

the Courier

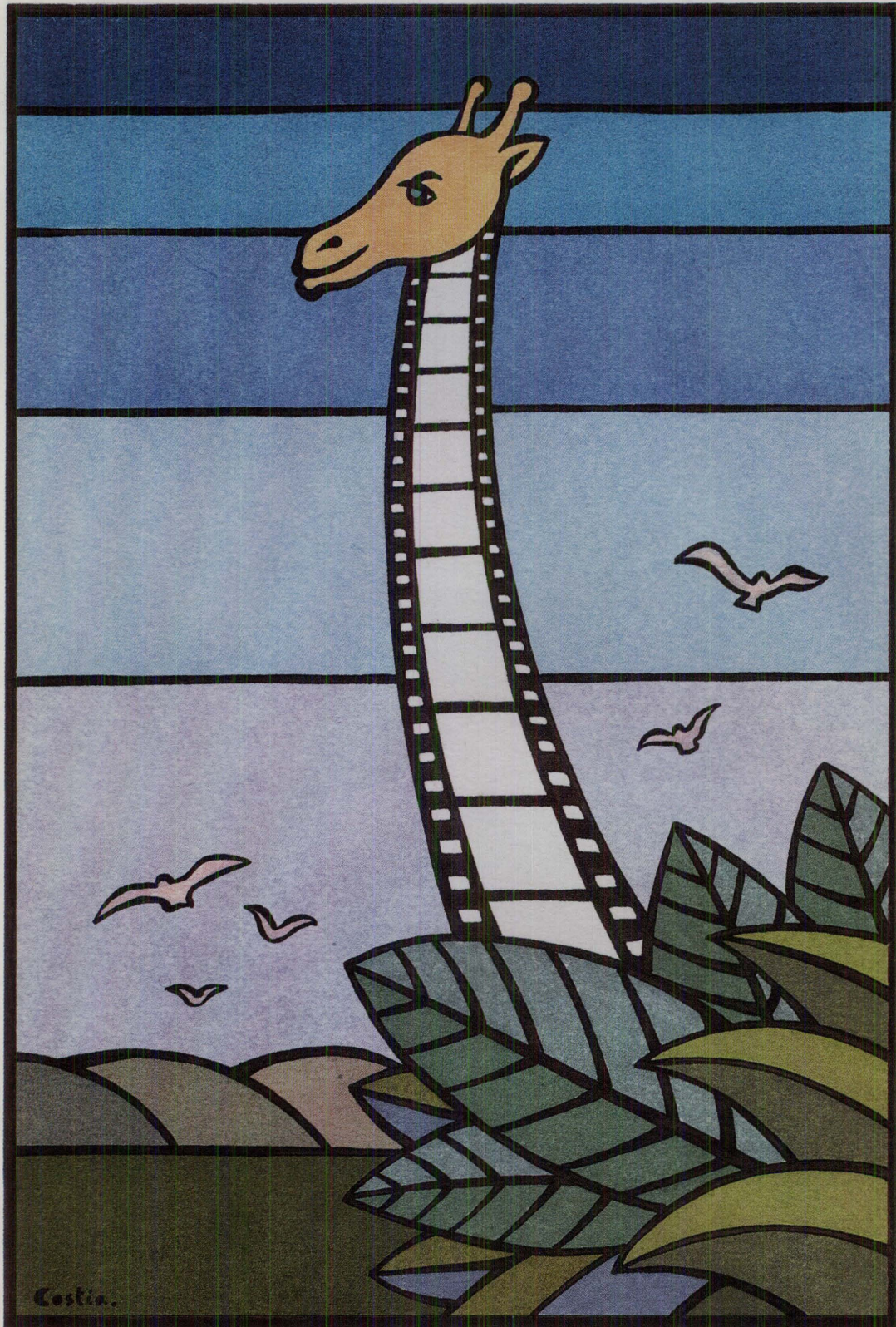
the magazine
of ACP-EU development cooperation

Country report

Angola

Dossier

Cinema



Is there really a film industry in Africa?

**What is the way forward for the seventh art in developing countries,
at the dawn of the new millennium?**

**In this dossier, Djo Munga focuses on many issues
which are often not on view**

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T h e A C P - E U C o u r i e r
is the main publication of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
and the European Union. The EU provides ACP countries with
preferential access to EC markets and substantial development
assistance (some two to three billion Euros a year). The ACP and EU
cooperate at a political level and engage in a continuous political
dialogue: in trade, to promote the integration of the ACP countries into
the World Economy and in development assistance, with the clear objective
to promote sustainable development and the reduction of poverty.



ACP Group adapts to meet global challenges

by Dr Pa'o LUTERU*

At the first Summit of the ACP Heads of State and Government held in Libreville, Gabon, in 1997, a commitment was made to adapt the structure of the ACP Group to meet new challenges and opportunities arising in the global environment. The second ACP Summit held in Santo Domingo in 1999 confirmed the need for the Group to develop a higher profile in international fora. It also had to strengthen regional cooperation and integration as a means of ensuring better cohesion within the Group.

As for the Secretariat, the main goal was to transform the organisation into a more proactive and dynamic executive body. It had to be capable of responding promptly and effectively, not only to the traditional concerns of member states but also to emerging new challenges.

The product of this reform is the Department of Political Affairs and Human Development, one of the two technical arms of the organisation with the task of assisting the Group in its mandated areas of responsibility.

Emphasis on conflict prevention

The political dimension of the ACP Group's interests and activities will assume a more prominent place than it did during the Lomé era, given the realities of globalisation and the increasing interdependence of states. Inevitably, this makes political dialogue vital among the members of the Group and between the Group and its interlocutors, especially the European Union.

The framework and modalities for conducting such political dialogue are currently being drafted for wider consideration and eventual formal adoption by the ACP Group's decision-making bodies. Within this framework, due emphasis will also be placed on conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building measures, and relations with relevant regional and international organisations. Respect for human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance also falls within the Group's renewed political mandate.

Recognition of civil society

The Cotonou Agreement negotiators recognised the importance of an active, dynamic and more participatory civil society in ACP-EU cooperation. They drew up the

agreement to encourage these aspects. Recognising the complementary role of civil society in the development process, and the need for greater equity and inclusion of the poor in sharing the benefits of economic growth, the ACP-EU Partnership is now more accessible to a wider range of non-state actors. The measures envisaged to achieve this include: participation in consultations on cooperation policies and strategies; access to the financial resources of the European Development Fund; involvement in and ownership of project and programme implementation; and access to institutional development and capacity-building support.

Bringing these measures into effect, the Department of Political Affairs and Human Development is now consulting civil society representatives. The outcome of this process will form the basis of a work programme to guide the activities of these actors within the framework of ACP-EU cooperation over the coming years.

Areas of opportunity and challenge

The Department's work, however, is not confined to these two priority areas. It also has the specific mandate of monitoring, co-ordinating and implementing activities relating to education and training, environment, information society, science and research, food security, rural development, migration, demography, urbanisation, technology, health, social protection, employment, humanitarian and emergency matters and management of natural resources. These are all areas of opportunity and challenge for the ACP Group.

As the organisation enters the new millennium, it must continue to be proactive in its approach, focusing on areas of real priority, and above all, be committed and single-minded in its mission to eradicate poverty, thus improving the living standards of the population of its member states. This puts the Department of Political Affairs and Human Development at the heart of current reforms. The organisation's future success will depend, to a significant degree, on how successfully the Department carries out the tasks entrusted to it.

* Assistant Secretary-General of the ACP Group

Sir Neville Nicholls

The Caribbean Development Bank - looking through a poverty prism

Sir Neville Nicholls, President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) met senior government officials across Europe during November 2000 to secure funding for the fifth cycle of the bank's Special Development Fund. *The Courier* spoke to him in Brussels.



As the Caribbean's leading development finance institution, CDB is committed to the systematic reduction of poverty through social and economic development. It does this by promoting private and public investment in development projects across the region and by providing technical assistance to local entrepreneurs.

Sir Neville Nicholls explains that, while the region is considered a middle income area, the Caribbean has deep pockets of poverty, caused in part by its traditional export dependence on sugar, citrus and bananas.

"The economy of the region is changing, leaving older displaced workers without the education and skills to be retrained in tourism or the knowledge-based economy," he says. "The bank with its member countries has developed strategies to address this dynamic."

CDB is collaborating with the Inter-American Development Bank (see *Courier* 183) on an initiative to prepare regions to survive the economic impact when trade preferences in Europe come to an end.

Redirecting traditional exports away from the US and Europe is part of a strategy to refocus the agricultural sector inwards to supply the many hotels and resorts that form the backbone of the region's burgeoning tourist industry. It is illogical to export inexpensive citrus and bananas

and at the same time import costly vegetables and other fruits to feed a growing sector of the economy.

The banana industry is caught in the middle of an unwieldy trade dispute between two economic giants, which has created uncertainty and fear among growers. Such trade disputes are not unusual, Nicholls maintains, but in this instance, the American position "makes it very difficult" for the industry to survive.

However, there are lucrative niche markets in the US and Europe for exotic tropical fruits. This potential could be developed with EU financial measures to assist banana-producing countries to diversify production. Many older agricultural workers could be redeployed into new, diversified crop production using scientifically-based methods.

At the same time, the region's economic infrastructure is being strengthened to encourage foreign direct investment, and CDB is supporting projects that will ensure the necessary transport infrastructure (roads, airports and seaports) is in place to facilitate the tourism sector.

New globalised economy ushers in new opportunities

Caribbean countries are no strangers to the uncertainties of the global economy. Small size, a high degree of openness and lack of economic



Sir Neville Nicholls (middle), with Volville Forsythe, Assistant Bank Secretary (left) and Dr Warren Smith, Deputy Director, Corporate Policy and Planning (right)

diversification have always left them vulnerable to the vagaries of world economic conditions.

In fact, the region has been coping with globalisation for the last five centuries. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, new opportunities are emerging for the Caribbean to exploit its comparative advantage. An educated labour force and competitive wage costs are creating opportunities for participation in the IT and service sectors.

Nicholls points to the region's economic and political stability as significant assets to attract inward investment, and says that both the knowledge-based economy and the IT sector that supports it are taking root and flourishing in the Caribbean.

"The service sector is not based on exploitation of natural resources," he says. "Economic activities are based on knowledge, not commodities, which is why CDB and the EU are financing education projects in the region."

The University of the West Indies, for example, in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank, is committed to a 10-year programme in science and technology training which includes distance-learning facilities and three campuses that serve member countries.

"We are trying to shift the emphasis from the traditional pursuit of a general arts degree programme to IT and computer training," Nicholls explains. "We are responding to demand and at the same time enabling our people to be more mobile."

The approach is paying off. Nicholls points out that many US companies are attracted to doing business in the region with increasing ticketing, billing and call centre activity. In addition, local entrepreneurs are setting up their own businesses offering IT related services.

A "pro-poor" approach

Poverty assessments have been done in several of the bank's member countries and projects are now looked at through a "poverty prism" to assess their prospective impact on poverty and on vulnerability. The Social Development Fund (SDF) is responding with more than 50% of its funds allocated to poverty reduction.

The SDF is used to make or guarantee loans of high development priority, with longer maturities, longer deferred repayment arrangements and lower interest rates. Funds have been used to finance projects in areas such as human resource development, poverty reduction and institutional capacity-building. As of December 1999, SDF amounted to the equivalent of US\$525,463,000.

The purpose of Nicholls' European trip was to solicit financing for the fifth round of SDF financing. The fund mirrors EU objectives in terms of development assistance. He explains that Haiti and Suriname are about to become CDB members, which will double the borrowing membership as well as significantly increase the number of poor people in the bank's region. This will "transform the nature of the bank" as it reaches out to meet the needs of its new French-speaking members.

CDB supports micro-enterprises that in turn create employment in service sectors that support the knowledge economy and tourism. The bank's most successful participation with the micro-economic sector has been through techni-

cal assistance implemented through the Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services Unit. This body assists users to find solutions to practical problems encountered in production enterprises, the hotel industry and the IT sector. Low-cost assistance is also provided in project implementation, training, computerisation and in developing business plans.

The bank is taking a "pro-poor" approach to the private sector. Under its pilot Microfinance Guarantee Programme, CDB provides a guarantee for a line of credit from a commercial lender to a specialised microfinance institution, which then lends the funds to micro and small enterprises.

In the wake of the rapid urbanisation of their populations, many Caribbean countries are faced with inadequate infrastructure facilities such as drainage, solid waste disposal, sewer and water supply systems, inadequate road networks, declining housing stock and the proliferation of derelict buildings. Strained social and community services are unable to cope with the growing number of issues resulting from urbanisation, such as overcrowding, substandard living conditions, poverty and crime.

In response, CDB developed an Urban Revitalisation Strategy in cooperation with member countries to support projects directed at improving urban areas, having net social and economic impacts and possibly reducing poverty. "All member governments realise that the private sector is the engine of growth and that they must provide an enabling environment to create development," Nicholls says. "CDB gives macroeconomic advice to help facilitate this." CDB has refocused its activities to bring poverty reduction to the forefront of its initiatives, because the region will not move forward until its whole population is able to participate in the benefits of a liberalised global marketplace.

Dianna Rienstra

CDB - facts at a glance

- The bank, which was **established in 1970**, is based at **Wilkey, St. Michael, Barbados** in the West Indies. As a regional financial institution, CDB contributes to the economic growth and development of member countries in the Caribbean.

- During 1999 CDB achieved **positive net transfers of \$44 million** to the borrowing member countries. This was the second consecutive year in which positive net transfers were achieved.

- CDB's financial resources consist of Ordinary Capital Resources (OCR), comprising mainly subscribed capital and borrowings and Special Funds Resources. As of 31 December 1999, the OCR was \$565,445,000 comprising mature subscriptions and reserves, market loans on the US capital market and also loans from the European Investment Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

- **Regional members** include Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Colombia, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, the Turks and Caicos Islands and Venezuela. Of these, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela do not borrow from the bank. **Non-regional members** are Canada, China, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom.

- **Subscribed share capital** is \$749.9 million, of which \$584.3 million is callable capital and \$165.6 million is paid up capital. The **largest shareholders** are Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Canada and the United Kingdom. The US, as a non-member, does not participate in CDB's Ordinary Capital Resources, but is the largest contributor to its Special Funds Resources. The Netherlands has also been a substantial contributor to this fund.

- In 1992, 1995, 1996, 1998 and 1999 CDB made **private placements** in the New York market for \$30 million, \$11.5 million, \$35 million, \$50 million and \$60 million respectively. These offerings have been rated AAA by Moody's Investors Services. In February 2000, CDB secured a loan of \$60 million on the Japanese capital market.

A newcomer to the ACP family



Cuba's joining the ACP group is the culmination of several years' work. What were the decisive stages in this process?

Firstly, it is important to remember that this is in the mutual interests of Cuba and its neighbours. We all share a common environment in the Caribbean region. We form a large number of island states, so we all participate in a process aimed at the integration of our countries, enabling us to rise more successfully to the challenges facing us as developing countries. It was for that reason, and also because of the ties that already exist between us, that the Caribbean ACP countries gave such strong support to the idea that Cuba could join this association of nation states in the Lomé Convention. Two or three years ago, it became apparent to us that other ACP member countries also strongly advocated the idea of Cuba participating fully in the activities of the group. This is hardly surprising because for decades we have enjoyed a close and diversified relationship with the countries of Africa. What is left is to get to know the Pacific countries. The whole process happened rather quickly: in 1998, in Barbados, the ACPs decided without hesitation to admit us as

The ACP group is expanding once again. On 14 December 2000, the Council of Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States, meeting in Brussels, passed a resolution with immediate effect admitting Cuba as its 78th member. There was, however, one special feature: Cuba became the first ACP country to take no part in cooperation with the European Union under Cotonou. *The Courier* met Rene J. Mujica, the Cuban Ambassador, who sees this membership as "another step in the right direction."

observers. This meant that we attended the negotiations which led to the signing of the new EU-ACP partnership agreement. Other notable events were the Summit of ACP Heads of State and government, in Santo Domingo at the end of 1999, where support for Cuba was expressed at the highest level. Later, at the beginning of 2000, the ACP Ministerial meeting in Brussels translated this expression into a firm decision to invite Cuba to sign the new Agreement on an equal footing with the other ACP Group members.

At the ministerial meeting in Cotonou before the agreement was signed, the ACP group expressed regret at the events which had led to the withdrawal of our application, and reaffirmed that, even under these circumstances, Cuba should still be a full member of the ACP group. This explicit backing was followed by the visit to our country last August of a large delegation headed by Georges-Anicet Dologuelé, Prime Minister of Central Africa and current President of the ACP Council of Ministers. This mission met President Fidel Castro and several members of the government.

One significant detail: prior to your being welcomed into

the ACP family, an alteration had to be made to the group's founding text...

Yes, that's true. The ACP group's charter, the Georgetown Agreement (1975), made no provision for the possibility of accepting a new member which did not participate in cooperation with the EU. So the Council's decision to admit us went hand in hand with a decision to amend this Agreement. I think that all this reveals without doubt that the ACP Group has reached full maturity, with a sense of its own identity and political independence.

So you are now the only ACP State not to have signed the Cotonou Agreement. Is your decision irrevocable?

We realised, as observers right through the duration of the negotiating process, and even afterwards when we were examining the final draft, that the possibility was still open to us to accept the terms on which it is based. But, just when we were ready to sign it, the stance taken by certain EU member countries, based on the EU's common position on Cuba adopted at the end of 1996, led them to put up objections and to insist on political preconditions which were

unacceptable, even outside the terms of the agreement itself, which I hasten to emphasise we would otherwise have signed. Certain events took place which made it clear that Europe was not prepared to adopt a non-selective, non-discriminatory position towards us in the context of the political decisions which could have led to our being included in the agreement, and in all probability, being able to implement it. We decided to withdraw our request for membership for these reasons. When we look back on this situation, we are forced to conclude that - quite the opposite of the ACP countries - the EU is just not able to adopt an autonomous position that is sufficiently independent of the USA in its relations with Cuba. Admittedly, the EU does not support the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the USA for the past 40 years, which is an attempt to strangle us. We do have commercial and economic relations in a number of different areas under normal conditions with the EU - which I believe makes the common EU position even more incomprehensible. The fact is that certain aspects of Europe's political decisions in regard to Cuba are leaning too far towards the American measures as far as practical consequences are concerned. In fact, even if it is not the intention, the reality is that we are now confronted with economic disadvantages in our external trade. Unfortunately the common EU position comes with strings attached that are remarkably similar to those of Washington, which ride roughshod over our fundamental and legitimate rights to endow ourselves with the political, social and economic institutions which we believe are appropriate to our history, cultural traditions and aspirations. International law is founded on key criteria such as independence, state sovereignty

and self-determination of peoples and so on. Cuba has as much right to these as any other country. As a matter of fact, the ACPs have expressed their willingness to help overcome these disagreements with the European Union through dialogue. We are of course open to any serious political dialogue which could positively enrich the experience of both parties and their mutual comprehension. But, all too often, the language of political dialogue coming from certain nations sounds more like an arrogant monologue. If we want dialogue to succeed, we will have to find a realistic way to define the principles of such an exchange. For us, the only acceptable principle is rooted in international law. I don't think that our present ACP membership will have any negative repercussions in the future, but rather the opposite. We are open to political dialogue and we will not hesitate to reply to a constructive approach from the EU. But at the moment the ball is not in our court.

Could Cuba's membership be seen as indicative of a new approach among the ACP countries - viewing development in the wider context of cooperation relations, including relations between the countries of the South?

Yes, we already have relations with most of the ACPs on one level or another. But this process is prompting us also to forge closer bonds with others, particularly with the Pacific countries. These relations are wide-ranging - diplomatic, economic, political, cultural, educational, scientific, and so on. Over the years, we have sent tens of thousands of voluntary workers to Africa and the Caribbean. Tens of thousands of citizens of these countries have also been able to come to

Cuba for training. Unquestionably, however, it is the developing countries which bear the brunt of the enormous challenges of globalisation. It is crucial that we pool our efforts so that our voices are heard and our legitimate aspirations and basic rights (such as the right to genuine sustainable development) are taken into consideration in the multilateral arenas. This is something which can only intensify as time goes on.

How have the people of Cuba reacted to this news?

The Cuban people are extremely well educated and highly politically aware. They understand very clearly that this new dimension to our relations with ACP countries brings us all increased possibilities for working together and expands our capacity for political action. Only through political action will the situation ever change. The Cuban public is well aware that what is currently being done on the international stage to meet the needs of the countries of the South is inadequate. Initiatives from the North are always welcome when it comes to debt, poverty or access to markets, but they are still too limited and will not in themselves be sufficient to solve the problems. Much more must be done, but to make this possible, it is vital that the developing countries send out a clear signal by staying united, active and committed and by both claiming and seizing any chance to participate more effectively in the decision-making process on the international stage. Both dialogue and the ACP-EU cooperation can play crucial roles in this context. Cuba's membership of the ACP Group is another step in the right direction.

Interview: Aya Kasasa

The future of Europe

by Laurent Duvillier*



Lionel Jospin, Jacques Chirac and Romano Prodi after four days and one entire night of work

The latest European Summit gave birth - by forceps - to a minimalist agreement. The EU which emerged from Nice is not more mature, though it will soon be larger.

The Nice European Summit will be remembered. As the longest in European history. As the most painful. And as a moment of high strategic importance, less than a year before the euro appears in more than 300 million pockets. All at a time when 12 Central and Eastern European countries are knocking on the EU's door, begging to be let in.

National interests before European ideal

Already creaky with 15 Member States, the postwar institutional system of the European Union would inevitably become ungovernable with 27. Unless it could be made more efficient. But no such far-reaching, crucial reform happened in Nice in the south of France. It was the redistribution of power between the European authorities that galvanised all the activity as everyone fought over who should register the most weight on the European scales. Germany or France? The Netherlands or Belgium? There was more than a little jousting on the Nice promenade. And what was supposed to have been the Summit at which Europe would redesign itself was reduced to hacking out a minimal compromise after days of protracted negotiations and unseemly haggling. It was difficult to find a delegation that was fighting for a European ideal rather than to preserve its position in the Council, Parliament or the Commission.

The prospect of enlarging its borders to take in a lot of little countries disrupted the balance of power originally agreed between the founding countries and on which the executive arm of the Union depends. Had there been no change, the influx of representatives of countries seeking membership would have inflated the European Commission beyond a manageable size. The proposed solution had initially been to have a team limited to 20 Commissioners, but the scenario would have meant a revolving representation of the 27 countries that would by then be members. This proposal was unacceptable to the 'small' countries who refused to give up their one Commissioner. The 'big' countries each agreed to lose one of theirs only if there was something in return. From 2005, therefore, one Commissioner per Member State. However, there was one advance: at the head of the Commission, the president, if nominated unanimously, has greater room for manoeuvre. By a process of extensive co-decision, the European Parliament also increases its power. Even if there are now 728 seats in the legislature instead of the 700 provided under the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty: the 99 German Euro MPs were not particularly keen on the thought of all those new MPs.

However, in the triangle of community institutions, neither the Commission nor Parliament stoked up as much covetous power-seeking as the Union's principal decision-making body, the European Council of Ministers. This is the real locus of power in which the ability of each Member State to influence European decisions is determined. Feeling themselves under-represented in the Council, the larger countries demanded changes to the weighting of votes to compensate them for losing one Commissioner each. Everyone agreed on the principle; but everyone fought on the exact form the blocking threshold should take and on vote weighting. Germany, with its population of 82 million, easily the most populous nation in the Union since reunification, wanted a formula that would better reflect its demographic importance. But any such readjustment would have upset the famous Franco-German parity, one of the foundations of the European system. Paris and President Chirac could not swallow this ... unless France also

benefited from the upgrade. The voraciousness of the 'big' powers prompted the 'smaller' countries to band together in self-defence. Belgium, Portugal and Finland refused to countenance an oligarchy of European giants capable of blocking any decision. But it did not mean that Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder had to return empty-handed to Berlin. His consolation prize was a 'demographic amalgamation', equivalent to 62% of the population of the European Union, which is necessary to endorse the Council's votes. A measure that makes it almost impossible to act without Germany.

Slender but real progress

These interminable talks, littered with what some described as impenetrable calculations, would almost have eclipsed the slender but noteworthy progress made at Nice. For example, the Summit sketched the outlines of a future social model, mentioning in particular the need for a modernised social security system, better access to work, and the need to limit poverty and promote equality between the sexes, to name but a few. Six issues to which Member States will have to put the finishing touches - though some of them like to point out that this is optional. Another convincing result is that the mechanism of 'enhanced cooperation' launched at the June 1997 Amsterdam Summit has gained in flexibility. From now on, as few as eight countries are allowed to collaborate, without waiting for the consent of the more nervous, in areas as diverse as tax, law, and socio-economic affairs, with the exception of defence policy.

How can the Council of Ministers be safeguarded against a growing paralysis in the event of enlargement? By opting for qualified majority voting instead of unanimous voting in the Union's executive organ, on as many subjects as possible. There were 40 or so such subjects on the negotiating table at Nice. As few as 30 - and not the most sensitive ones - will be adopted. Berlin will continue to reserve the right to block a decision on the right of veto on asylum policy. Spain will keep its hold on regional aid. Paris will successfully protect cinema and television from commercial negotiations. And London rules out tax and social security questions. The logic of qualified majority voting has therefore not become the norm.

In the aftermath of the painful negotiations, the French presidency tried to make reassuring noises. President Jacques Chirac attempted to defend the agreement - still to be ratified by the 15 national Parliaments for it to become a Treaty - as 'substantial' and 'balanced'. His attempts were in vain. The European press came down like a ton of bricks on the conclusions of the Nice Summit. The French

daily *Le Monde* spoke of a 'miserable outcome', to which the Italian *Corriere Della Sera* responded by comparing the 'institutional insecurity' of the Union with the post-electoral fever of the United States. Meanwhile, Spain's solemn daily newspaper *El Pais* reported the heated exchanges between the Governments and Heads of State of the 15, particularly those between the 'large' and 'small' countries. By piling on their acerbic criticisms and grumbling complaints, international commentators are tending to throw the European baby out with the Nice bathwater. Greater forgiveness is shown by the 12 applicant countries who had feared an outright failure, and from Poland to Estonia a sigh of relief went up. Seen from Prague, Warsaw, Budapest or Tallin, the overriding merit of the Nice Summit was that it raised no objection and caused no delay to their membership. The French Riviera did not issue a more mature Union, just a larger one, because the 15 will keep to the timetable set for the entry of Central and Eastern European countries. The countries of the Union have declared their willingness to embrace the newcomers by the end of 2002 and will integrate them from 2004. But as every mountaineer knows, you do not reach the top of a mountain by hesitating at the bottom.

European project: builders wanted

To make progress, the European project has always sought the greatest common denominator among its partners. In Nice it only found the lowest. The strategy of 'small steps' has proved to have limits. The latest European Summit has exacerbated the differences between the two visions, the two concepts of the Union that cohabit within its borders. On one side are the majority of member states favourable to a progressive abandonment of national prerogatives to a federal European State. On the other are those member states whose only interest is in extending the free-trade area, its political institutions limited to their simplest expression. After Nice, the Union's post-euro federal project has broken down and these twin currents can no longer be ignored, contained or stifled. What kind of a Europe do we want tomorrow? What degree of integration are the partners of the Old World willing to accept? What exactly will be the effect of the European project on the concert of nations? A Pandora's box of questions could be opening up just as 300 million citizens are preparing to adopt the euro. The fifteen (soon to be twenty-seven) will not put off the debate indefinitely. Having obtained the right to draw up a political declaration on the future of the Union at the next summit in Laeken in December 2001, Belgium can now put out a classified advert: 'European project seeks serious builders. Decorators need not apply.'

**Freelance journalist*

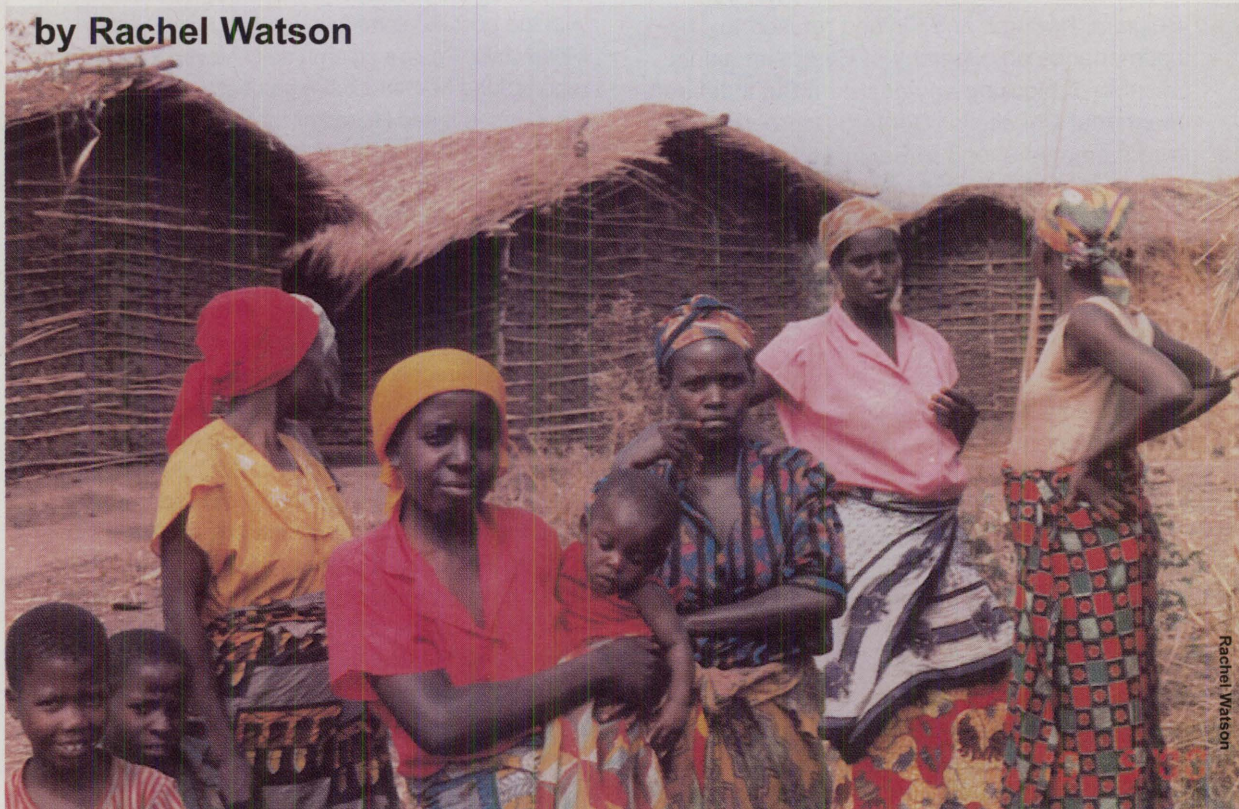
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Turkish demonstrator in the streets of Nice

Dreaming of home

by Rachel Watson



Rachel Watson

Bubanza, Burundi - The woman lived with six relatives in a cramped rattan hut at the edge of the crowded Nabubu I displacement camp. She spoke quietly of her efforts to grow crops with other women from the site, pointing to a bare patch of land where her family eked out a living from the dusty red earth. Yet her voice was strong when she spoke of her desire to take her children home.

"This is such a poor land. Our children don't get enough to eat. We just want to be able to go home, build a comfortable house, grow some food and dress our children in nice clothes."

In Burundi today, around half a million people dream of a distant place they once called home. They might live in displacement camps, hide in the forests or shelter with friends or neighbours, but all of them are truly homeless, displaced by the ongoing civil war.

Refugees within their own homeland

The international community is unsure exactly how many people are internally displaced in

Burundi. An estimated six per cent of the population currently lives in displacement sites, according to a November 2000 report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Burundi. A further 170,000 are believed to have no permanent home, although this figure is difficult to verify. Many live on the move, forced to flee the fighting and find shelter where they can. These families are unable to cultivate crops or send their children to school. They are also the least likely to receive any humanitarian assistance, because they are so difficult to trace.

Some of these dispersed families had been previously contained by the government in "regroupment camps" in the area around the capital known as Bujumbura Rurale. The government set up these camps at the end of 1999, on security grounds, although this mass evacuation of the local population was more likely carried out to isolate the rebels. Families were forced to leave their homes in war-ravaged districts and

crowd into poorly constructed camps where they lived in appalling conditions.

An international outcry over the camps led to their closure in July 2000, but the sites were dismantled hastily - in many cases quite literally overnight - and little was done to protect and assist the camp populations, many of whom would have to return to insecure areas and whose whereabouts is now unknown.

"I wouldn't say that people have returned to their homes," Stefano Severes, head of UNHCR in Burundi, told the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children in an interview in October 2000. "They have been dispersed, or they have spontaneously regrouped. The security situation has hampered our ability to go to the field, and most of the information we have is second hand."

A long civil war

Since its independence in 1962, Burundi has been plagued by inter-ethnic conflict and political power struggles, the legacy of a colonial political strategy which polarised Burundi's main ethnic groups. In the early seventies, thousands of Tutsis were killed in an attack by Hutu insurgents; reprisals led to the deaths of over 100,000 Hutu. Several thousand Hutu fled to Tanzania, where they remain to this day. The next twenty years saw

attacks and counter-attacks by both groups, killing hundreds of thousands of Burundians, mainly Hutu. Thousands more fled across the border to Tanzania, dotting the frontier with refugee camps.

Elections in 1993 were seen as a breakthrough and brought hope of reconciliation. But the first democratically elected President - a Hutu - was assassinated later that year, sparking what people today in Burundi refer to as "the crisis". The current President, Major Pierre Buyoya, seized power in a military coup in July 1996. His mainly Tutsi government forces are battling for power with Hutu rebels and militia; the fighting has cost thousands of lives and uprooted half a million people from their homes.

The fighting has severely hindered humanitarian efforts to provide assistance, even to those living in fixed displacement sites around the country, despite the courage and dedication of a host of aid workers from international, national and local organisations.

The situation is further compromised by the absence of a focal United Nations agency whose task would be to coordinate IDP protection and assistance in Burundi. The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children found that many agencies recognise that little is being done for the IDP population but not one is willing to step forward to push for more.



This lack of coordination, coupled with security restrictions, means that internally displaced families are not always afforded the level of care and protection given to refugees who flee across an international border to a recognised refugee camp.

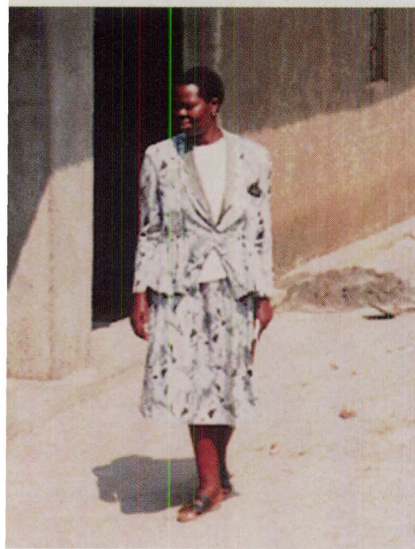
Interrupted lives

Généreuse has been on the move since fighting broke out in her home commune in Bujumbura Rurale several years ago. Her home was destroyed and she and her family were forced to move to a displacement camp.

"My husband and I were both sick but we had no medicine when we were living in the displacement site," she recalled. "I was so sick I didn't even realise my husband had died. When I recovered they told me he had died from typhus. I was four months pregnant with my baby daughter."

The aptly named Généreuse now has seven children of her own and also cares for Césarie, a 13-year-old girl whose brothers and sisters all died from dysentery and malnutrition. The

Families in refugee camps are unable to send their children to school



Pascasie Sinzinkayo — an example for all women in Burundi

family has now moved out of the displacement site into a nearby house provided by a neighbour, but they are still far from home. Without the security of land and the support of relatives, life remains difficult.

"My main problem is providing food for my family," said Génèreuse. "My land is very far away. My old neighbours helped me to cultivate my last crop of cassava and I sold it at the market, but now I have nothing at all. My only relatives have been displaced too, but they are in

Mayuyi, which is too far for me to reach them."

As in many war-torn regions, it is women like Génèreuse who must struggle to support their children and others in need, despite their own great emotional and physical loss. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that 40% of families living in displacement camps are headed by women. Many women - like Génèreuse - look after abandoned or orphaned children in addition to their own offspring.

Pillars of society

Bubanza province lies to the north of Bujumbura, squeezed between a range of forested mountains and the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. Here, rebels and government forces launch attacks and counter-attacks along the main routes to the capital. Only a handful of international aid agencies work in this area because the security situation along these access roads remains tense.

In the main town of Bubanza, several women's organisations are picking up the pieces. They work alone, often unsupported, and reach out to the most vulnerable, including the estimated 9,000 children in this province who have lost their families. One local women's group, "Parents, Let's Educate for Burundi", is setting up a centre for street children on the main street in the town.

"I found one child in Mpanda (a displacement site) who was seven years old but who looked younger," said Pascasie Sinzinkayo, a founding member of the group. "He had no brothers or sisters and yet he was called "Bucumi," which traditionally means 'Child Number 10'. It was so sad. We are trying to do some investigations to see if there are any surviving relatives who could take him in."

Groups like this one may be fragmented or underfunded. They may lack skills or expertise. But they represent a determination for change and a hope for Burundi's future at a time when international agencies have been thwarted by poor overall coordination and general insecurity from reaching the displaced people most at risk. These women have all defied Burundi's culture of conflict by reaching out to those displaced and bewildered by the war: the tiny women's crop cooperative at the Nabubu displacement site, Génèreuse bringing up a lost child as her own, Pascasie and her children's centre.

"Women are the pillars of our society," said Pascasie. "We just want to be an example to other women in the province, to show them that they could do something similar if they got together."

With security risks and poor coordination plaguing the international agencies in Burundi, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children believes that local initiatives should be nurtured and encouraged to give some hope to the half million displaced people still at risk, and still in need of protection and assistance.

Rachel Watson works for the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children in New York. She was a member of the Women's Commission's October 2000 delegation to Burundi to assess protection and assistance measures for displaced women and children. The report is available in full on the website: www.womenscommission.org

Pictures: Rachel Watson

Project management

An effective new tool for managing HIV/AIDS and population projects

The scourge of AIDS is now affecting every continent and it continues to spread.

5.6 million new cases were recorded in 2000.

The European Commission provides financial assistance for the battle against this pandemic, and has now drawn up a practical guide for managing HIV/AIDS and population projects to combat the disease more effectively.

An information system to facilitate the management of HIV/AIDS and population projects has been launched.

In October 2000 the Common Service for External Relations (SCR), which on 1 January 2001 became the EuropeAid Cooperation Office, drew up a practical guide for managing HIV/AIDS and population projects (budget lines) for developing countries, with a view to harmonising such projects and making their implementation more efficient. This guide has been distributed to all Delegations.

The guide, which is user-friendly and novel in design, is an information system supplied on an interactive CD-ROM. For the General Directorates concerned with external relations, it is a shared reference source to ensure that these projects are financed and executed in accordance with

defined standards. It will provide considerable savings of time, energy and funds and will ensure that application is more in line with operating procedures.

The guide has been produced to comply with Commission policy which is to create a successful, modern and efficient organisation using the latest information technology to optimise human resources and improve the quality of the work.

Why this guide?

The guide was developed to improve the monitoring and assessment of HIV/AIDS and population projects, based on proper and rigorous application of the various project cycle phases; simplification and harmonisation of the procedures in project instruction, implementation and assessment, and improved communication for the benefit of external partners.

Based on permanent dialogue between the different services of EuropeAid and DG Relex, the practical project guide was produced, with the help of International Health Support – Technical Assistance Network (IHS –TAN) in the framework of its contract.

The guide is a collection of rules (legal bases), standard documents, templates, scorecards, utilities, and simultaneously integrates the official harmonisation work already carried out by the other EuropeAid services and DG Development. It is a kind of comprehensive toolbox which greatly simplifies project work.

The guide provides standard templates for contracts — for subsidies, budgets, terms of reference, action plans, schedules, etc. — and these can be completed in Word and Excel which are also integrated in the guide. Users can create a text or table to suit their requirements or connect to the EuropeAid "Tenders and contract" Internet site with a simple click of the mouse. A bilingual English/French version of the guide is currently available on

interactive CD-ROM, as are English or French paper versions.

Target audience: external partners, consultants and community services

In this age of globalisation, it is important that projects are an integral part of a set of standard interventions where various tools and players work in synergy. This tool has been designed for all beneficiaries or operational players involved in implementing community cooperation in the areas of HIV/AIDS and population.

By providing adequate and efficient information, the community external aid services, national and regional administrations and the local powers in partner countries, civil society players (NGOs, professional organisations, the private sector, research institutes, etc.) and consultants will from now on be able to follow the same standard pattern in proposing, implementing and assessing HIV/AIDS and population programmes and projects.

Advantages: speed, efficiency and increased management conformity

With increasingly limited human and financial resources, use of this powerful technological tool will bring

many advantages in terms of improving work quality.

These include:

- quick and comprehensive information for all parties involved, particularly external partners;
 - use of a single standard approach;
 - consistent mobilisation of credits and faster budget execution;
 - guaranteed compliance with legal bases,
 - conformity of operating procedures and budgets granted;
 - far greater legibility and understanding of technical and financial execution reports, the standardised format of which has been in use since 01/01/2001;
 - considerable reduction in payment times for operations;
 - matching expenditure to the finance plan.
- The standard presentation of execution reports will ease the analysis and comparison of technical, social and financial data, allowing:
- anticipated and achieved objectives, results and monitoring indicators;
 - theoretical and actual planning for operational programming;
 - timescales for submission of important documents.

Comparative analyses between geographical zones and/or financial instruments will be easier to conduct.

These are important criteria for facilitating both the interventions of contracting parties and the decisions of EuropeAid.

Positive impact and possible development

From November 2000, a web page for the guide will be available on the Commission's Intranet. The EuropeAid homepage can be accessed via Internet Explorer at http://158.166.31.23/Guide_new/aids/Guide.htm. Then click on "Practical guide for managing HIV/AIDS and population projects". In the near future it will be possible to access the guide on the Commission's Internet site.

This guide contributes substantive elements to the administrative and legal harmonisation work carried out to date, in terms of approach: the six phases in the operational and technical cycle: objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) necessary to further reinforce the new EuropeAid modes of operation.

The fact that this guide has been designed to evolve over time means that constructive criticism from Delegations and contracting parties will help to

bring it more in line with the new organisation of DG Relex and make it more comprehensive.

While the guide is specifically relevant to HIV/AIDS and population projects, with appropriate adaptation (legal bases, monitoring indicators, etc), it could also be valuable in training, management and assessment of other budget lines, or even applied to the European Development Fund (EDF).

The CD-ROM can be supplemented over time and made more comprehensive by adding further information and/or applications relating to all sectoral policies. Only 8% of the maximum 650 MB storage capacity of the CD-ROM is currently taken up.

The process of deconcentration/decentralisation of the management of external aid is certain to be made easier by increasing the capacities of the Delegations, and by the

increased mobilisation of external partners (appropriation of objectives), which will be made possible by use of this tool. This is sure to result in increased effectiveness and durability of cooperation.

For any information and/or requests regarding this tool please e-mail pasquale.Raimondo@cec.eu.int

P. Raimondo

Positive feedback

MOROCCO: "The Delegation has received one copy of the guide. Given that this document will prove extremely useful to us in our briefings to project staff on how they present their requests, monitor their projects and submit their reports, would it be possible to send us a few more copies?"

We find this document very clearly presented and believe that the CD-ROM will prove extremely valuable to representatives in Morocco."

FER-MACEDONIA : "It seems to be really interesting and could correspond to our needs, if it is generic enough. As Programme Officer at the EC Delegation in Skopje, I would be extremely interested in receiving a copy of this tool, especially because project cycle management is an everyday issue for all of us."

GUATEMALA : "We can only encourage you to continue to carry on with this compilation and guide, which is extremely useful for these of us in the field."

SOUTH AFRICA, Durban Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division University of Natal: "Thank you so much for the CD-ROM with the manual/toolkit. May I congratulate you on the content, presentation and ease with which it can be used. It is very innovative and useful - I wish we had had it years ago, as it would have made many of our activities easier. May I have an additional 5 copies when it is one general release. I doubt it will make the top ten but for those of us working in the field it will be invaluable." Alan Whiteside, Director

World Trade: Africa seeks to enhance its role

By Kenneth Karl

A more central role for Africa in world trade; the introduction of a prescriptive framework capable of responding to the continent's specific economic situation; encouragement of African countries to take a more active part in WTO activities, a better understanding of WTO functions, rules and certain agreements in order to improve their implementation; Africa's preparation for the forthcoming multilateral negotiations; attempts to find common ground. These summarise the main aims of the meeting of African trade ministers held in Libreville from 13 to 15 November 2000 under the auspices of the WTO and sponsored by the Gabonese government.

An end to marginalisation

At the time of setting up the mechanisms and regulations intended to govern international trade in the period following the Second World War, not one African country existed on the international stage as an independent State. More than fifty years have elapsed since then, and things have changed considerably during that period. Starting in 1948 with the creation of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), continuing through the Kennedy, Tokyo and Uruguay Rounds of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and culminating in the formation of the World Trade Organisation in 1995, profound changes have been made to the structure and nature of world trade, prompted by huge transformations in the world economy. The exponential growth in both volume and value of the goods and services traded throughout the world, together with the arrival of new actors on the world market, have changed the rules of the game and made commercial competition between countries ever more intense. Despite having a virtually insignificant (and indeed diminishing) share in world trade (now less than 2%), African countries make up almost one-third of WTO membership: 41 African countries are WTO members, and, of these, 31 are counted amongst the world's 48 least-developed countries. Today Africa is keener than ever to improve its standing within the multilateral trade system and to generate the income it so vitally needs to ensure its economic development. Trade is not, of course, the only vehicle for growth, but current trends show that it is increasingly becoming one of the most determining factors.

Africa's marginalisation due to the globalisation process is already a very real phenomenon, if you

believe statistics and certain projections. The danger is, however, that the gap separating Africa from both industrialised countries and the other developing countries will probably continue to widen if nothing is done to reverse this trend. The Libreville meeting was therefore billed as an initial wake-up call to the continent made on behalf of its leading trade ministers, who were supported in their initiative by representatives of several international and regional institutions. In all, 24 workshops were organised during the three-day conference, covering ten or so trade-related themes.

Expressing his delight at the organisation of such an event, the first of its kind set up to discuss the trade situation in Africa since the creation of GATT, WTO Director-General Mike Moore used his inaugural speech to urge the continent to focus its attention more directly on the World Trade Organisation, which, he said, must do more for Africa. He went on to set out the series of initiatives and actions approved by his organisation and aimed at facilitating Africa's integration into the global system. The European Union had sent two of its principal Commissioners: Pascal Lamy, in charge of trade, and Poul Nielson, responsible for development and humanitarian assistance. The former assured us that Africa's participation in the WTO, anchoring it more firmly to the global trade system, is a top priority for the EU. The European Commission is currently looking for ways and means to allow a more flexible application of trade agreements issuing from the Uruguay Round. Links will have to be made, and balances struck, between WTO regulations and the provisions for the future commercial framework set out in the new ACP-EU Agreement signed in Cotonou in June 2000. This is a challenge which the ACP

countries are actively preparing to meet, according to Jean-Robert Goulongana, ACP-Group Secretary General in Brussels. During a lunch debate with ministers, Poul Nielson emphasised that the strengthening of integration and of regional cooperation as a prerequisite for setting up regional economic partnership agreements with the EU, is the approach to best enable Africa to jump on the bandwagon of globalisation as quickly as possible and to fight poverty most effectively.

Consolidating expertise in the African countries

Africa's lack of technical expertise, lack of knowledge of certain issues, absence of appropriate strategies and its weak participation in multilateral trade negotiations go some way to explaining why the continent was marginalised in the previous trade rounds, and are partly responsible for the gradual erosion of its market share. For example, the vast majority of African countries signed and ratified the Marrakesh Agreement setting up the WTO without necessarily understanding that this would imply the implementation of certain measures which were at best restrictive and at worst unrealistic. Today, these countries are demanding greater flexibility, together with the revision of some of those measures. Africa therefore faces an initial challenge of considerable magnitude, of which its leading politicians are fully aware. Because of the plethora and complexity of the themes either directly linked or closely related to trade, this challenge will consist of strengthening Africa's technical capabilities to enable it to negotiate more effectively in the future. The new ACP-EU Agreement makes provision for financial and technical assistance to enable the ACP countries to initiate more successful trade negotiations. The WTO is making training programmes available to African executives. Both the International Trade Centre and UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade and Development) are continuing to give Africa the benefit of their expertise. But there is still a long way to go because of the extent to which the continent is lagging behind. Although the resounding failure of the Seattle conference signified a healthy rebellion by the countries of the South, they must gradually move from protests to proposals. This requires a thorough understanding of the issues and stakes involved.

A Communication instead of a Declaration

The Libreville talks ended, with some difficulty, with the adoption of a final communication instead of the Declaration initially scheduled. The text reaffirms the commitment of the African ministers to

work within the framework of the multilateral trade system towards a significant and equitable role for their continent in world trade. The communication also underlines the importance of the development aspect, which must be integrated into future negotiations as a matter of urgency, and the need to take into consideration the concerns and interests of all African countries. It goes on to mention the promotion of intra-African trade and the importance of strengthening cooperation between the WTO and the other institutions that finance development.

The discord prior to the adoption of the final text



Mike Moore,
WTO Director General
"The WTO must do more
for Africa"

clearly revealed the potential cracks which can occur when strategies conflict. It is vital that the African States iron out these conflicts, to avoid the pitfalls of undisciplined and disorganised negotiations. While it is true that commercial interests do vary from one country or region to another, it will always be necessary to demonstrate a minimum level of cohesion. One particular topic was the main cause of division at Libreville. Several countries expressed their hostility to the initiation of a new round of talks as long as certain issues from the Uruguay round still remained unresolved. Others, however, were all in favour of new negotiations. Some countries simply wanted a text with the status of a Declaration – for which they had received no authorisation – to be adopted at a higher level of representation, ie by their heads of State. Significant too, is that these differences are also indicative of the bargaining and attempts on the part of major commercial forces to co-opt and seduce a continent which, because of its sheer numerical weight, will have a decisive role to play in future negotiations.

In the final analysis – and with hopes firmly pinned on a dynamic follow-through - Libreville will go down as a success. As WTO Deputy Director Ablassé Ouédraogo concluded, the talks achieved their aim of mobilising the African continent and heightening its awareness, and that in itself was a very good start.

The future of Mozambique will be shaped by its women

by Benjamin Dard



“Hello to all our listeners, and now on with the rest of today’s programme on violence within marriage,” says Enia, radiant behind the microphone at Radio Mozambique, where for a year now she has been presenting a programme on women. Established in 1933, Radio Mozambique, the national radio station since the 1975 revolution, broadcasts right across the country. Programmes from local stations spread over nine of the ten provinces making up the country can be received far beyond the edges of the towns. Radio Mozambique can pride itself

on being the only medium to reach the whole population, 80% of which lives in rural areas.

Conscious of the vital role it could play, Radio Mozambique introduced, in 1997, with the help of the Austrian government and the Institute for North-South Cooperation, the ‘Women and Development’ programme. In this country, a hotchpotch of 53 different dialects, where women struggle to make their voice heard and where access to information is still very limited, this initiative is extremely ambitious, attempting to train bilingual female journalists to speak to women

about women.

Like thirty other young women, Enia was recruited because, as well as Portuguese, the official language of Mozambique, she also speaks another Bantu language. When she is at the microphone or interviewing she speaks in Ronga, her maternal dialect, which is spoken in the province of Maputo. Dialects were in fact one of the selection criteria for these young women straight out of secondary school. Between the thirty of them, they speak 17 dialects, thereby covering nearly all the languages commonly spoken in Mozambique.

Spread across the nine local stations, all the young women present, in their own language, a programme devoted to the role of women in the local economy. This programme seeks to provide information on the issues that really affect their daily lives and deals with their specific problems. The cause of women is no longer merely a subject reserved for a few groups in Maputo; via the airwaves, it has now reached every household.

The programmes do not just provide information, they try to be militant. They provoke discussion and, led by women for women, show the way. As Fernanda Fernandes, director of the project, explains: "We are trying to involve women more in the various political, economic and social decision-making processes. To do this, they have to become more involved in public debates, express themselves and be able to do so in their own language. In addition, the particular vulnerability of women and the greatest social and economic difficulties they face have to be explained." As, in Mozambique, it is the women who suffer most

from unemployment, they are the ones with the highest level of illiteracy: only one woman in three goes to primary school. One need look no further than the difficulties the programme managers had in recruiting women who had completed their secondary education. And finally, it is women who are the principal victims of the inadequacy of health service structures: for every 100 children born, one woman dies in labour. This is why, says Enia, "Most of the women we want to help, and at whom our programmes are mainly directed, have very difficult lives. But these are often the women who do not speak Portuguese."

However, speaking about AIDS in Ronga or about contraception in Ximakhonde, the dialect spoken in the province of Cabo Delgado in the north of the country, has not been without some surprising problems of vocabulary. The programme managers noticed that vocabulary associated with problems of gender or subjects relating to development was relatively limited in local dialects. This is why, alongside the

'Women and Development' programme, an initiative, which was unexpected to say the least, has been set up to bring lexicologists together to translate or enrich local dialects.

To enable them to speak more effectively about women's issues, the young journalists - they are aged between 18 and 25 - have undertaken a training course which fully integrates gender problems. A number of seminars have been organised which deal with socio-economic questions relating to women (local development, commerce) and with health (contraception, AIDS). In the programmes they present today, their main aim is to make women aware of their rights.

In preparing her report on violence within marriage, Enia went to the district of Namaacha in the province of Maputo to meet Dona Rablina Buque, local manager of the Mozambique Association for the Development of the Family (AMDFA). This activist uses the programme to explain the problem: "I think it is important to work with women to educate them about the violence they are

suffering, because once they are aware of it they can be directed towards bodies which can help solve these problems." And she adds, as if to indicate the size of the task: "The important thing is to educate them, as there are still too many women who think the violence they are suffering is normal."

One of the other benefits of the programme for Radio Mozambique is that it has completely changed professional practices at the station and increased the numbers of women on its staff. At Radio Mozambique, women are no longer confined to the advertisements, but are trained journalists and managers of their own programmes. These new voices are obviously one of the station's strengths. "There are women's issues which a male journalist finds difficult to tackle; I think

women understand women's problems better than men," emphasises Enia.

In fact, these female journalists have ultimately become veritable agents of change, broadcasting information which above all else is supposed to be "practical", as if the underlying aim was primarily to turn a medium to the benefit of both the women and the men of this country. And in Mozambique, where 15% of the population is allegedly infected with the AIDS virus, explaining the existence of condoms constitutes information in itself. This is another reason why Enia looks at her job as making up a whole. "It involves both informing and helping; for example, when I go out into the field, we give out lots of information. We then receive letters and reactions which we answer, giving suggestions."

Providing information, helping and getting involved are the watchwords of this innovative programme. "Radio Mozambique," concludes Joao de Sousa, programme director, "thus gives the general public the chance to hear about their own problems on the radio because, as far as we are concerned, the most important thing is for the people of Mozambique to find, on the radio, the very problems they are experiencing, and for them to write letters and pick up the telephone. Journalists then go out to report on these issues and we thereby create an exchange, receive feedback."

Women, journalists, polyglots: Enia and her thirty other colleagues are now set to play a vital role in the future of Mozambique, the development of the country.



You can find more on this subject along with pictures, by contacting the Demain! network on (+33) 1.44.25.79.88 or by looking at the collection of images on our Internet website www.demain.fr

Cattle on the brain

by Emma Young*

For years it was called "the British disease." But BSE, which kills cattle and causes a fatal brain disorder in people, has spread through much of Europe - and panic has spread with it. To date, nine European countries have reported infected cattle. Between 1999 and 2000, cases of the disease doubled in France, and reports that beef from infected herds was on sale on supermarket shelves shocked the nation.

Last year, Germany, which had long proclaimed itself to be BSE-free, was also forced to admit that its herds had been infected, triggering widespread public alarm and anger. "They made fools of us with the long-winded promises that Germany is safe from BSE," said the *Berliner Morgenpost*.

There are also fears that BSE outbreaks could emerge outside Europe. Last December, a South African woman who had never been to Europe died from the human form of BSE. The announcement came amid allegations that Britain had put potentially contaminated animal feed on world markets, while it was banned in the UK.

The UK is still home to around 90% of all "mad cows" - but the number of new cases is on the decline, while in many other European countries, it is rising. Denmark, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, as well as France and Germany, have all reported cases of cattle infected with BSE. And many experts think that new EU rules enforcing widespread testing of all cattle over 30 months will reveal cases in other countries that are currently denying any infection.

New EU laws

The new EU laws on testing are part of a



Rex Features/Peter Trevnor

tough new set of anti-BSE measures announced last November. BSE is thought to be primarily transmitted through eating infected animal remains. The feeding of all livestock with products containing meat and bonemeal has now been banned. And all cattle over 30 months old (thought to be the age at which they can become infectious) must now be slaughtered if they do not test negative for BSE.

These procedures are already in force in the UK, where more than 4.6 million cows over 30 months have been killed. But the new measures have divided Europe, provoking anger in countries that claim their own safeguards are already sufficient.

EU ministers hope the measures will stem the spread of the disease and eliminate the risk to humans. But no one knows how many people have already been infected, or how long the incubation period might be. Estimates for the future death toll from vCJD - variant Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease, the human form of BSE - vary from hundreds to hundreds of thousands.

How do you get it?

Although the first cases of vCJD are thought to have been caused by eating infected beef, there are fears that the disease could be trans-

mitted in transfusions of infected blood, or even during tonsillectomies. John Collinge, a British BSE expert at Imperial College in London, controversially estimates that half the surgical kits used to remove tonsils in the UK could be contaminated with vCJD.

Collinge predicts that a vCJD epidemic in Britain - and perhaps in other European countries - might now be waiting in the wings.

Some of his most recent research suggests that a person's genes might determine how rapidly they develop symptoms after infection. All the 84 people diagnosed with vCJD to date have or had a particular genetic make up, which is found in around 40% of the population. But Collinge suspects that, far from being safe, the other 60% simply incubate the infection for longer.

"We're saying there might be lifelong incubation periods," he says.

The infectious agent in both BSE and CJD is a misshapen form of a prion, a protein found mainly in the brain and central nervous system. The abnormal prions accumulate in clumps in the brain, but it is thought that their interaction with other molecules, rather than their clumping, causes the devastating effects.

The first case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy emerged in a Sussex farm in 1984. A vet was summoned to inspect a cow with head tremors and an arching back. Six weeks later, the cow was dead. Seven months later, the UK Central Veterinary Laboratory made its official diagnosis.

British ministers were informed about the emergence of BSE in 1987, after cows from four herds had been diagnosed with the disease. One year later, the government established a group of scientists to investigate. For years they found little evidence that BSE could cross from cattle to infect another species, and the British government repeatedly told the public that eating beef was safe.

But in 1995, the first cases of vCJD were diagnosed in humans, and in March 1996, after eight

human cases had been recorded, the British Parliament was told that the most likely cause was eating beef products contaminated with BSE.

First Britain...

In the UK, the BSE fiasco was the subject of a major investigation, which culminated in a report published late last year. Ministers were criticised, but escaped severe blame. According to the investigating committee, there was no way the British BSE epidemic could have been prevented, because by the time the first case had been diagnosed, thousands of cattle had already been infected and were incubating the disease.

However, many analysts think Britain could have done more to contain the outbreak.

In the early years of BSE, farmers were paid only 50% compensation for infected cattle. Critics say this probably led to infected carcasses being illegally sold - and this furthered the spread of the disease.

They also say that the British government should have acted faster and more effectively, particularly in banning feed containing meat and bonemeal. For years, scientists advised that potentially infective tissue from slaughtered cows, such as the spinal cord, should not be recycled into animal feed - but the practice remained widespread.

Critics also say Britain should have halted the consumption of cattle above the infectious age limit sooner - and moved earlier to prevent beef exports. Although the EU banned all exports of British beef in 1996, thousands of potentially infected cattle had already been shipped to Europe. Germany received some 13,000 cattle from the UK between 1980 and 1993, and France imported many more.

...now Europe

Now herds in much of Europe are thought to be infected, and the cost of the clean-up will run into many millions of euros. The EU has agreed to pay 70% of the costs. But governments of some countries that claim they have already

implemented effective BSE safeguards say the cost is unfair.

Finland argued that the measures are "unjustified" in its case. And the Dutch, in particular, are unhappy about the ban on feed containing meat and bonemeal. But although they argue that it will be tough to find an alternative high-protein feed for their millions of pigs, most BSE analysts argue that the ban, along with EU-wide blanket testing and slaughter, is essential if the widespread denial, finally followed by embarrassed admission, in Germany is not to be repeated.

However, the testing many not end with beef. Some British experts are even calling for a mass screening programme to establish whether BSE could have spread from cattle to sheep.

Mad sheep?

"Of the 40 million sheep in Britain, some 4,000 succumb annually to another disease, scrapie, which appears not to have any human health risk. It is possible, however, that some of these animals are actually suffering from BSE," says Sir John Krebs, chair of the UK's Food Standards Agency.

"We simply do not know whether sheep are also dying from BSE," he said. Or whether eating lamb could also pose a health risk to humans.

The lack of knowledge has prompted massive increases in research into BSE and prion diseases in Europe.

Last November, French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin announced that his country would treble its spending on basic prion research to FF210 million for 2001. Germany has also announced huge research spending increases.

Hopes of a test and a cure

At present, there is no cure for BSE or for vCJD. However, in December 2000, a Swiss team did announce a major breakthrough, which is raising hopes of a fast, accurate test for the disease in living people, and even a potential treatment.



Sipa press/H. Lane

The team identified the first natural molecule that binds strongly to abnormal prions, but not to normal ones. The molecule is called *plasminogen*, an inactive form of a chemical thought to be essential for thought and memory.

The discovery could also mean donated blood could be effectively screened for the rogue prions. Almost a dozen countries have already banned blood donations from people who have spent more than six months in Britain. Experts think that any infectious prions in blood would be contained in the white blood cells, and the majority of these cells are routinely removed from blood in the UK. But some critics have claimed no one can be sure the infectious agent cannot be carried in other parts of the blood. The fact that *plasminogen* binds to the deformed prions makes this much more likely. But it also raises the hope that *plasminogen* could possibly be used to mop up the prions in infected animals or people.

If John Collinge is right, unless more urgent prion research is carried out, the human cost of the BSE tragedy may end up being much higher than the cost to Europe's farmers.

*New Scientist

Getting older in a changing world

by Sarah Graham-Brown



An older woman in Cameroon went to a clinic complaining of a painful leg. The nurse told the woman she was not ill, but just suffering from old age. The older woman replied: "My child, why is my old age only in the left leg, not the right leg or any other part of my body?"

In many developed and developing countries health care is routinely, if not always so explicitly, rationed according to age. As life expectancy increases worldwide, a critical gap is opening up between the needs and rights of those who survive beyond their fifties, and societies' willingness to acknowledge the implications of this demographic "agequake".

Human rights are not age-limited - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other conventions and declarations on rights apply as much to a person of 80 as to a person of 15 or 40. In the coming decades, rapid demographic change will make equal rights for older people all the more critical.

Today, older people form a growing proportion of the population in most countries. In the developing world, the number of older people is

expected to double, to 12% of the total population by 2025. The Asia-Pacific region, where an estimated 62% of the world's older people currently live, is expected to experience a disproportionate increase in numbers of older people, especially in the largest countries - China, India and Indonesia.

Older people are also likely to be among the poorest in most communities. The proportion of older women, many of whom are widows in precarious economic circumstances, will continue to grow. Most developing countries are growing old before they become rich, with traumatic consequences for the vulnerable old and their families. Already the majority of the world's population of older people (61% or 355 million) lives in poorer countries. This proportion is expected to increase to nearly 70% by 2025.

Policy-makers, at the UN and in national governments, have been slow to address older people's rights and needs. The adoption of the UN Principles for Older People in 1991, with the five key principles of independence, participation, care, dignity, self-fulfillment, was a first step in

acknowledging older people's rights. But these principles are not binding on states, and in practical terms they have not brought significant change.

Social development policy in the last two decades, for example, has taken little account of those who reach old age. International organisations have adopted poverty alleviation as a development goal, yet research on the causes and character of widespread poverty among older people has scarcely begun. Current poverty assessments are overwhelmingly weighted toward issues of child nutrition, child and young-adult education, infant and maternal mortality rates and reproductive health.

At the same time, the impact of globalisation and rapid social change is undermining family life and the role and status of older people. The speed of change creates difficulties in adjusting economic and social structures.

Governments have often assumed that families will care for their older relatives. But even in societies where family bonds are still strong, such as Korea, the government's view that family care rather than social provision takes priority is under challenge. Life expectancy will reach 74 years early in the 21st century, but it is being accompanied by a rapid rise in the numbers of older people living alone to almost a quarter of the population over 65, while

over two thirds of all families are now nuclear families.

In the Philippines, despite a long tradition of family and community care and respect for older people, recent economic changes have left many elderly people vulnerable and without family support. Smaller families and labour migration have diminished the numbers of family carers available to support older people. Many migrants are young women who were traditionally the main care-providers for older people. The dominant youth culture and the recent economic problems have pushed older people's issues further down the agendas of government, non-governmental and international organisations.

HelpAge International's research in Africa, Asia and Latin America highlights not only older people's needs but also the range of their contributions to family and community. An older South African woman spells out the variety of ways in which she contributes to her family and community: "In the past I educated my children - paying school fees, buying books, transport, food and uniforms. I also contributed to cultural education, for example, circumcision ceremonies. I contributed in the church, medical fees when the children were ill, preparing nutritious food, cleanliness, providing accommodation, ploughing the fields and counselling whenever the children and their marital partners

had problems. I am still doing all of these things, I contribute financially and to the health care of the family."

The image of older people as a burden is also countered by the important role they play in countries where HIV/AIDS is decimating the young and those who are already parents. Older people care for their children and younger relatives when they are ill, and bring up their orphaned grandchildren. In Thailand, there is evidence that when young people who have contracted HIV/AIDS become ill, they go home to their villages where they are cared for by older relatives.

In Tanzania, HelpAge International's research on older people caring for AIDS orphans emphasised the strain placed on both grandparents and





children. "Because of the relative poverty of the household, very often grandparents cannot afford to send the children to school and they miss chunks of their education...Although it is primarily the grandparents who care for the children, from time to time the children can be forced into a caring role, for example when their grandparents fall sick."

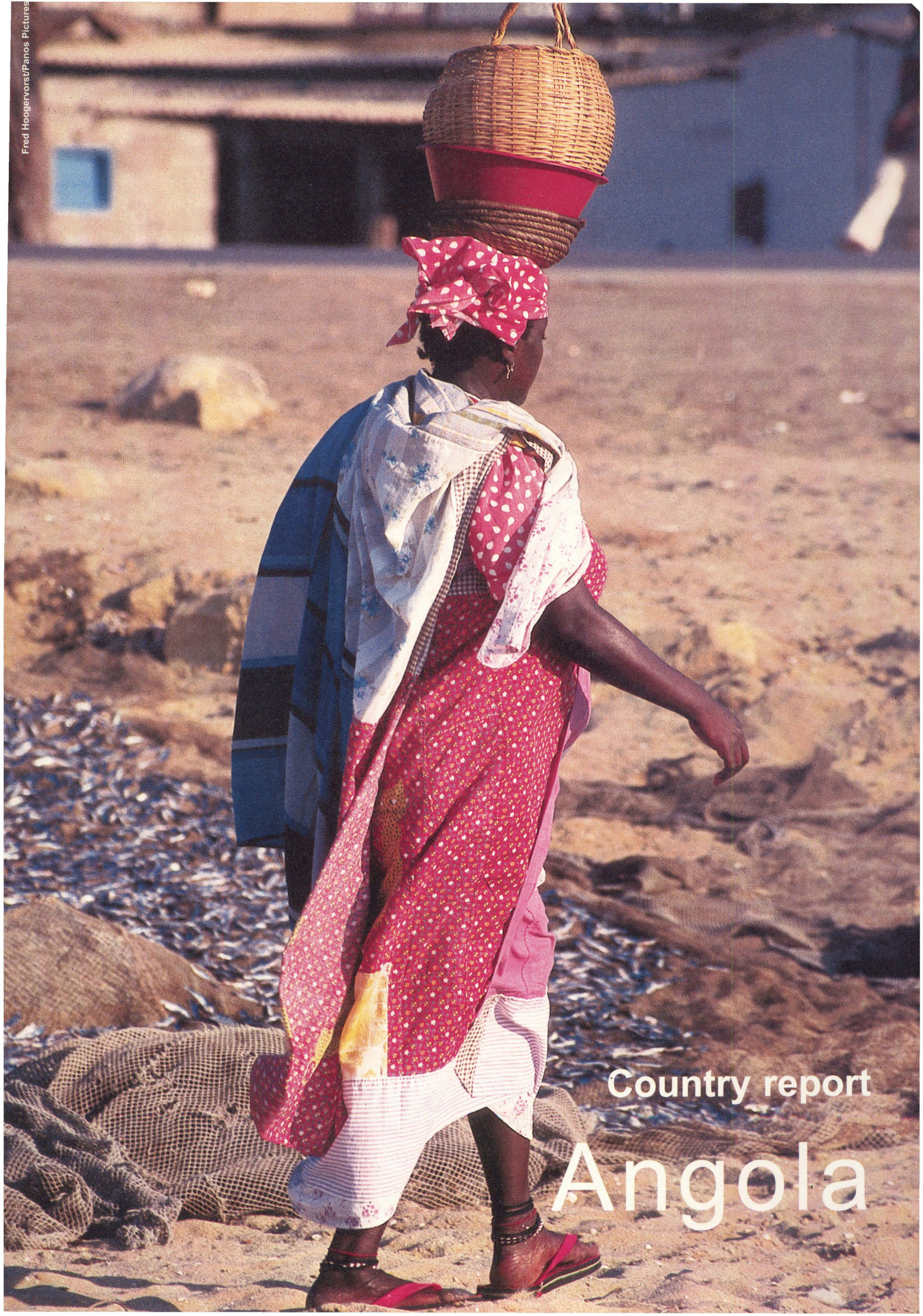
Acute humanitarian emergencies - wars, famines, or hurricanes - highlight both older people's fragility and the contributions they can make if they are listened to. Recent HAI research called for older people to be seen, heard and understood. In Juba, southern Sudan, where many years of civil war have undermined the local economy and society, its programme has encouraged older people to participate in planning and delivering aid. The result is a noticeable improvement in older people's overall quality of life. In addition to promoting their welfare, "the project helped the older persons' image greatly," according to Samson Kwaje, 65 year old chairman of a committee coordinating older people's activities. "They can dress well on social occasions, so they feel well. Those without shelters are sheltered, sanitation has been taken care of and the project has brought craft skills."

As part of civil society, older people can participate in efforts to claim and insist on their rights. In Bolivia, a governmental decision to grant pensions to the over-60s met with an outcry from older people because most were not registered at birth and therefore could not prove their eligibility for the payment. Older people took to the street and lobbied the government, the legal profession and the public to secure the help they needed to get essential identification. Some 5,000 people received their entitlements.

Poverty in old age is clearly a major issue of the 21st century, not just for older people themselves but for the generations that depend on them. This is the challenge facing the policy-makers framing new policy guidelines on ageing for the UN Conference on Ageing in Spain in 2002: not to deny the rights of other vulnerable groups, but to seek inclusion for a critical part of the world's population.

HelpAge International's recent publication, [The mark of a noble society: human rights and older people](#) argues: "All the evidence is that older people everywhere seek social inclusion as well as economic attention. The question is not what we should do about older people - but what would we do without them? Socially and economically, can their contributions be ignored any longer?"

Pictures: HelpAge International



Country report
Angola

On the road to peace

by Augusta Conchiglia*

A quarter of a century after independence, peace is perhaps no longer an unrealistic prospect for Angola. On 11 November 2000, the President, José Eduardo Dos Santos gave a speech that raises the hope that this country, which has only had brief respite between two periods of conflict, will reach a significant turning point.

"The prospects are encouraging," declared the head of state. After "two and a half decades of defending its territory and its sovereignty ... Angola must now devote itself to its economic development and improving the living conditions of its people." The recent military victories, he said "have completely eliminated the threat of a take-over by force. "The low-intensity guerrilla war that UNITA is still waging in certain regions cannot prevent us from tackling the tasks of national economic reconstruction and development." At the same time the head of state declared that there must be "an attitude of forgiveness towards UNITA members who give up this unjust war and choose democracy: a general amnesty." This is the third to be decreed since 1991, but this time it might be taken up more generally. Thousands of fighters have already left UNITA since the collapse of the fiefdoms on the central plateau of Bailundo and Andulo, about a year ago. UNITA has suffered one defeat after another and has lost almost all the regions that it had controlled, including the main diamond production areas. Twelve of UNITA's most popular officers and generals have also deserted and rejoined the Angolan armed forces, fleeing the savage repression by Savimbi against his own men, whom he considers guilty of having failed in the counter-offensive that was yet another attempt to reverse the balance of forces.

Savimbi habitually engages in such activities. According to the most recent UN report monitoring sanctions against UNITA (Monitoring Mechanism in Angola Sanctions, December 2000), Savimbi has always had an enormous ability to revive and reverse a situation. Severely beaten in 1994, he was able to hide behind the Lusaka peace process in order to recover his strength and re-emerge in 1998 stronger and better equipped than ever.

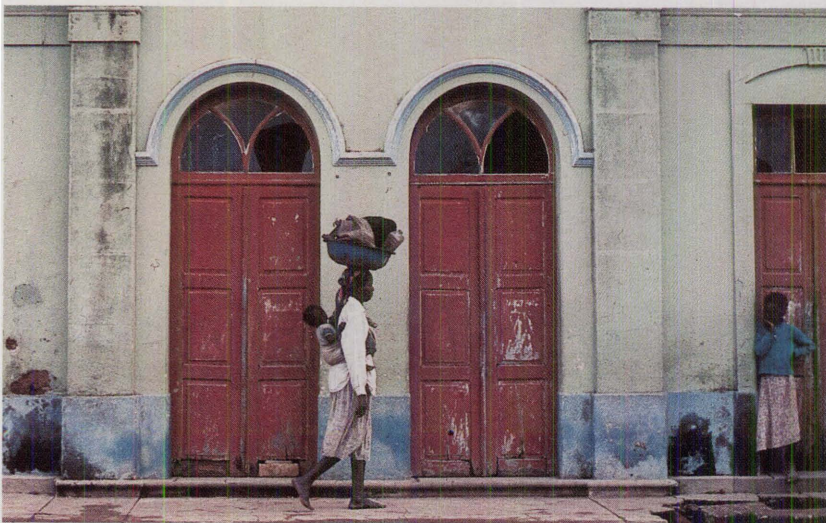
This observation, which also sounds like recognition by the UN of the failure of its mission to monitor the peace agreements (UNAVEM III), in particular regarding the demilitarisation of UNITA, is intended to sustain the vigilance of the international community with regard to sanctions against the rebel movement, which apparently still has a reserve of diamonds (valued at \$250 million) and a number of cutting centres.

The sales of these precious stones through a number of different routes revealed by the Fowler report¹ enabled UNITA to rake in about \$4 billion between 1993 and 1998, according to UN estimates. These are huge amounts that have been used to finance a massive flow of arms to UNITA bases in Angola.

And yet, history was repeating itself. UNITA had already reneged on its commitments and betrayed its own allies, the United States, which, together with Russia and Portugal, had sponsored the peace agreement signed in Bicesse in May 1991, providing for general elections to be held in September 1992. UNITA made a pretence of demobilising its forces, and remained ready to take power by force in the event of electoral defeat. One week after the ballot, won by the MPLA² and validated by the United Nations, Savimbi called up his generals, who had just helped to set up the initial nucleus of the unified national army, and set out to conquer the country by force. This was the most murderous and destructive episode in the successive wars that have spilt so much blood in Angola since the decolonisation process, which started in 1974.

Profiting from the weakness of the army that was still being restructured and was without heavy weapons, which had been left to rust in stores under UN seals, UNITA occupied two thirds of the country within a few months. Economic and social infrastructure — including several hydroelectric dams, 120 bridges, thousands of schools and public buildings — were destroyed and a large number of towns devastated. Huambo and Kuito were virtually annihilated. The attacks on Kuito, which resisted UNITA's siege for nine months, cost 25 000 lives according to UN. Millions of people were internally displaced.

Street scene in the capital, Luanda



The cost of conflict

The breakout of this conflict was catastrophic for Angola, which was just starting to recover from 16 years of war and prolonged occupation by the South African army. The country had just undertaken the first reforms leading to a market economy. In 1993, the national economy was therefore in a very damaged state. The return of war resulted in a 25% drop in domestic production. Goods could now only be transported by air, because of the danger of mines, and the costs of consumer goods constantly increased. In 1994, inflation exceeded 3000%, the budget deficit reached 23% and the balance of payments on current accounts amounted to \$879 million.

According to the study presented to the donors' conference in Brussels in September 1995 by the Angolese Planning Minister, José Pedro de Morais, Angola was "in a state of complete financial isolation, forcing the government to resort to short-term borrowing and to use oil as a pledge in order to have the resources necessary to keep the country supplied and to meet war expenses"³. Because of the "cruel lack of financing to ensure the re-establishment of peace and to keep the national economy at a minimum survival level, 2.5 billion was borrowed, using oil as a guarantee," he explained, adding that 95% of oil income in 1995 "has already been earmarked for debt servicing and essential imports."

The donors' conference, which was held almost one year after the signing of the peace agreements, and which was attended by the President José Eduardo Dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi, was successful: 785.7 million was committed to finance the community rehabilitation programme and 207 million was committed to humanitarian aid. But UNITA's vacillations, which upset the timescale determined at Lusaka, refusing in particular to withdraw from the territories it was occupying, to allow administrative structures to

be reinstalled, proved to be an insurmountable obstacle for the application of such a programme, which was postponed indefinitely.

The Morais study, produced in collaboration with the UNDP, provides in more than 1600 pages a detailed report of the situation and of the needs of each one of the 19 provinces of the country. It is open about the economic problems "resulting from ineffective management and aberrations such as inflation." Although war had played a determining role in the crisis, it was in its turn stoked up by the weakness of the state. This was the essential conclusion of the study, which also stated that the resumption of the war led to the crumbling of the state apparatus responsible for administration, by provoking "the disappearance of any regulation of economic activity at the very moment when the policy of returning to a market economy had been confirmed."

Putting the economy back on its feet

As the years passed, and since the first attempts back in 1987, the implementation of economic reforms met strong resistance within the government. In 1996, the Nova vida programme, which was directly endorsed by the President, seemed destined to fare better, but its anti-inflationary policy resulted in an enormous accumulation of arrears, including those caused by the non-payment of public service wages.

Budgetary control collapsed with the gradual appearance of a parallel system of public finance in which the national oil company, Sonangol, paid credit lines guaranteed by oil directly, a system which became more widespread, according to the findings of the International Monetary Fund, worsening macroeconomic imbalances and promoting hidden financial management.

In 1998, following a new financial crisis caused by a simultaneous drop in oil prices and yet another



Subsistence agriculture is still the mainstay for most of the population

flare-up in the conflict (this time decisive) – with its corollary purchase of new military hardware – the government entered into talks with the IMF. A preliminary agreement was finally reached in April 2000, consisting of the Staff Monitored Programme, SMP, according to which the government undertook to stop spending beyond its budget, to introduce greater transparency in its fiscal and financial policy, and to increase expenditure in the health and education sectors; this is in accordance with the new parameters introduced by the IMF in its relations with third world countries. The SMP particularly provides for partial audits on current financial transactions in the oil industry, (Sonangol and Banque nationale) and the diamond industry. It is to be monitored by the more substantial programme known as the "Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility" which promotes, among other things, the rescheduling and/or reduction of foreign debt (11.5 billion).

However, a mid-term assessment of the SMP in November decided it was necessary to extend the period by six months (until June 2001) as "not all the macroeconomic objectives had been achieved." Inflation, which was at 316%, was also above the target set for the year 2000. The sharp rise in petrol prices by 1400%, strongly encouraged by the IMF, impacted on all consumer goods. In addition, the withdrawal of subsidies on certain imported food products resulted, in May 2000, in

Forty years of war

4 February 1961:

The first armed attacks by underground nationalist groups in Luanda. Angola is a Portuguese colony.

March 1961:

The UPA (Union of Populations of Angola), launches an insurrection from the former Belgian Congo and in 1962 forms the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola).

1961:

The MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) is formed in exile in Europe and has links with numerous nationalist groups in the Angolan capital.

1966:

Formation of UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

January 1975:

Alvor Agreement on future independence and a constitution for a coalition government made up of the FNLA, UNITA and the MPLA.

The same month witnesses the first incidents that mark the beginning of the civil war. Angola is enmeshed in the cold war: the United States, Mobutu's Zaire and apartheid South Africa support FNLA and UNITA. The USSR and Cuba take the side of the MPLA.

11 November 1975:

Independence proclaimed by the MPLA.

March 1976:

Military victory of the MPLA against its two rivals.

1978 :

Disappearance of the FNLA as an armed force. The war is resumed by the two belligerents and the conflict escalates, supported by large sums from oil and diamond revenues.

May 1991:

Bicesse Agreement on an end to the civil war and the adoption of a multiparty system.

September 1992:

UN-monitored elections won by the MPLA and by President Eduardo Dos Santos (leader of his party since 1975, President since 1979 and head of government since 1999). Jonas Savimbi and UNITA contest the results and fighting resumes.

1993 :

UN sanctions against Unita.

20 November 1994:

Second peace agreement negotiated in Lusaka: UNITA to disarm and enter government and parliament. UNITA does not respect its commitments.

1997 :

The government supports the rebellion against Mobutu and intervenes in Brazzaville, Congo. From 1998, it supports Kabila.

Autumn 1998:

The relaunch of a 'war for peace', total war for the 'political and military annihilation of the militaristic UNITA'.

1999 :

UN embargo on arms sales and buying of diamonds from UNITA.

Autumn 1999:

Military successes by the FAA (Angolan Armed Forces) and ousting of UNITA from its main bases of support: Bailundu, Andulo, Huambo, Jamba. Armed fighting, guerrilla warfare and insecurity persist throughout the country.

July 2000:

'Pro-Peace', a pluralist ecumenical congress in Luanda at the initiative of the Catholic Church; creation of the COIEPA (Inter-Church Committee for Peace), and declaration in favour of peace and national reconciliation.

Angela Scillia

an increase in the price index of 438%. Finally, the Kwanza, the national currency, fell in value by 182% against the dollar in the course of the year 2000.

Public discontent

It is a situation in which the consequences for purchasing power are disastrous. This is because, even though public service salaries have risen by 300%, the minimum wage is currently 14 dollars. A social movement which has a relatively good following both in Luanda and in the provinces has recently been created to demand that the minimum wage be increased to 300 dollars! It is a demand encouraged by the oil windfall in the year 2000, but deemed by the government to be incompatible with economic reality which, nevertheless, promised to gradually increase wages in 2001 leading, in real terms, to a 10% increase after inflation.

On top of the social crisis in the public sector came a very high level of unemployment and an extremely serious humanitarian situation, with the number of displaced persons estimated at 3.8 million by the HCR. On 29 January, this UN organisation launched an appeal to the government demanding that it get more involved in the implementation of aid programmes for displaced persons crammed together in camps. It is against this background of social instability and complex structural reform that the Government of National Unity and Reconciliation (GRUN) — to which the legal wing of UNITA, led by Eugenio Manuvakola⁴, belongs — is thinking about preparing for the general elections. Originally scheduled for this year, they might not take place until 2002 because of the insecurity which still exists in several regions of the country, caused by the armed groups of UNITA.

If the holding of elections depends on a normalisation of the military situation, then the European Union, in its Common Position on Angola, hopes that the issue of human rights, of "reinforcing democratic institutions and the involvement of all sectors of civil society in the democratic development of the country" will be the order of the day. In this declaration published last June, the EU also reiterates its support for the efforts of the international community "aiming to reinforce the sanctions of the UN Security Council against Savimbi's UNITA" on which "the primary responsibility for the resumption of the conflict falls." The EU is also still in favour of "a political solution to the conflict based on the Bicesse and Lusaka peace agreements and on the relevant resolutions of the Security Council," thereby supporting the position adopted by the Luanda government.

* freelance journalist

¹ Roger Fowler, Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations, chaired the sanctions committee against UNITA and is carrying out an inquiry into violations of these sanctions which has revealed international collusion in Savimbi's movement. This in particular has had a massive impact on the world diamond industry and led to the ever more systematic use of certificates of origin.

² UNITA received 34.1% of the vote, the MPLA 53.7%. Savimbi 40% and Dos Santos 49.6%. The second round of the presidential election has not taken place because of the war.

³ It is against this more than difficult financial and military background that the Angolan government, trying to get hold of arms, became involved with Pierre Falcone and Arkady Gaidamak, both of whom have recently been indicted by the French courts.

⁴ Manuvakola, who signed the Lusaka agreements on Savimbi's behalf in 1994, is the leader of the so-called "Reformed" UNITA, which disassociated itself from the warmongering wing of UNITA in September 1998. He is the only person to whom the government will speak on matters relating to the Lusaka Agreements.

Centuries of history

The populations that formed Angola are as diversified as the territory is limited. When the Portuguese arrived (1482-1485), the country was divided into several highly structured kingdoms and social systems unique to each ethnic group, including the Bakongos and Ambundus (north west), the Ovimbundus (midwest), the Arundas (Lunda) and the Tchokwes (north east).

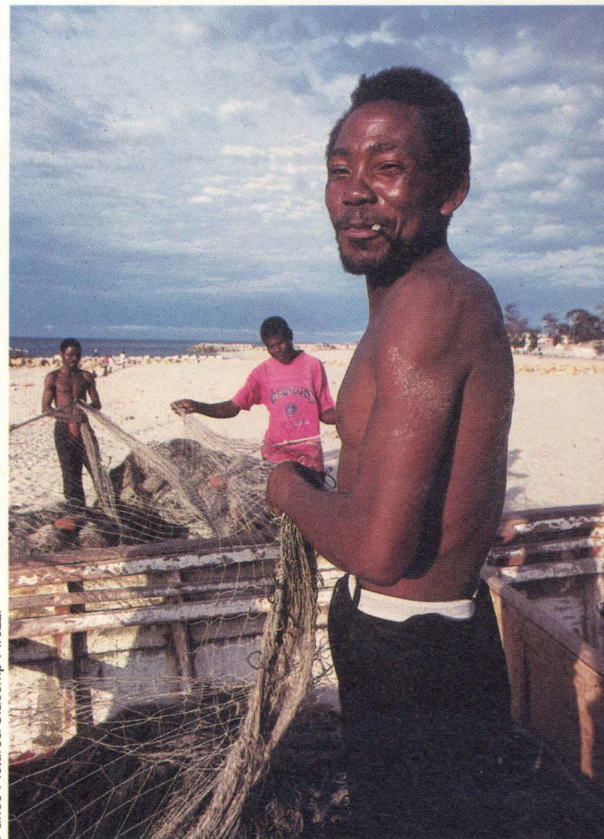
Until Africa was carved up between the 'big' nations at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, the Portuguese presence was mostly limited to the towns and trading posts along the coast. Signs of this can still be seen in Benguela, Luanda, Lubango and Lobito. Their relations with the local people were trading relations, as Angola had always been rich in natural resources and was an ideal trading place, criss-crossed by trading caravan routes and open to the exterior. Intermarriage between ethnic groups on each side of the borders further contributed to this situation.

The slave trade with the Americas, particularly Brazil, continued until the end of the nineteenth century. It was then replaced by the exploitation of ivory, wood, rubber and wax.

These activities slowly unraveled the social fabric and traditional relationships between the peoples of Angola. But twentieth-century colonialism left a still deeper mark. Long useful as an exile for the pariahs of Portuguese society, Angola was destined to become a settlement colony. Intermarriage and 'going native' were rejected and forbidden. From the time of the dictatorship of Salazar in 1933, the Angolan population, each subgroup of which had already been labelled, was stratified on the basis of race, culture and language (whites born in Portugal, whites born in Angola, half-castes, so-called civilised blacks (*assimilados*) and indigenous). An unprecedented economic boom brought profits to the mother country.

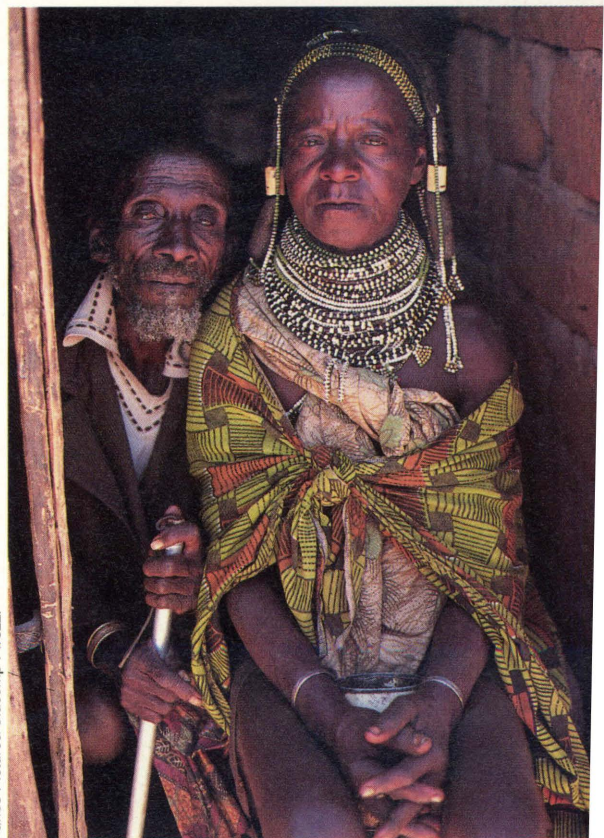
In the 1960s the worst forms of discrimination were replaced by a policy of extreme 'Portugalisation'. The teaching of the Portuguese language and culture forged a whole generation of intellectuals, leaders and civil servants in the colonial administration. It was these élites, the students (often trained in Portuguese universities), the Creole middle class (half-castes, blacks or whites) and immigré Angolans that gave rise to the movements for independence and national liberation.

Angela Scillia



Panos Pictures/Giacomp Pirozzi

Fisherman



Panos Pictures/Giacomp Pirozzi

Couple from M'Huilu

How long till independence is more than a false dawn?



He arrives abruptly on the floor with a dull thud. His delicate new-born head hits the tiled floor of the hospital. Just like the hero of Pepetela's novel *Yaka*, the birth of this little boy, whose name I will never know, foreshadows the fate of his whole existence. Life is a shock, right from its earliest moments. Does this baby realise what sort of world it has come into? A world of never-ending war, a world of sickening contrasts and glaring injustices.

12 September 2000, Kuito, Angola. Less than two hours' flight from the capital, Luanda; it is as though I have arrived on another planet. Today, after the bombings of spring '99, the town of Kuito looks more like a film set. Riddled with bullet holes, what were once buildings in the Portuguese style now conjure up an image of the end of the world. Police and militia patrol along the wide avenues. Children recite their lessons in

one of the few schools to have miraculously been spared. Women trudge like indefatigable zombies from the refugee camp to the medical station, stopping off at the nutrition centre along the way. Malnourished old ladies wear identity bracelets just like the children. The only traffic is humanitarian-aid jeeps, on a road that bends to reveal the warehouses of the World Food Programme (WFP). The food supply is already insufficient and will run out when the rainy season arrives and the landing strip becomes impassable. People come to Kuito from throughout the provinces for the hospital, for humanitarian aid or simply for protection from the blackmail of this war, in which they are forced to become the victims first of one side then the other, in turns.

Beyond the 20 km zone controlled by the government forces, no one is safe. The military

regularly set fire to the savannah to get a clearer view. The camps form a funeral wreath. The camp at Cambandua already stretches beyond the white stones which are strewn about the road to indicate where the mined areas are. This fast-expanding town is already home to 100,000 displaced people, easily doubling its original population.

A surrealistic duality

To get around the country today without risking your life on the roads, you have to go by aeroplane. These few kilometres, converted into several hundred dollars hard cash, are a potent symbol of the contrasts and extremes of Angolan society. On the strength of first impressions it is tempting to try to understand the situation by radically oversimplifying matters. Everything can be seen in sets of two, in terms of black and white. Two parties in conflict since independence – MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA, two opposing world-views which force you to take one side or the other. The country is divided into two separate universes resembling two different planets: Luanda, the State capital, and the rest of the country - the provinces, this deep, inaccessible world where we are supposed to be able to find traces of "the real African" or "the real Angolan", to quote the politicians. That world is so

varied and disparate that it becomes incomprehensible for most of the intellectuals educated at the universities of Portugal. In Luanda, the very rich and the very poor live side by side but know nothing of each other's lives. Dollars buy luxury, technology and power. At first sight, Luanda looks like a densely populated, congested, polluted town. Seventies-style tower blocks loom up around the bay in a show of modernity. Along what is known as the "Marginal" avenue, colonial-style buildings (the national bank, freshly repainted in pink) alternate with trendy restaurants worthy of Paris or London and the ornate baroque chapel. A brand new promenade stretches along the seafront with palm trees and little flower beds lovingly tended by gardeners. The residential areas, with their well-to-do, brightly coloured houses, perch high up on the hillsides in a pastiche of the most idyllic of Mediterranean picture post-cards.

At the foot of the fortress, however, on the scenic peninsula and just about everywhere else, too, the spreading blight of the shanty-towns or *musseques* can be seen. These slums are home to the poor, people generally referred to as "displaced", even if they have lived in Luanda for years. There is tight security in the town, with a plethora of private guards and



Béatrice Maravilla and her family on the seventh floor of a building in ruins

alarm systems, though some say that in the event of an actual revolt, these would all prove to be completely useless.

Most of the population has to struggle with a system where there are no public services and everything has to be paid for. An average family spends almost \$150 a month on sending its child to a private school. The public health system is practically non-existent. The vast majority of consumer goods are imported. The situation is exacerbated by the heavy subsidies of humanitarian aid received by the government, which unwittingly keep prices artificially inflated. To make matters worse, the housewife sees these prices constantly changing for no apparent reason.



Women and children flee the war

Photos: Panos Pictures

The question most frequently asked about those who do not belong to the privileged classes or the expatriate set, is "what do most of these people live on?" To which the cynical answer is that they live in abject poverty, barely managing to get by, relying on the black market or out-and-out corruption. To make an honest living, a respectable teacher will often give lessons in the morning, take another job in the afternoon and then go to evening classes to further their career. Others, less scrupulous, sell their services for hard cash. Meanwhile the educated middle classes, the "assimilated" (to use the shocking but revealing colonialist term) are content to live their lives according to an unquestioning liberalism.

What hope for a situation which could quite easily last for years?

Some Angolans escape through exile, others through artistic creativity. The people seem drained of all optimism. Yet voices are being raised, calling for a different future. There are also all these exiles within their own country, existing in a living hell.

In Kuito, the baby born on the hospital floor is now a few months old. His young mother is 25 – the same age as independence.

Angela Scillia

A woman's words

Milena is a young woman of 32, tired of a war which is nearly as old as she is. Like many of her generation, she studied at a foreign university. Trained as an ethnologist and working as a local manager of an NGO in Luanda, she expresses the hope and creativity of young Angolans, but also their disillusion with the situation in their country. "Angola is facing a huge cultural and intellectual void," she tells us. "The previous generation had its day, and there are very few prospects for the young. Artists find it difficult to make a living from their work because of the lack of cultural centres and facilities." Academics like Milena often have to make do with earning less than expatriates, and, however highly qualified they are, are often forced to accept the less-skilled jobs. "We can be justly proud of the level of training in Angola. Yet the system excludes us unfairly. Some NGOs are doing a good job, but all too often they are called in to compensate for the failings of the State. Vocational training, health, education, children living rough on the streets, the humanitarian crisis – such a wide-ranging list of projects reflects the enormous needs of our country. But the system is corrupt, and there's no way of reversing that."

Milena and the young intellectuals of her generation are thirsty for art, culture and, above all, hope. "We'd like to be able to experience and talk about our country in a positive way, because we have plenty of enthusiasm." Is this not equally true for the whole of Angola? For this is a country which, though it dare not believe such a day will ever dawn, dreams of a time when it will finally see its considerable human and material resources properly harnessed so that Angola may finally blossom and at last know the true meaning of independence.

Civil society: facing a brighter future?

Civil society is without doubt a major force to be reckoned with and the fount from which spring all hopes of democracy. It takes time, however, to learn the art of effective social intervention. As things currently stand, many Angolans expect a great deal more from civilian action than it has so far been able to deliver. The people of Angola are highly politicised, fully aware of the vicissitudes of political life, and extremely critical. Everyone everywhere is talking politics. This has come about partly as a result of the 1992 elections (despite the widespread disillusionment these brought in their wake), and it is partly down to the private press. Angola stands at a key turning point in its history, a precipitous moment when players in the democratic process emerge, take a few hesitant first steps, only to disappear again in many cases. So what are the real prospects for progress? Fernando Pacheco, director of the Angolan NGO ADRA (Action for Rural Development and the Environment), was able to throw some light on this question, informed by his concrete experience on the ground. In his view, citizens and communities alike, whether urban or rural, are quite capable of setting their own agendas without any assistance whatsoever. What they do need, however, is selective, very specific

support for individual projects. And it will be those movements, parties or leaders best able to address the concerns of the people and avoid the pitfalls of power which will genuinely propel Angola towards a better future. This is what he had to say....

How did civil society come into being and what is its role today?

We need to disabuse ourselves of the notion that civil society is strong enough to change things. In fact, it is very weak. It didn't exist at all before the multiparty system came about. The only mass organisations permitted were tied to the single party, and it was impossible for civil movements to develop. The situation with the two warring sides had reached stalemate. Only politicians could take any action in the political and social sphere.

1991-1992 saw the beginning of a widespread movement towards the foundation of civil society. Determination and motivation raised the hopes and expectations of the people to a new high. The ACA (Angolan Civic Action), the trades unions, the associations and the NGOs all helped to inspire change.

Unfortunately, after the elections, the resumption of war put paid to the democratic project, the participation and the motivation. Only the teachers' union SINPROF, which started several strikes, was still able to make its demands heard.

New social forces

A combination of historical factors and several decades of war have undermined and weakened civil society in Angola. Survival is the primary concern. The shortcomings of many of the organisations are widely acknowledged: insufficient institutional capacity, lack of qualified staff, failure of management to be open and above board and to circulate information freely, and inadequate financial and material resources.

Despite this, there is clear evidence of new social forces emerging:

A large number of churches, sects and other forms of religious organisation are rallying the energies of the people right across the social strata. They also provide social services, such as health, education and aid to the non-market sector;

Organisations, foundations and associations close to the government are becoming involved in the social and political sphere;

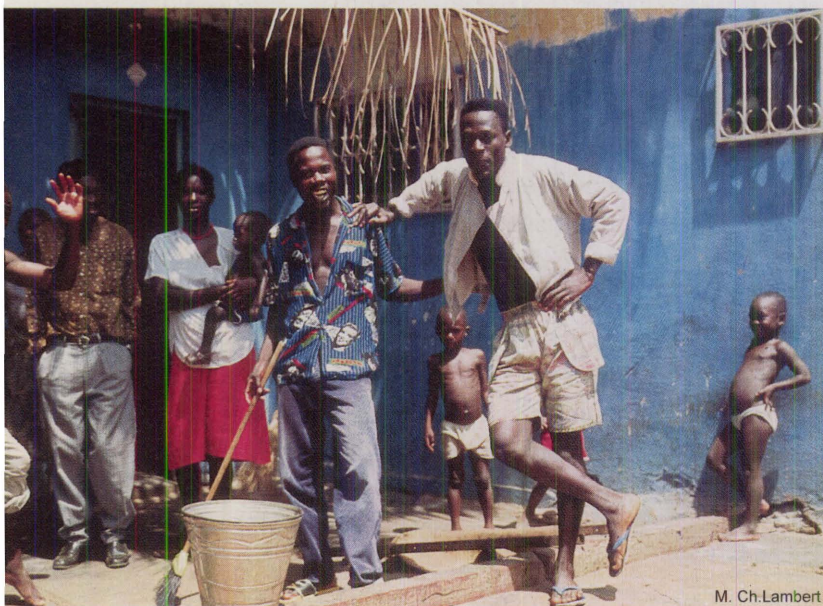
The existence and influence of the private media;

Cultural groups involved in civic education and the promotion of human rights;

The development of socio-economic activity within the informal sector is ensuring the survival of thousands of people in both urban and rural areas.

The new context of political and economic pluralism is a fertile breeding ground for these associations which are involved with community projects. In this way, civil society can contribute to the process of peace, national reconciliation and reconstruction of the country.

Fernando Pacheco.



What do you consider to be the weaknesses of the civilian movements?

A whole series of conditions, including the political backdrop, have conspired to hinder civil society from emerging and taking firm root in our country. Right from the start, there was a hiatus between the aspirations of the vast majority of people and the political objectives of most leaders. On the ground, the people have fought as best they can to reduce poverty. But it will take 10 years of toil before anyone dares tackle the causes of that poverty! This is something a whole range of NGOs understand very clearly through their day-to-day work with the people. Civil movements, on the other hand, are cut off from the realities of the people and get lost in their quest for power.

This is why I have my doubts about the idea that civil society has a role to play in the peace process. These movements lack popular credibility. Only the Catholic Church is sufficiently powerful and well established to intervene.

The political parties and civilian organisations all want to ally themselves with the Church in this peace movement. It's as if they want to be taken under its wing. But all the divisions in Angolan society – regional, political and ethnic – are also to be found within the Church. Even a peace initiative cannot erase that fact.

The private press

The private press has changed the democratic climate: today, the news-vendors on the streets of Luanda sell the only state-owned daily *Jornal de Angola*, first published in 1976, along with the independent weeklies *Folha 8*, *Agora*, *Angolense* and *Actual*. The private press began in 1994 with the appearance of Ricardo Mello's *Imperial Fax* (which ran for a year until the mysterious assassination of its editor), along with the likes of *Correio da Semana* (no longer published) and *Comércio Actualidade*.

The private Catholic radio station *Radio Ecclesia* is currently the only radio broadcasting in a fully independent and professional manner. It has successfully developed topical analytical programmes, and its broadcasts are accessible to Angolans from all walks of life.

These new private media are beset with a whole host of problems. Financial resources are precarious, because the advertising market is underdeveloped and the broadcasting network non-existent outside the capital. When it comes to journalism, several areas (professional training, independence, code of ethics) are still in urgent need of attention. Those who champion the freedom of the press have no illusions about the gravity of such problems, which sometimes lead to editorial blunders and a decrease in quality. These media are acting as pioneers in the field. They need to strike the right balance between the broadcasting of facts, in-depth analysis and public opinion. One important element renders this situation even more vulnerable: the ongoing war and mutual distrust exacerbate the strained relationship between the State and the media. According to the NGO *Reporters Sans Frontières* [Reporters Without Borders], "the independence movements in Cabinda and the military success of UNITA are two of the subjects that can cause journalists to be thrown directly into jail. Even though they do have a degree of editorial freedom, privately owned weeklies have to take countless precautions..." (2000 Report). This organisation exposes the long list of journalists attacked, imprisoned and prosecuted for taking positions considered to amount to 'high treason' and 'a threat to national security'. A new law on the press, which the various professional associations of journalists describe as a "repressive, retrograde measure which restricts freedom of expression", has so far been avoided. And, in spite of everything, Angolan journalists do their best to fulfil their vital role as providers of critical and independent information.

M. Ch'Lambert



People don't want charity, but tools

What are the prospects for the future?

Angola's future will be decided and taken in hand by an unusual class of people, citizens who are politically aware but not activists, who inhabit a sort of no man's land between the MPLA and UNITA. The people are waiting for a new kind of politics: good governance, social justice and an end to corruption. The change will come about through new leaders and a new way of governing.

Angolans need to be able to put their faith in a political system which is genuinely going to serve the people and protect its interests, not one which is solely motivated by the lust for power.

There is huge potential in the organisations which work with local communities. Many people are receptive to new points of view, new approaches and a new kind of politics.

Interview conducted in Luanda by Angela Scillia

Fernando Pacheco:

"In September 2000, in Huambo, I met the leaders of the communities which ADRA is working with. I was impressed by the way they see the future. Paradoxically, in this town which is home to more than 300,000 displaced people, I saw no despair, no pessimism. No one was asking for hand-outs. Yet these people have lost everything, several times over – parents, resources, houses.... They still manage to find the energy to believe in a better future. These communities believe that faith can overcome uncertainty, especially when they are encouraged by the presence of organisations willing to help them strengthen their capabilities (by restoring roads,

schools and health centres, for example, or by improving the food crops or irrigation system. Instead of asking for charity or loans, these people want seeds, cattle, tools and fertilizer. They would also like to revive their old community institutions, such as the traditional 'onjangos', schools where the young were educated and taught the culture of their community. They would also like to revive the farmers' associations and agricultural cooperatives. They would like to build a new culture of democracy and peace for the whole population. They are taking a long-term view of things."

Culture: *Vamos descobrir Angola**

By Angela Scillia



Ariel De Bigault

Banda Maravilha

Luanda is a fascinating town that is full of surprises. To fully appreciate a tour of the town, you need to leave any preconceived ideas at home, give in to the curious side of your nature and leave any encounters with people and places quite to chance. This is the only way to discover culture, entering, as with religion, through the gate of humility. For, in Luanda, culture is all around, not just in the art and history museum or in the *Jornal do Angola*, the local weekly supplement. An artist's studio lies in the shadow of a colonial building; a stranger you meet in a bar gives himself up to poetry as and when the mood takes him and the young people from the working-class areas have revived the tradition of **capoeira**, an ancestral dance that owes its origins to Brazil. In essence, culture is just as important for the Angolans as having air to breathe and personal freedom. Moreover, it was the artistic and intellectual experiences of the Angolan students that were to give rise to the movement for independence, and, as Angola strove to establish a national identity for itself, culture was to remain its only means of expression for a long time afterwards.

A maze of passions

A visitor to the town will be surprised at how few arts venues there are. There is very little demand for art, and artists find it practically impossible to

make a living from their art. Professional bodies and groups are rare. From trendy little galleries to chic restaurants, concerts and exhibitions move from place to place. A number of key haunts, such as the famous Cenarius gallery, the fashionable bar Miami, the much quieter bar Mi and the delightful old café Bizer, serve as meeting points for musicians, writers and visual artists. A lively atmosphere is guaranteed, for example, when people are dashing from venue to venue, hot on the trail of passionate concerts staged by the likes of Carlitos Vieira Dias and Banda Maravilha. The latter group is a good example of the musical revival that is taking place: "we want to do a little research, bring back popular music and produce our own modern-day repertoire of genuine Angolan music." Banda has brought the *rebita* back into fashion, a style of music that emerged at the beginning of the century in the lounge bars frequented by the black urban elite. It takes up the legacy left behind by big groups from the 1970s, such as Ngola Ritmos, who were the first to include verses in the native language of *kimbundu* in their songs, employing a strategy worthy of their experience as nationalist militants. On the international scene, Bonga is undoubtedly the most well known of all Angolan artists.

The roots of a highly diverse culture

In the years of colonisation, the Portuguese culture was dominant in Angola and, consequently, the traditional cultures of the various peoples of Angola fell by the wayside and were completely forgotten, whilst the Portuguese culture and language positively flourished. "Nowadays, the most accomplished artists try to include traditional forms in their contemporary creations," explains José Mena Abrantes, writer for theatre, manager of the theatre company Elinga and public relations consultant to Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos. "And this is irrespective of whether they are working in theatre, the visual arts or dance. Music is naturally the most well known instance of this. Earlier generations of writers and artists were

intent on understanding these low-profile cultures and on giving them a voice. For this reason I admire the work of Pepetela, who is keen to tell Angola's story through accounts of various events and moments in history. Reading it gives you a clear picture of Angola. Antonio Ole does likewise with his sculptures, which were inspired by the murals of the Tchokwe people in the east of the country. His original, modern style incorporates a number of traditional elements. The rising generation of the last ten years or so, on the other hand, tends to concentrate more on its own more individual concerns and experiences." The abstract art of Viteix, the works or photographs of Ole and the video clips put together by Paulo Capela are testament to the fact that Angolan artists draw from the vast mass of cultural roots around them and, each in their own way, whether in Angola or elsewhere, recount the nightmares or dreams of their country.

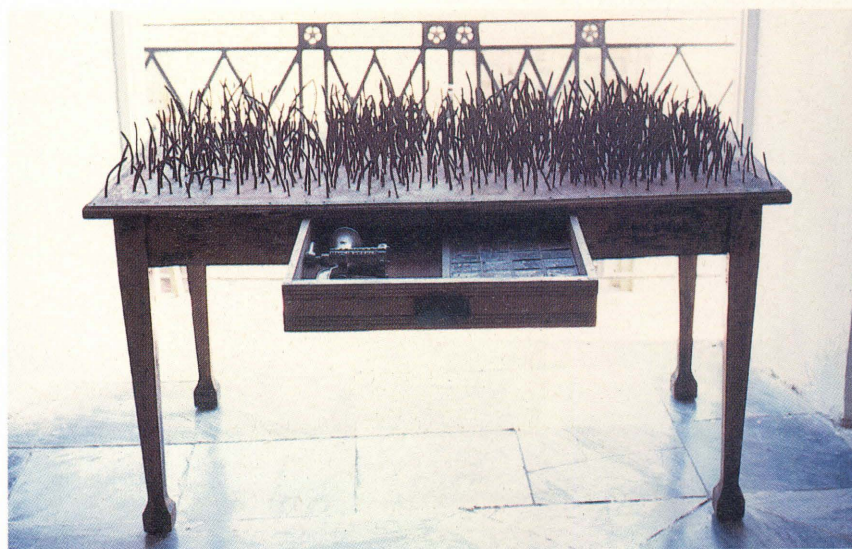
Traces of intimate memories

"The time to view Africa with blind contempt and as an exotic far-off land has passed," says Fernando Alvim, visual artist and manager of the Camouflage gallery. In just a few short years, this art centre has developed in Johannesburg and Brussels and is soon to arrive in Luanda. It brings together the work of contemporary artists from all over the world. Camouflage has become a point of reference for private collectors and public institutions alike. Although these professionals, with their dedication and foresight, are no longer plagued by complexes, they still have to contend with the clichés and prejudices around them. People just don't expect to find contemporary art in countries such as Eritrea, Burundi and Angola. Likewise, what African artist is going to be able to assert his identity and give vent to his creativity without a little timidity? In the visual arts and elsewhere, African artists are still striving to exist in their own right.

Exhibitions can serve as a cruel and harrowing look at reality. To produce *Memorias intimas marcas*, for example, Fernando Alvim (Angola), Carlos Garaicoa (Cuba) and Gavin Younge (South Africa) met up to brave the dramatic scene of the war in Angola. In April 1997 they spent 12 days in the heart of the war in Cuito Cuanavale to produce

a deeply moving and controversial multimedia exhibition. A leg blown off by a land mine, sinister and sharp objects, disfigured bodies, memory imprisoned in the maze of horror: the exhibition draws our attention to all these monstrosities. It's as if the texts, images and plastic constructions were little parcels of intimate memories. The exhibition, which has since gone on tour (Paris in 2001), represents an initiatory voyage for these artists and one which they've continued to build on, spurred on by their inner turmoil and the harsh reality of the conflict affecting their respective countries.

Art, culture and politics are the three watch-words of Camouflage. Its artists defend the need to ask pertinent questions about Africa and its uncertain future. Should we need convincing of



Camouflage gallery

their commitment, we only have to look at the challenge of setting up a branch of the contemporary art centre in a warehouse in Luanda or this idealistic vision of constructing a village of small wooden houses for 20 or so families of one-legged war victims. Drawing on traditional notions, Alvim is proposing to build an "Angolan nation of visionaries" for these victims of the war. The village, a symbol of memory, would be marked out with photos of where they were born, where they lost their leg and where they will live from now on. Fernando Alvim himself still has both his legs, and perhaps a third eye as well! Does he represent a better Angola to come?

* *Vamos descobrir Angola* (1948) and *Mensagem* (1952) were cultural movements that fed the fight for national liberation. In Lisbon, the

Casa dos Estudantes do Imperio (today called the *Casa de Angola*) was home to the meetings of the small factions fighting to liberate the Portuguese colonies. Literature, practically the only means of expression left open to the Angolan people, remained "in the service of the nation", even after independence. Key figures such as Antonio Jacinto, Viriato da Cruz and Agostinho Neto, first president

of the country (1975-1979) greatly influenced this political and literary history. The search for roots, the refusal to yield to domination and national hope, were among the main themes addressed in this politically committed literature, as depicted by writers such as Luandino Vieira, Pepetela, Mendes de Carvalho, Boaventura Cardoso, Costa Andrade, Santos Lima, and many more besides.

Bonga, a committed visionary

Musician through family heritage and star by chance, Bonga has clocked up nearly 30 years in the business and just as many albums. This son of Angola sings the story of his country.

You were introduced to the world of music at a very early age and have kept this human simplicity. Why is that?



When I was very young, my father, an accordionist, took me along to a number of cultural and folk festivals, celebrating the rebita style of music. To this day, I still play the *dicanza*, a small strip of bamboo that is played by scraping. We lived in a shanty town of Luanda and, for me, this district was a place brimming with culture, a sociological hardcore that resisted domination by the colonists. My social experiences, family gatherings and the passing down of old traditions shaped my youth. Even when we were very young, we were aware of the situation and of the huge social and racial differences. My first band, *Kissueia*, asserted the Angolan identity very strongly. At the age of 23 I became an athletics champion, representing Portugal. Music has always been a part of my life and I recorded my first record in Rotterdam, with *Morabeza*. It was called *Angola 72* and marked the start of a career guided by the fate of my country.

What is the message behind your songs?

I have always been inspired by popular melodies, African sentiments and the everyday difficulties faced by the African people and so my songs sing of poverty, shanty towns and war. My first record, which was basically political, was a big hit. It spread like wildfire, through clandestine channels, brought into Angola by the Cape Verdean sailors. People liked my peculiar singing style and my music brought into the limelight an unknown and scorned culture. The assertions I was making were both cultural and political.

You are regarded as a politically committed singer and there are those who are very quick to stick labels on you.

I am not a member of any political party. I'm not interested in all that. I do have points I want to make, however, guided by my real life experience and patriotism. I feel a great affinity with people who have always remained unknown to the rest of the world, along with their languages, their cultures and their traditions. For me, playing the *semba* is a way to experience the African perspective. It seems to me, however, that the black race is still under threat and that the war can only succeed in destroying it further. People just don't seem to be interested. This is why, like many other artists, painters and writers, I continue to tell the world about Angola and its terrible suffering, painting it as it really is and asking myself questions for the future. It is my whole-hearted, persistent approach that earns me the respect of the public.

Do you feel that people are ready to back you up in all this?

No; people are very apathetic. They have grown tired of an unending situation. They don't show a united front. Instead, it is a case of every man for himself; they are all caught up in their own respective problems and fears. It is just not acceptable for our generation who have fought so hard for their independence. It is the duty of African artists to unite and fight as one for the good of their continent. As for my part in all of this: I will continue to sing and to be the messenger for a people who have never been given the chance to assert their identity.

Angela Scillia

A realistic and flexible approach

EU-Angola cooperation

In April 1985 Angola joined 65 other ACP (African - Caribbean - Pacific) states that had signed the Lomé III Convention.

However, even before the cooperation agreements had been signed, the country had benefited from a special regime which the European Commission set up between 1978 and 1984. During this period, emergency and food aid represented the bulk of the cooperation. The special regime thus responded to the needs of the government which had to cope with the humanitarian crisis caused by the war. Included also was an integrated fishing project in Namibe province and a project to return refugees to Uige province.

Destination Namibe and Huila

Angola therefore signed a first National Indicative Programme (NIP) under the sixth European Development Fund (EDF), for the period 1986 - 1990. The amount allocated was €102 million. One priority was to work for food self-sufficiency through the development of

farming and food processing and getting food production going again by repairing existing infrastructure and installations. At the same time the programme sought to improve sanitation and promote technical training. Several geographical regions were picked out for priority treatment in two provinces in the south of the country: Namibe and Huila.

During this period the emphasis was on increasing the development of the country's production systems by giving substantial support to farming, food processing, fishing, production infrastructure and a clean environment. Rural development, health and the development and improvement of infrastructure, education, training and institutional support are the main areas to benefit from the sixth EDF. In the case of health, one of the largest hospitals in the city of Luanda, the Américo Boavida Hospital, has been refitted thanks to EC funds, enabling it to double its admissions capacity.



Cornfield on a collective farm

G. Pirozzi, Panos Pictures



Luanda: the port, and railway warehouses

Bruce Paton, Panos Pictures

Angola has also benefited from non-programmed funds, partly under the umbrella of the NIP, but also from other parts of the EC budget. These have been used principally for humanitarian aid, emergency aid and other forms of assistance, the object being to get to grips with the social and economic consequences of the lengthy armed conflict that is ravaging the country. The geographical areas that have benefited most from EC funds have been those where the destruction has been worst, essentially the southern central part of the country.

Greater cooperation

From 1991 to 2000, cooperation between the European Union and Angola developed on the basis of monies from the seventh and eighth EDFs, which have been used to go on with existing projects, the main beneficiaries being the Reconstruction Support Programme and small-scale projects in rural areas. In addition to this, there has also been an emphasis on promoting external trade and encouraging investment in Portuguese-speaking African countries (the PALOP). In late 1999,

during the mid-term review of the 8th EDF, a number of shortcomings were identified in the execution of EDF projects. This led to a change in focus towards integrated rehabilitation projects, support from government, support for public reforms and educational systems, and health, rural development and a clean environment.

Over the last few months there has been an improvement in the situation in Angola compared with previous years. This is related to the adoption of macro-economic measures, greater respect for human rights and democratic principles, and a better understanding of the role and aspirations of civil society. If this trend continues, the European Union can actively support this process, combining attempts to attract material investment with social support, notably the reduction of poverty, humanitarian assistance to populations who have been the direct victims of the conflict, and encouragement for further democratisation of society.

Foot factory in Viana (Handicap International Belgium)

A young girl moves across the yard on her artificial limbs. She is learning to walk. A block away, a strong smell of rubber strikes the nose. The Viana orthopaedic Centre nine miles from Luanda is home to a workshop manufacturing artificial feet (Handicap International Belgium), an artificial limbs workshop (AGTZ, Germany) and a re-education centre (Ministry of Health). In the foot workshop, the 14 workers are meticulous and busy. Each stage in the process is carefully analysed and evaluated to avoid waste. The workers are employees of the Ministry of Health, with which the Belgian NGO co-operates. The various operations of mixing the rubber, moulding, pressing and baking the foot take nearly three hours. Next, after trimming and quality control, the feet are sorted according to size. They will

The European Union tends to adopt a realistic and flexible approach in Angola in order to maximise the impact of its work. It is particularly concerned that there should be coherence and complementarity between projects carried out in the different situations across the country and among different beneficiary groups. It also fosters closer dialogue with the Government, civil society and the private sector over questions of development policies and resource management, while insisting on the active role the private sector must adopt in national reconstruction and reconciliation.

Jerónimo Belo
Press & Information Officer

then be fitted to the artificial leg. This project distributes more than 800 feet a month to the ten orthopaedic centres of Angola. The country is self-sufficient when it comes to artificial feet.

The other striking feature of the workshop is the good rapport between the staff and the NGO. Job training was tackled sensitively, and absenteeism is cut down by financial incentives and by fostering a sense of ownership of the project. And even though there are enormous difficulties in locating and following up the disabled (mostly landmine victims) Handicap International Belgium is proud of the quality and effectiveness of the artificial feet and prostheses produced in Angola. Angola, it should be remembered, is littered with 12 million antipersonnel mines for its 12 million inhabitants.

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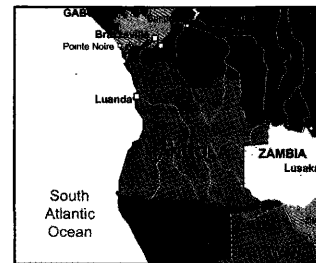
Health assistance in Kuito **(*Médecins Sans Frontières*, Belgium)**

Everyone in Kuito knows the MSF doctors. For many years now they have had a presence at various levels of humanitarian intervention in the province of Bié. The war has reduced its sphere of action to just the town of Kuito and the ring of camps that encircle it within a four-mile security perimeter. MSF Belgium runs the provincial hospital (in partnership with the Ministry of Health), a feeding programme and the refugee camps. It supports many government health units across the country. In the hospitals, health units and feeding stations, the emphasis is on training locals and giving them a sense of ownership of the project. Although all the doctors are expatriates, the nurses and assistants are trained with great care. Many of these, facing questions of survival, still somehow perform remarkable work. The renewal of the fighting in late 1998 had serious repercussions on the medical and food situation of the Angolan population. Massive population displacements have brought about a food crisis of extreme proportions which affects refugees and residents alike. In the towns, and even more in the refugee camps, appalling living conditions have resulted in very high mortality rates. MSF reports continuing high numbers of admissions to the health units and Accident and Emergency Departments and a steep rise in the number of people injured by weapons or landmines. The NGO is worried that the people are in such danger, and denounces the gaps in health care and the fact that humanitarian aid organisations are refused access to certain regions.

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PROFILE

Angola



General Information

Official name	Republic of Angola, achieved independence 11 November 1975
Area	1.246.700 km ²
Capital	Luanda
Principal towns	Lubango, Huambo, Kuito, Malanje
Population	12.1 million (last census 1970)
Languages	Portuguese (official), Umbundu, Kimbundu, Kikongo, Quioco, Ganguela
Religions	Catholic 38%, Protestant 15%, indigenous beliefs 47%

Economy

GDP per capita	US\$1,030 (1999)
Growth rate	4%
Inflation	270% (1999)
External debt	US\$10.6 billion, debt servicing: 17%
Currency	Kwanza. 125 kwanza = US\$10 (September 2000)
Distribution of GDP by sector	Agriculture 13%; industry 53%, services 34%
Principal exports	Oil 90%, refined petroleum products, diamonds, gas, coffee, sisal, fishing, cotton.
Principal trading partners	USA 63%, Benelux 9%, China, Chile, France
Principal imports	Equipment, vehicles, medicines, foodstuffs, textiles, weapons
Principal suppliers	Portugal 20%, USA 17%, South Africa 10%, Spain, Brazil, France
Economic aid	US\$493 million
Principal industries	Oil, diamonds, iron, phosphates, bauxite, gold, uranium, cement, steel, fishing, agriculture, brewing, tobacco, sugar, textiles. Principal resources are oil, diamonds, gold, forestry, Atlantic fishing (1600 km of coastline). Farming has been laid to waste by the war which has been affecting the country's economy since 1961. Nevertheless, subsistence farming is the main resource for almost 85% of the population. The oil industry contributes nearly 45% of GDP and 90% of exports. The majority of consumer goods and foodstuffs are imported. Labour force: 5 million. Unemployment and underemployment affect over half the population.

Politics

Head of State and Government	President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, since 20.09.1979
Political system	Multi-party parliamentary system governed by a President since 1991. On 11.04.1997, a Government of Unity and National Reconciliation was established in accordance with the Lusaka peace agreements (November 1994). The Parliament (elected in 1992) voted its prorogation until 2000, although the constitution provides for legislative elections every four years.
Legislative assembly	Unicameral assembly of 220 members (last elections in September 1992, proportional vote for four years: MPLA 53%, UNITA 34%. J.E. Dos Santos 49.5%, J. Savimbi 40%).
Regional legislature	Each of the 18 provinces has a Governor
Principal political parties	MPLA - Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (129 members); UNITA - National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (70 members); PRS - Social Renewal Party (6 members); FNLA, National Front for the Liberation of Angola, split into two branches (5 members) and the PLD - Liberal Democratic Party (3 members). Roughly a dozen other parties
Next elections	2002

Social indicators

Population growth rate	2,15 %
Life expectancy	38 years (1998)
Adult literacy	41,7 %. (28,5 % women; 56,6 % men)
Human development index rating	160th out of 175 countries

Cinema

At the dawn of the new millennium African cinema realises that it must explore new avenues if it is to survive and grow as an industry. The hope of creating poetry on the big screen, based on nothing more substantial than the magical mental world of Africa, has collided with shock against the buffers of industrial reality. This is the painful finding after several decades of production. Harsh as it may seem, the only way to survive is to adapt, innovate and above all learn the ways of the market place. It is no longer possible to conceive a film without thinking of the spectators, the hall where it will be shown and the circuit it will follow. Money is taken seriously now. The challenge of the new century will be simultaneous to juggle art, politics and marketing.

by Tunda Wa Munga, Djo

A kaleidoscope of vivid colours

The Toronto International Film Festival

Toronto's magnificent Park Hyatt hotel stands right in the heart of the city's skyscrapers. Everything about it exudes an air of quiet luxury : limousines gliding silently to a halt, doormen on hand with measured smiles and steady voices, noiseless automatic doors. Inside, however, the hubbub is completely at odds with the apparent serenity of the building's calm exterior. This is where the offices of the 25th Toronto International Film Festival are based. The atmosphere inside is chaotic - amid a cacophony of constantly ringing telephones, stars go unnoticed as negotiations are held or badges exchanged. The festival takes up a number of rooms, but the one generating most noise is definitely the "sections" room. Here, amid the confusion, one of the many tables has a piece of paper stuck to it which reads *Planet Africa*. The ladies working there are too busy to look up much, but when they do so and recognise you, they rush over to greet you with warm smiles...

Exploring African diversity

Planet Africa is one section of the Toronto International Film Festival. It encompasses films originating from the African continent, the Diaspora and from Afro-American culture. Films from the latter category have largely dominated the section since its creation in 1995. These films are sometimes also shown in other sections, which has led some to complain about their over-representation. This year, struck by the quality and quantity of films produced in Africa and the African Diaspora, the programme organisers decided to highlight the diversity of African life. Thus, among many other films in this category, we were treated to : *Adanggaman* by Roger Gnoan from Côte d'Ivoire, *Voyage au pays* (Journey to the homeland) by Cameroonian Jean-Marie Teno, *Bye Bye Africa*, Chad's first ever full-length film, made by Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, not forgetting Raoul Peck's unmissable

Lumumba, which brought the house down when it was screened.

Two other films also caused quite a stir. The first, *Hijack Stories* by the "white" South-African Oliver Schmitz, is about a gang of car thieves based in Soweto. The *Planet Africa* section opened with this film, and there was a certain amount of tension in the air at its screening - as if people somehow believe that it is wrong to promote a non-black film-maker - not helped by the fact that this film had a comfortable budget and is set in a ghetto. The quality of the film, however, and the screenwriter's approach, probing the multiple contradictions of African identity today, dispelled any such doubts as completely unfounded. The fact that the programme organisers deliberately chose this film as their opening gambit is indicative of a desire to broaden the horizons of our exploration of the rich diversity of African film. The second film to bedazzle us was the visually stunning *Ali Zaoua*, by the Moroccan Nabil Ayouch, which tells of the brutal lives of a group of children on the streets of Casablanca. The North-American audience was evidently moved. It expressed its approval by turning out in huge numbers to see most of the films shown, enjoying a kaleidoscope of vivid colours, full of light and shade, the subtleties of which left a lingering impression on all our memories.

Genesis of a "work in progress"

Not so very long ago, Cameron Bailey was wondering about his community. Working as a schedule planner in the *Perspective Canada* section, he became aware of an enormous gap: there was no black representation among the European and American films shown each year. How could it be that, in a city as cosmopolitan as Toronto — which every year held the Caribbean festival *Carabana*, when almost a million black people filled the streets — when the celebration of cinema just a few weeks later excluded all but

a handful of blacks? The public is generally willing to turn out to an event which has some sort of real significance for them. How could this public best be introduced to characters, scenes and times evoking an emotional experience different from that of Hollywood or Europe?

The first thing Cameron Bailey had to do was integrate this category into the Toronto festival. Secondly, he had to find African films other than the rare few which occasionally made it to the Cannes film festival. *Fespaco* - the Pan-African film festival held every two years in Burkina Faso - provided Bailey with a ready-made source on which to draw and, with the addition of Afro-American cinema, he had a sufficiently wide range of films with which to start. Thus it was that 1995 saw the launch of this work in progress which is *Planet Africa*.

Cinema and business go hand in hand

It is the business aspect of this event which sets it apart from most other (predominantly French-speaking) African festivals. Here, the film-makers and their films are not treated like African icons, relics of a bygone era, full of nostalgia for palm trees and coconuts. On the contrary, this festival is about a very real struggle with the modern marketplace. For cinema is also - and primarily - about money. Film-makers dream above all of selling their work -



and understandably so, since this transaction will bring others in its wake and result in the production of more films leading, ultimately, to recognition. To sell is to reach a much-coveted position, to be one of the few who manage to turn their dreams into a reality. It makes all those years of toil and hardship worthwhile. *Planet Africa* can boast that, in the space of a few years, its success has gone beyond the level of the local community. A wide variety of audiences flock to its screenings; new broadcasting media are showing an interest in its films. Certain films, such as *Third World Cop*, have drawn huge crowds, something of a first for a Jamaican film in Canada. The Tunisian film *Un été à la goulette* (A Summer in *La Goulette*) found a distributor at the Toronto festival and was shown for six or seven weeks, a long run for an international

film. Specific cases such as these exemplify *Planet Africa's* desire to set itself up as an active platform for the film industry. Not everyone sells, of course, and being part of the selection does not automatically guarantee a film's distribution and transition to the cinema screens. It does, however, bring that film closer to the real market and increase its chances of commercial success.

Planet Africa or Alien nation?

The new programme planner, Gaylene Gould, might have been happy enough with the success of this innovative hybrid "made in/out of America", but she has had to deal with violent protests from the film-makers themselves. The term *Planet Africa* has been publicly denounced by artists who refuse to be "ghettoised" by a label they consider tendentious, some even say pejorative. If we



Gaylene Gould,
programme planner
of *Planet Africa*

can talk of a Planet Africa, then why not an Alien Nation? The film-makers wish to forge a healthy relationship with their audience, but this title sets up intellectual barriers with its ambiguities and its perverse exoticism. Asked for her opinion on this matter, Gaylene Gould replies: "Yes, the name does indeed pose a problem - they're absolutely right about that. But you have to remember one thing: the people who chose this epithet had one very precise aim - to attract an audience! The Toronto festival shows more than 270 films. There are documentaries, Hispanic films, Asian films, and so on. With such a vast catalogue, sections are vital in order to find our way around. The public needs clear pointers to guide its choices. At the time, *Planet Africa* seemed like

a good title. What's more, the film-makers in this section are guaranteed coverage and maximum attention for the marketing of their films. *Planet Africa* deals with 12 feature-length films and seven short films. A section such as *Contemporary World* has more than 60 films. It's obvious that those films will not be as well promoted and therefore not as well attended."

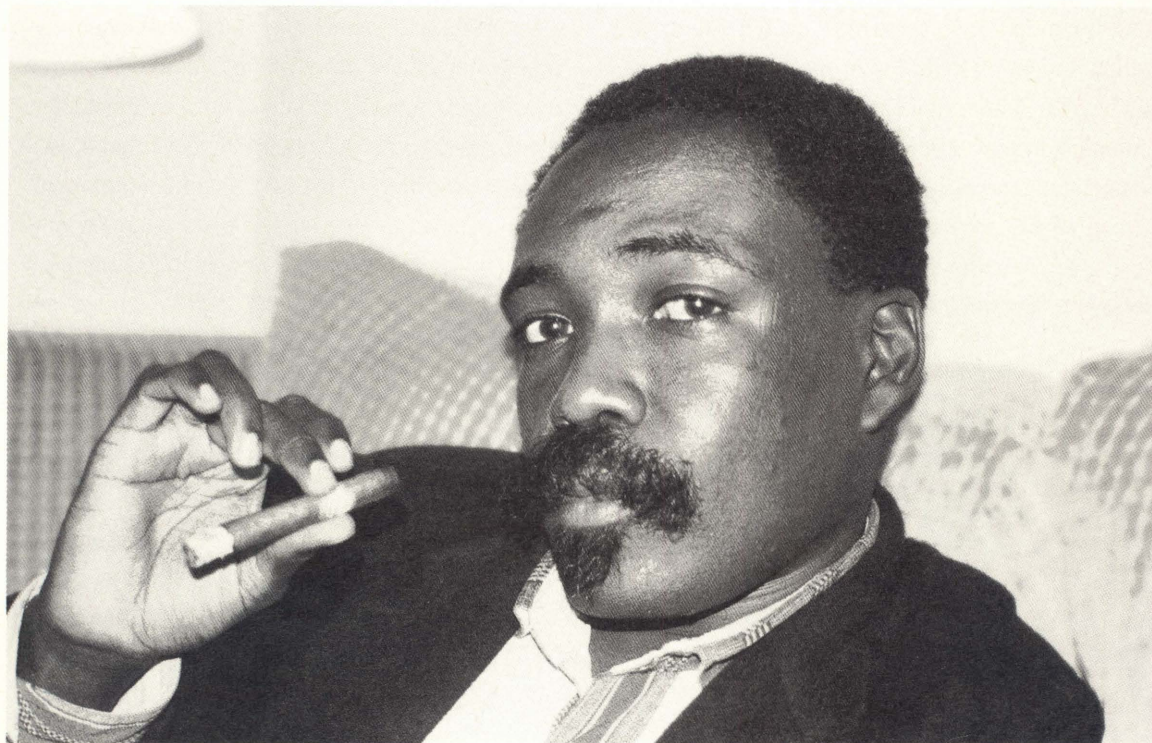
Star system

The North-American press is not on the whole interested in African cinema. Apart from a couple of journalists who do view some of the films, the rest flock to see the Hollywood productions, even though these will soon be presented for official release. According to Ms Gould, if the *Planet Africa* section is to develop, then it is essential that its names and personalities become more widely known. Looking at the Chinese films which have taken the festivals by storm over the last few years, you notice that there are certain personalities for whom journalists are willing to show up. They become fans of a certain person's work, and the name is enough to attract their attention. At the suggestion of a "star system", she laughs: "you could call it that, I suppose." She cites the example of Raoul Peck, for whom a special press conference was organised

around his film *Lumumba*, to discuss the historical role of the Congo's deposed prime minister and the film-maker's connection with the story of his film. This approach greatly appealed to the journalists, who were genuinely curious and interested to find out more about the film-maker, his film and, indirectly, the other African films. This conference actually changed the nature of the relationship between the press and *Planet Africa*.

Star system or not, we must find a way to establish African cinema once and for all as a reality for both the public and the industry. In terms of its specific remit, *Planet Africa* is undoubtedly a success - it is drawing in audiences and selling films. Hopefully the section's reputation will continue to grow in the years to come. A word of caution, however - festivals sink or swim according to the films they show. A glance at the African productions currently in progress or planned for the future reveals that they are somewhat thin on the ground. The quality of the festival will no doubt suffer as a result, and the risk is that the inroads which are currently being made will simply peter out or veer off course again. Will we continue to talk about an African planet? Without films, it'll be difficult.

Dreaming of bigger and better things



Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, a film director from Chad, directed the first fictional film to come out of his country, *Bye Bye Africa*, winner of two awards in Venice. A highly committed man, he dreams of a whole new economy for Africa.

"I was born in Eastern Chad in the town of Abéché, and lived there until I was nine or ten years old. My father was posted to N'Djaména, the capital, which in those days was known as Fort Lamy. That is where I first discovered films, at the open-air cinema — a French arts cinema."

So cinema had already made it to Chad?

Yes. I remember one of my uncles taking me to the cinema for the very first time. We watched a sappy black and white Indian film on an enormous screen. I remember a close-up of a beautiful woman who was looking straight into the camera; it was a shot taken from the hero's perspective. She was smiling and, for a few seconds, I believed her smile was directed at me. It was utter madness. The following day I met my friends and said, "we're going to play a new game. Here are swords for all of you. You kidnap one of the girls and then I'll come along, we'll

have a big fight, I'll kill you all and free the girl." Looking back, I'm sure that's what started it all. In sixth form at school, I took the literature option but had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do after my exams. One of my uncles was a teacher and told me that with a literature qualification I could go on to do sociology, psychology or cinematography. That was certainly news to me as I had always thought of cinema as being all to do with cameras, microphones, lighting and all manner of technical gadgetry. I had never considered the possibility that a director might simply be someone from a literary background. That awoke something in me and I knew then that I was going to pursue a career in cinema.

How did things pan out from there?

I came to Paris to enrol on a course at a privately run college called the *Conservatoire du cinéma français*. After that things became a bit more difficult. I had to talk people into taking me

on to get some experience, but I didn't actually get to work in cinema, let alone African cinema, and became very disillusioned with it all, turning to journalism instead. I later returned to cinema as a writer. One of my scripts was selected in a competition and I started work as a director. It wasn't that long ago, actually; I made my first short film in 1995. I am uncommonly old — in my forties — but at the same time I am regarded as young for a film director. It's all very bizarre!

Two short films in 1996, followed by two documentaries; then another short film before going on to make *Bye Bye Africa*. This is a pretty high turnover by all accounts. How do you see it?

I set great store by my identity as a young African director because I am painfully aware, and am reminded on a daily basis of the political, social and economic reality in Africa. I have no intention of shirking my responsibility in all this and see my role as a long-term commitment, working towards a kind of new economy that will allow us to take our work to a higher level and explore our chosen paths. I refuse to end up like all those before me who have reached the end of their careers with very little to show for it, or who have found themselves at the age of 60 with only two or three feature films to their name. Looking at it in terms of the history of cinema or a man's life, three films are clearly not enough by which to judge a person's work. For me, being a young African director means the chance to churn out work after work after work. Just as a shoemaker makes or repairs shoes, a film director makes films. We really have to work hard so that we don't find ourselves at the age of 50 or 60 with a paltry two or three films under our belts which took us an eternity to make, whilst others at the same age have an impressive 15 or so feature films behind them.

We are a seed that is sprouting; we must try to devise an economy of our very own that will enable us to forge our own path as we forge relations with those around us. This means positioning ourselves within a certain genre of cinema and

taking a good look at the international broadcasting scene. European arthouse films seem to me to be our best allies since they tend to be very much theme-based and are a part of life, making people examine the phenomena that society throws at them. Hollywood cinema, on the other hand, is largely geared towards pure entertainment, consuming its audience in the true sense of the word. In much the same way as people in Europe go out shopping to take their minds off their worries, people feel a need to "consume" these films, saying to themselves, "I'm fed up, I'm overworked and I'm going to watch a film to make me laugh." This kind of cinema is a thing of the moment and works on a purely commercial level. This route is not open to us, however. It's not that we couldn't do it equally well; it's just that we don't have the means to promote our films, so we are excluded from this particular genre, leaving us only arthouse cinema, providing we act quickly. Otherwise we risk disappearing altogether, that's the frightening thing (laughter). People don't seem to realise that. The fact that we are essentially financed by Europe means that our film production could cease more or less overnight. If the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which works for and on behalf of the French-speaking world, decided to stop pouring money into films for one reason or another, our production would cease. In the history of cinema, there have been a great many directors and talented individuals whose careers died an untimely death because they no longer had the means to go on making films.

Raoul Peck said, "it's like a gun with six bullets; every bullet counts; you can't afford to miss the target..." This could also be said of your vision of cinema.

In this day and age it is more important than ever that we do not use cinema simply to recount tales of village life, tradition, legendary belief and what have you. From the initial writing stage right through to the film's release, our films require a great deal of thought if we are to succeed in defending an identity in a world that is pushing

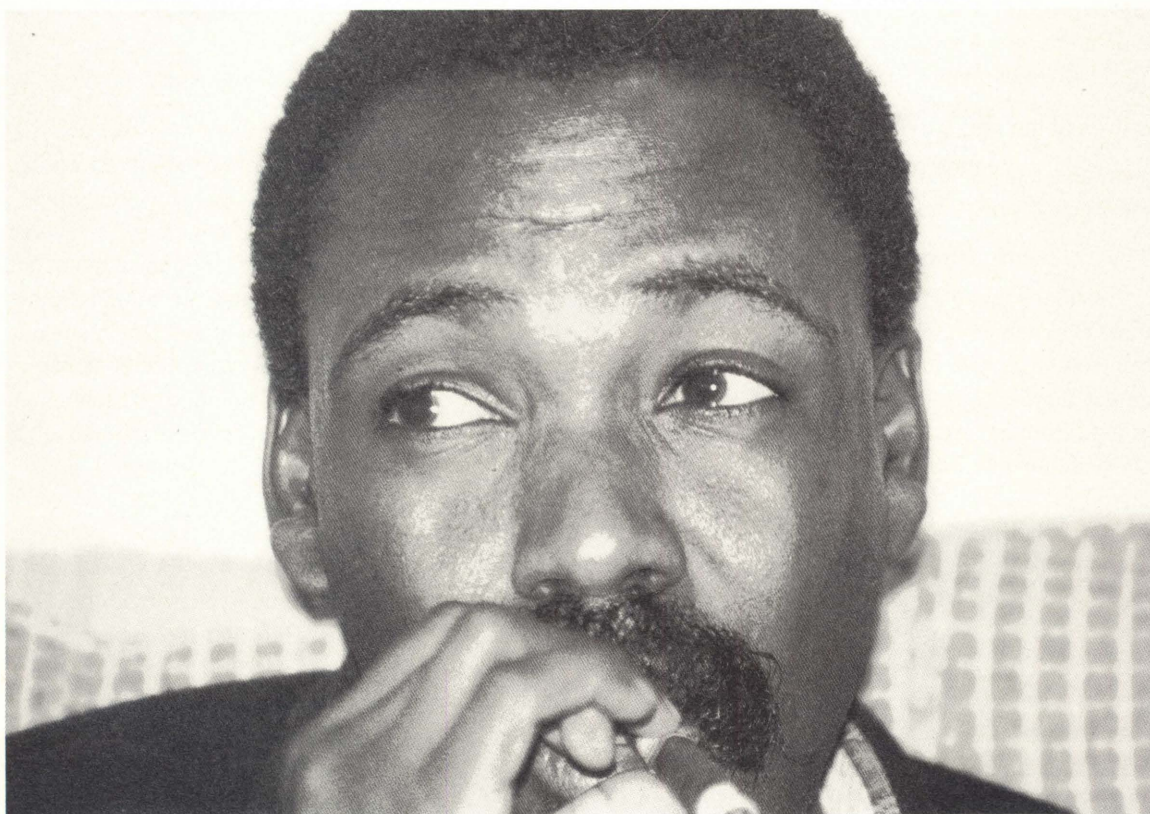
us out, leaving us nowhere to go. This battle is led by a new generation, which is introducing a new, much more personal genre of cinema with a series of highly defined worlds. With these people we can go on to create a whole new niche for ourselves, as long as we work at it and don't give up.

*In Venice, *Bye Bye Africa* received a mention on two counts, firstly from the official panel of judges, who gave you an award for "best first work", and then by a panel of young critics, who awarded you for best first film. What impact has this had on your career?*

What pleases me about Venice is that the Italian film which took the prize for best first work, winning prize money of \$100 000, will go down in history as undeserving of such an award. It never made it onto the big screen and I never saw it again at any of the other film festivals. I was told by the panel of judges that my film was actually rated higher but they had

no choice but to block it because there were large sums of money involved. Any African, regardless of who he is, whether living in Bamako, Timbuktu, or Bordeaux like me, is faced with this reality. It is vital that we are aware of it and fight against it. Apart from this prize, there has been nothing to help me promote my work. What I need is the perfect producer to really help me get my work off the ground and give me the backing I need to take things further. But where do I find such a person?

Venice was my way into the world of festivals and television, however. People and organisations contact me sometimes, which never ceases to amaze me. It is clear that Venice opened a lot of doors for me. It's no longer enough just to be talented; you've got to have a way to get yourself noticed. That's what I mean by promoting yourself. We still don't have the means to do this, whereas others have. In this war, we're at a major disadvantage. It's us against the world. It's all very complicated but that doesn't stop us dreaming of bigger and better things to come.



Empty seats and full screens

Tom, Julia and the rest...

For ten years now, Zimbabwe's capital has been hosting the SAFF (Southern African Film Festival) organised by the member countries of the SADC. This event is the Southern African equivalent of Fespaco (a film festival held in Burkina Faso). A comparison between the two African events reveals, however, just how different they are: one is brimming over with films, whilst the other screens a more timid offering. Above all, the extraordinary festival atmosphere generated by audiences at every Ouagadougou event unfortunately has no counterpart in Harare. We can only commiserate with the organisers over the practically total absence of participation on the part of the general public. Those same organisers, in their frustration, cannot but deplore what they refer to as "the misconception" on the part of African audiences. Their feelings are quite understandable: the SAFF takes place in a fine cinema with an extremely good city-centre location, and all the major films are screened there. Programming is solid and comprises films on popular themes supported by reliable production methods; there is as large an audience as may be expected for a Saturday evening, when couples go out to watch a film, complete with popcorn and soft drinks. Yet the public prefers to frequent another cinema where they can see the latest films starring Tom Cruise, Tom Hanks or Julia Roberts. The situation is truly lamentable! Powerless, the organisers watch those for whom they are organising the event inevitably "going next door" to watch the film with the biggest stars - could adultery ever be so cruel?

The misconception

There are many reasons for this "desertion", the most important undoubtedly being the hold that the Hollywood film industry appears to have over young Zimbabweans. The signs are everywhere: in the street, in night-clubs, in the abbreviated style of speech copied from any billboard "name" although certainly not from a billboard outside the cinema in Harare. Television — dominated practically to the exclusion of other programmes by US series or the latter's by-products — brainwashes young people on a daily basis, showing them the next trend to be followed. How on earth, therefore, is it possible to persuade cinema-goers to watch films made by Africans? The "misconception" consists in believing that a film made by an African, based on subjects familiar to audiences,

cannot give you guaranteed thrills, emotions and palpitations. Another objective factor is that English-speakers are not accustomed to watching subtitled films! Reading, and concentrating on the picture, requires a great effort on their part - young French-speaking Africans who, since childhood, have had to read the words picked out in white at the bottom of the frame whenever they go to the cinema, might find this point fairly amusing. International films in the United States come up against the same problem, to the point that watching a subtitled documentary is so difficult for some people that they prefer to give up rather than rub shoulders with another reality. Although the cinemas are in towns, the average Zimbabwean generally lives in a rural area, and has to travel and pay a fare if he wants to go to the cinema. On top of that, he has the return journey, late at night. Cinema ticket prices are not particularly-cheap, making such an outing fairly expensive when all is said and done. However, people are ready to make such sacrifices for a Hollywood film from which they "get their money's worth", whereas they do not feel the same way about an African film. Is all this logical? According to current data, yes; but it is not normal for the public not to go to watch films dealing with their own situation. The cinema as a reflection of society is too important not to exist.

The invisible barrier

The more adventurous souls who "risk" going to see an African film are generally delighted with what is on offer. Perhaps they go in with a whole raft of preconceived ideas but are greatly surprised when they come across films of good or excellent quality. It is difficult to know this for certain, but it is encouraging for the organisers of this festival, whose aim is to persuade African audiences to watch films from Africa itself. A further problem is that of marketing in connection with the festival: a number of complaints were levelled at the organisers for leaving everything until the last minute. The media, announcers and the general public had not been informed in time about scheduling, and this, according to some, was behind the failure of the festival. The organisers defended themselves against this alleged lack of preparation, but the director was forced to offer his resignation to restore calm to Harare's cultural circles. The ZIFF (Zimbabwean International Film Festival), the country's other cinematographic event, takes

place every year and bears no comparison to its counterpart in terms of audience numbers. Why should this be? The answer is quite simple: it screens only European films with the odd offering from America or Asia. It is difficult to avoid a comparison, or to ignore the competition between these two extremely different approaches, but the ZIFF is extremely popular despite the fact that it also screens subtitled films. Another aspect almost impossible to ignore is that the ZIFF is organised by white Africans: donations to it are larger and the target audience has much greater purchasing power. It is interesting to note the extent to which such an audience identifies with a make-believe European image - a culture which is no longer its own. It is not our intention, in such a short article, to embark upon a discussion of the racial division surrounding the festivals, but the situation in Zimbabwe is difficult to deny. The SAFF is struggling to screen films from Africa, but in the cinemas, which were really very poorly attended, there were as many whites as blacks. Here is a festival with film-makers and films no one is interested in. Everyone has their own ideas and preconceived notions, and is unable to cross the invisible barrier to genuinely celebrate African cinema.

Multiple-speed birth

The birth of the SAFF was long and laborious, but can be broken down into two distinct stages: the idea and the first event. Initial discussions took place in Mogadishu, Somalia, in the early 1980s, but were placed on a more serious footing in Niamey, Niger, in 1982.

Fepaci (the Pan-African Federation of Film-Makers) decided to stage a festival in Southern Africa to promote the development of cinema, along the lines of Fespaco. Zimbabwe was chosen for its potential: firstly, its economy was in full growth and looked likely in the near future to be able to support a film industry: secondly, from a structural standpoint, it had a good laboratory to support certain cinema-related activities. Next came a succession of dates marking small steps towards a possible festival: 1984 saw a working session in Harare, with film-makers from various countries, and the screening of a number of films. In 1988, a meeting was held in Maputo, Mozambique, where the first festival organisers' committee was set up. In 1990, the first edition of the festival took place, called The First Front Line Film Festival, reflecting the policy of the front-line states on South Africa's apartheid system. The second festival took place three years later following problems with raising the necessary funds. This festival was called the Southern African Film Festival. Further problems marred its organisation: the office closed, the director resigned and it was another three years before a new edition saw the light of day. Since 1996, the SAFF has taken place regularly every two years. The countries represented in the organisation as its members are: South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, the host country. Missing were only Malawi, Mauritius and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which recently rejoined the SADC.



The SAFF still lives

Shuvai Chikombah, coordinator of the Southern African Film Festival

Although the SAFF was a colourless event this time round, the organisers have already got down to work to make a success of the 2002 event. The main problem to be overcome is that of funding. The political situation has tarnished the country's image abroad, and this will not encourage western countries to invest. Nevertheless, this is a major festival, and it creates a link between the different styles of cinema in Africa and the public, a link necessary for the development and emancipation of African culture. Although the situation is not favourable, it is necessary now more than ever to continue the battle for the survival of African cinema in the public mind. Overcoming people's preconceptions is the first step towards submission or freedom: everything depends on one's point of view. It has to be hoped that the desire for freedom is the stronger; otherwise, self-image is lost. What is the point of existence if our dreams are made by other people? In the long term, the general public will regard African cinema as pointless and irrelevant to their lifestyle. This art, as a mirror for society, is too important to be neglected.



Making one's voice heard

Women film-makers in Zimbabwe are asserting themselves by producing films. *Mixed Black Marriages*, their first film, was a box-office hit.

A first step in making their voices heard?

Is there a specific quality in films made by women? The WFOZ (Women Film-makers Of Zimbabwe) would reply to such a question with an emphatic "no" refuting the idea that it is their intention to produce work under the heading "women". They would say that it is more a question of a process: when topics arise on the production table, some of them, if those around the table are men, will have a greater chance of being selected than others. It is to counteract such "discrimination" that these women have formed an association. They maintain that men's and women's "voices" are different, that men and women relate differently to the world and therefore have a different approach to films. What is the essence of the difference between directors from different communities? The choice of their subject matter and their approach, because they are from different backgrounds, particularly in Zimbabwe. This doesn't prevent any of them from making films. By choosing their subject matter, the women make a difference from the very start, their interests as a group diverging from what a group of male producers might put forward, and all subsequent stages will be managed similarly. When all is said and done, they are making a film, albeit a film that is different because some of its "ingredients" will have been given greater emphasis than others. They do not believe that audiences can tell whether a film is made by a man or a woman. By guaranteeing that they make the decisions at all stages of the process, they ensure respect for the values they defend and adopt a position vis-à-vis the authorities which are often male-dominated, and thus make their "voice" heard.

Splitting the embryo

Women are poorly represented in the film industry, and Zimbabwe is no exception. Access

to training, the development of programmes and the securing of budgets for projects directed or set up by women are the primary battlegrounds for this group in its desire to improve the situation of women. In countries where cinema is very underdeveloped, there is little regard for fairness in preparing for the industry of the future. Why? Should men first set up an environment where cinema exists as a daily reality before opening the door to women? Or is it because so few films are made that the battle of the sexes is disregarded? Admittedly, in Zimbabwe, as in many other countries in Africa, cinema is at the embryo stage. Few productions see the light of day and the future is not particularly promising, given the deteriorating political and economic situations. But this does not constitute grounds for ostracising a particular group. The WFOZ idea is that they have decided to take up the challenge before every door is barred to them, this being their best guarantee of obtaining a privileged position when the rules for determining how the sector operates - which will come at a more advanced stage of development - are written and put into practice. Yet their involvement is not purely political: not all of them are involved in the film industry as professionals. Some come from dance or other disciplines and are pooling their skills, enriching the vision of the sector and thus making it possible to prevent sclerosis in the profession, a problem which has effected the industry in more developed countries.

Ongoing commitment

Their causes are just, our heroines are charming, the setting in a radiant Zim' leaves no reason to be jealous of Hollywood, and everything is in place for a fine story to unfold. However, the reality of the struggle reveals every reason to be jealous towards a superproduction: deprived of

resources, married women, mothers or single women drifting from job to job form this group which has more than its fair share of hardship. They finance everything themselves and make every sacrifice to advance their project. It is funny, good to look at and, moreover, dramatic. At a presentation of two films produced by the WFOZ, we attended a poetry reading, a "happening" and a mini political conference. Everything appeared to be, and undoubtedly was, chaotic, but for the time being it is the only way they can stage a production and raise awareness, because opportunities are few and far between. The single watchword is "commitment". It is this that brings people along to weekly meetings, choosing a project via a lengthy democratic process where there is dialogue, an exchange of views and questions as to the end and means. It is commitment which will bring out, from the four corners of Harare, the little camera, the puny tripod and the old microphone without its cover. Commitment of this type carries everything along, changing an association of housewives which might appear to be something of a group meeting around a kitchen table for a chat into veritable swashbuckling "destroyers" of the established order. It creates genuine film-makers imbued with the desire to create one picture which is worth ten bad films. This is the most important aspect, this daily grind against a background of the unromantic obscurity of family life, of insignificant work and of the solitude of womanhood, deriving its strength from unparalleled commitment to the end-product: a film. It is perhaps that which is the climax: this fragile bringing-to-life of images, sounds and storyline in a Unesco hall which is neither a dingy meeting place nor a luxury multiplex. This is where the first step is taken and where the WFOZ achieves its aim.

What about the films?

The films, *The Boarders* and *Mixed Black Marriages*, differ markedly in terms of quality. The former is unquestionably a failure, with masked propaganda, uneven rhythm and subject matter that is too wide-ranging, namely the antipersonnel mines with their cortège of victims - widows, maimed children - and uncaring inter-

national opinion. Watching such a film makes one feel uneasy. No indulgence or laziness in production can be excused by the gravity of the events. Quite the contrary, the greatest rigour is required when addressing such a delicate subject. One often wants to stop the film to move on to something else, but, at the same time, one feels obliged to watch it through to the end. The second film, much more lightweight but subtle in terms of the originality of its theme, addresses the issue of marriage between blacks from different cultures and communities. This subject was brought up by a woman from Martinique, a member of the group who married a Zimbabwean, and it is precisely the type of subject supported by the WFOZ because it speaks of women as women, as part of a society at world level in which the belief is too widely held that blacks are all the same. This is an aberration, but how many films have you seen which directly address this subject? Aside from the old racial antagonism which has often been dealt with in caricature fashion, few films address "otherness", that which is different, cultural elements outside their native space.

Obviously, it is just as difficult amongst blacks as it is amongst whites, Asians or those who do not look like us, but it is rarely discussed, if at all.

Mixed Black Marriages is charming in its human poetry and the simple people who speak about the difficulty of approaching that which is different. The film depicts the complexity of culture shock by bringing us into daily life. This film also suffers from a lack of technical mastery, but that aspect is less important: the WFOZ is aware of the need to move on to another stage where they can produce and screen films which do not suffer from a lack of resources. They want to screen a documentary series on mixed-race relationships, given the public success of their first film.

However, if they wish to expand their horizons, they also need access to a secure source of funding. The new objective is to bring in groups and financiers interested in their work and in participating in projects. Television is not excluded either; on the contrary, they would welcome it. South African channels, which are the most important in the region, are their target, but there is still a long way to go.



One aspect of the film industry is hardly mentioned, yet it is an essential link: distribution. Pan-African film-makers have been slow to understand its importance. At the dawn of the 21st century, a serious film-maker can no longer dream up a story without assessing the target audience and knowing what resources he needs to mobilise in order to get his film to that audience.

Distribution is the activity which places a cinematographic work before the public, and this varies from the film which is screened in a multiplex cinema to an organised screening in a school in the heart of the savannah. It also includes the video cassettes sold at the local record shop or grocer's, and involves the active promotion of the film, its sale to various broadcasters and retailers; and a necessary part includes the transfer of a portion of the profits to the producers and authors.

Precisely where are the African film-makers?

If one had to count the number of African films available for viewing in order to assess the importance of cinematographic activity on that continent, one could quite easily conclude that the industry was non-existent. African films are

rarely screened in Europe, or indeed in Africa: the market belongs to films from the US, Europe and the rest of the world, yet Africa is not seen as part of "the rest of the world". No one has thought even once of occupying this niche: production has carried on for several decades without bothering about marketing aspects because films have been subsidised. Big mistake! Cinema is an industry and requires a chain to bring films to the public, to generate profits and to reinvest for survival. The supply of subsidies is drying up rapidly, taking with it a certain style of cinema. The African film-maker is forced to write, direct, produce and distribute his film entirely on his own. There he is, with his copy under his arm, on the telephone, in the process of negotiating with festivals, or running between trains and planes.

Awareness is increasing, and attempts are being made to organise this sector, but everything is still very vague. It is not yet possible to identify a concrete approach from which lessons could be learned, and there is no scope yet for a review of the situation to help prepare the future market.

Difficult conditions

For distributors the principal source of film-purchasing is still festivals. These act as a market-place where the impact of a product is examined, reviewed and analysed before it is purchased. Any film making a good impression has every chance of ending up in movie theatres in a number of countries. Cannes, Venice and Berlin are the principal European attractions, with Toronto and Sundance as their North-American counterparts. When making their purchases, companies also refer to lists of films already on the circuit, but the most decisive elements of all are the press, private screenings and scores produced in other countries. When an African film-maker takes his film and knocks on a distributor's door, what happens next? First, very few take this approach: there are many reasons for this, but it is not difficult to imagine that preconceived ideas or complexes exist on both sides. The general public in the west is blinkered, paying no attention to non-western productions except when these are exceptional. Even an excellent

African film is thus severely handicapped before the distributor looks into whether it would be viable to screen it in his cinemas. Releasing a film is expensive: copies have to be made for the movie theatres, and the product has to be advertised in the media, yet all this does not guarantee a film's success. Publicity is required to attract attention to a film, to make it stand out from the mass. The distributor often fears that he will lose money and is therefore unwilling to accept an African film. The film-maker can always turn to TV as a means of distribution and source of profits, but a film which has had the benefit of an opening screening in a cinema has an added value which may be nearly double that of a film which has not been advertised on the billboards. It is not the quality of the film that counts, but the promotion in the press that comes as a result of a screening in a cinema alone justifies this added value. The film-maker is confined to picking up the crumbs if he achieves a TV sale, or if he objects to selling his film cut-price, he puts it away in a drawer and forgets about it.

Distribution patterns

So, why not distribute one's film in Africa? After all, there are more opportunities for making a profit. As pointed out above, this area has not yet been developed. Distribution takes on various forms according to the region. In West



Jean-Marie Teno

Africa there are movie theatres, but film directors themselves negotiate on a film-by-film basis. There is no policy covering this or body responsible for it. In countries like Nigeria or Ghana, they opt for production and distribution of a film in video form - at least that's promising! In central Africa, a country such as the Democratic Republic of Congo has only one movie theatre. The example of English-speaking countries enables us to analyse some figures. Zimbabwe has approximately 40 screens: a film like *Titanic* generated US\$100,000 in that country. Of this, 50% goes to the movie theatre, 40% to the producer and 10% goes back to the distributor. That is the maximum return a film can expect in such a country. Kenya, with approximately 18 screens, can achieve three quarters of that figure, ie US\$75 000. Next come Zambia, Uganda and Tanzania, in decreasing order, with from seven down to just one or two theatres each. Taken individually,

none of these countries is capable of returning sufficient profit for a feature-length film, but, on the income side, things appear to be looking up. If you bring into the equation South Africa, a country which has 900 movie theatres, then there is no doubt that a profit could be generated. Unfortunately, this huge market is firmly occupied by the US, which guards it jealously: South Africa would probably come after Germany or France in terms of world markets.

A great story is a good start

So, what is to be done? We put this question to Jean Marie Teno, a film-maker who has directed a number of films and who decided to distribute certain films in order to investigate other market approaches. In his opinion, investment has to go into TV to create a space where African films can become more familiar to viewers. This would facilitate collaboration with broadcasting channels - a project co-produced by a TV channel has a guaranteed distribution and has more chance of raising the full budget - with a view to gaining a share of the market. He adds that, to achieve an opening into major distribution networks, film-makers need to write commercially viable drafts with story-lines that are sufficiently strong. Crowds everywhere like a good story and the film which becomes a box-

office hit is the one with good screenplay and pleasing production. That is the only rule that has stood the test of time in this sector.

The new climate

Young film-makers have understood the rules of the market and are attempting to turn them to advantage. New technologies like the Internet are opening up more possibilities: film sales, information websites, etc. Major firms are attempting to lock small players out of the sector, but the small independents are standing their ground. The tired old formula which characterises Hollywood films - same scenario, rehashed every which way, with massive investment in special effects - is also opening up the industry to different works. Films from all over the world are attracting the public in droves in major urban centres. This was unthinkable just a couple of decades ago! A new climate is emerging, and if Africans do not wish to find themselves lagging behind in the future, it is in their interests to set up suitable structures right away. Distribution is essential to the development of a durable industry. Professionals know this, but they cannot act without state support or support from the economic operators, who have yet to become aware of the potential of this sector.



Image from
Jean-Marie Teno's film
Vacance au pays

LA CINEMATHEQUE AFRICAINNE

01 BP 2505 Ouagadougou
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Tel 226 30 75 38 - Fax 226 31 25 09
E-mail : sg@fespaco.festival.bf
Directeur : Ardouma SOMA

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Fax : 263 4 733 404
E-mail : asdf@icon.co.zw
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Magazine sur le cinéma africain
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Fax : 39 2 66714338
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Fax : 1 (416) 967-9477
Programmatrice : Gaylene Gould

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Web : www.fespaco.bf

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Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel : 263 (4) 791-156
Fax : 263 (4) 704-227
e-mail : safff@zimsurf.co.zw
Programmatrice : Shuvai M. Chikombah

AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL

154 West 18th Street, Suite 2A, New-
York, NY 10011
Tel : 1 (212) 352-1720
Fax : 1 (212) 807-9752
E-mail : nyaff@erols.com
Web : www.africanfilmny.org
Directrice : Mahen Bonetti



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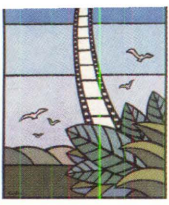
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Directeur : Jean-Marie Teno

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Pacific Islander Breaking down film stereotypes

By Craig DeSilva

Lights! Camera! Action!

The bare-breasted native woman runs out of a grass hut and onto the beach to greet the white men coming ashore. Beefy men dressed in *lava lava* and coloured paint streaked across their faces hold spears and dance around a fire.

These scenes are typical of how Hollywood portrays Pacific Islanders in films.

From *Bird of Paradise* in the early 1930s to *South Pacific* in the 1950s and even the most recent *The Thin Red Line*, Pacific Islanders have been treated as the backdrop in films rather than in pivotal roles whose characters are developed during the course of the plot.

Michelle Kamakanoenoe Tupou would like to break through these stereotypical portrayals of Pacific Islanders by allowing indigenous people – not Hollywood – to take control of the camera and tell stories from their own perspective.

Born and raised in Hawaii, Tupou received her master's degree in Pacific Island Studies at the University of Hawaii-Manoa.



Tupou emphasises that she's not a filmmaker, rather an academic who talks about filmmaking. Her love of film grew from an interest in Pacific Island arts and culture, and by working on a film in Australia.

A native Hawaiian, Tupou says cultural identity has always been an issue in her life. She has blonde hair and light skin from her half European ancestry. But she grew up in a Hawaiian society with a Hawaiian name.

So it's easy to see why Tupou uses film to explore and make better sense of her identity.

"It's more than just filmmaking. It's a medium that captures cultural identity for a lot of Pacific Islanders," she says. "The main purpose of Pacific Island literature, film or theatre is finding out who you are as an island people."

Why is it important to have Pacific Island filmmakers?

For so long it's been outsiders telling the stories for us. I think that it's time we take control of the camera. The medium adapts itself so well to our oral tradition as Pacific Islanders that it seems like a natural connection between the two. The Pacific Island and Maori and aborig-

inal community in New Zealand have been able to do it through indigenous dramatic film. We as Pacific Islanders have made a lot of documentaries, but I think it's time to look more at indigenous dramatic film.

What are some of the dangers if Pacific Islanders don't take control of the camera

and tell stories through their own eyes?

Then you'll be stuck with the images Hollywood creates. A good example of that is the film *Hei Tiki*. It's an example of how we can be stuck with that stereotype of the coconut image. In addition to being portrayed incorrectly, we'll lose those stories that our elders are holding on to.



Why is there a greater impact when indigenous people make dramatic films as opposed to documentaries?

The style is so different. When you're making a film, whether drama or documentary, it's always an interpretive thing. The filmmaker decides what to include in a documentary, and the same thing can be said about drama. The director decides to look at this angle or aspect. It's still interpretation. But with documentaries, it's more the outside looking in. My main push is to have everybody – from the writer, director, producer, cast and crew – to be indigenous. We need to push through getting the indigenous voice out through drama because of our connection with oral traditions.

How have Pacific Islanders been portrayed in film by outsiders?

I think almost every film that has been made gives a clichéd portrayal. The film I mentioned earlier, *Hei Tiki*, is a Maori film made back in 1935. One of the quotes from the film called the people of the Pacific "fuzzy-haired natives of the South Pacific". A quote by Merata Mita, a Maori filmmaker, said, "It appears Markey arrived on the shores with already entrenched ideas of racial purity and what his audiences' expectation of the romantic South Seas should be. These ideas he immediately put into practice." He came with Universal Studios to portray the native people, with an agenda about what the movie-going audiences back in New York and the United States wanted to see. So he basically portrayed them the way he felt his audience would want to see them.

What kind of advances have Pacific Islanders made in filmmaking?

Australia and New Zealand have produced several series made by Pacific Islanders with an entirely indigenous cast and crew. One thing that makes a big difference to the film is that they involve the community in the making of it. One filmmaker I interviewed said that we're more accountable because we have elders on our set. It creates a different atmosphere to the western-type films that come to town. She said the atmosphere is different on a Pacific Island set compared to a European set.

How can Pacific Islanders use film as part of their oral traditions? Can it accurately portray or document a certain culture or event?

First of all it's enabling stories that we're losing to be captured, because we're losing a lot of our elders who were able to hold on to those stories. This generation and the previous generation have been losing a lot of their elders, as you know. And it just seems that film is a good way of capturing those stories and conveying them to a generation that is much more media-oriented. So it's archival as well as something that will be listened to. I think the timing is right to use film as the right medium to capture the attention of this generation.

But are these stories entertaining enough to encourage people to sit through them in a theatre?

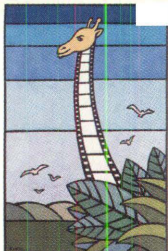
Oh yeah, definitely. I think entertainment and immediate gratification is something this generation is very much into. So the time is right for taking our stories and retelling them.

What kind of developments have you seen in Hawaii with native Hawaiians telling their stories through filmmaking?

I think native Hawaiians have captured documentary filmmaking. People like Puhipau, Joan Lander and Eddie Kamae have been making documentary-style films. But in terms of indigenous dramatic film, it's an area we can expand on. I do know people who are trying to put stories together to make short films. One film, called *Hawaiian Sting*, actually made it to the Sundance Film Festival. It was written by a Hawaiian boy. That was one of the first steps towards indigenous dramatic film. And there have been some programmes on television. But I think the indigenous creative side is much different than Hollywood coming to Hawaii and saying: "We have this great idea to make this film, you guys can star in it and here's the storyline." Some of our people are now writing stories. It's going to happen soon, but funding here is difficult, in comparison to New Zealand where the arts are much more supported.

Well, you raise a good point. Where do artists go if they need funding for their films?

There are film commissions in Australia and New Zealand and funding available from Creative New Zealand and TV New Zealand. Of course Hawaii is smaller and has fewer funding agencies for Pacific Islanders. So it is much more difficult. Funding is important because it allows people to develop their skills. And once you get that, you start to find people who want to tell stories. But it's a slow process. Unfortunately, it all comes down to money. You could have all these wonderful ideas, but it's nothing if you don't have funding.



what efforts are underway to encourage more Pacific Islanders to make films?

Pacific Islanders in Communication in Hawaii is the resource for Pacific Islanders who want to get into film here. But it's a small agency with limited funding so this is still a difficult issue. I think you have to take baby steps and just get the word out. As far as I know, there isn't anyone in Hawaii talking about this issue. When people talk about Pacific films, they usually mean films about the South Pacific and Hollywood films that portray Pacific Islanders in a certain way.

So the slant is a little different when I'm looking at indigenous creative works. A lot of Pacific Islanders have been making short films.

what barriers do Pacific filmmakers face in the industry?

I think that there are numerous barriers that make filmmaking especially difficult for Pacific Islanders. The obvious is to get funding for all filmmakers. However, I think the most significant barrier is being recognised. A lot of times films made by Pacific Islanders are not considered mainstream

enough to be put in primetime. For example most of the Pacific Island short films in New Zealand are shown on Sunday morning while many people are at church. It's been a major struggle to get a primetime slot to air these shorts.

How important is TV as a medium?

I think television is a very important medium because of its ability to reach a very wide audience. Therefore I think that it's vitally important that Pacific Islanders use television like every other group or culture using this particular medium. It's just common sense.

Want more information on how to produce a film about the Pacific? Here's a list of useful Web sites and film distributors to get you started.

- **Na Maka o ka 'Aina (<http://www.namaka.com>)**
Headed by filmmakers Puhipau and Joan Lander, Na Maka o ka 'Aina has produced over 50 videos focusing on Hawaiian and Pacific topics in the areas of culture, environment, the arts, language, history and sovereignty.
- **Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) (<http://www.piccom.org>)**
Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) is a Minority Consortium funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a nonprofit media organisation, whose primary purpose is to increase national public broadcast programming by and about Pacific Islanders. Members receive the publication *Storyboard* three times a year. Their films and programmes deal with Hawaii and the broader Pacific.
- **Moving Images of the Pacific Islands (<http://www.hawaii.edu/oceanic/film>)**
Moving Images of the Pacific Islands is a searchable database of over 2,300 films and videos about the Pacific Islands (excluding Hawaii). Produced and maintained by the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. The distributor's list is a useful guide to producers of films about the Pacific.
- **Hawaii International Film Festival (<http://www.hiff.org>.)**
A wide range of films represented Hawaii and the Pacific in this festival, which focused on film from the Pacific and Pacific Rim. The festival is held on O'ahu and the neighbouring islands during the first two weeks of November.

DISTRIBUTORS

ADCK

Agence de Developement de la Culture Kanak. 100 Avenue James Cook, BP 378, Noumea, New Caledonia. Telephone: (687) 28-32-40, Fax: (687) 28-21-78.

ABC

Australian Broadcasting Corporation. ABC Ultimo Centre, GPO Box 9994, Sydney, NSW 2001. Telephone: (61) 2-9333-1500, Fax: (61) 2-9333-5305.

ASPLES Productions

PO Box 561, Kimbe, WNB, Papua New Guinea.

Fiji National Video Centre

Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, Television, and Telecommunications, Government Buildings, Suva, Fiji. Telephone: (679) 303-600.

IFF

International Film Foundation. 155 West 72nd Street, New York, NY 10023. Telephone: (1) 212-580-1111.

Pasifika Communications

5 Bau Street, Suva, Fiji. Telephone: (679) 307-000, Fax: (679) 307-222, E-mail: pasifika@is.com.fj.

SPPF

South Pacific People's Foundation. 1921 Fernwood Road, Victoria, BC, Canada V8T 2Y6. Telephone: (1) 604-381-4131, Fax: (1) 604-388-5258, E-mail: sppf@sppf.org, Website: <http://www.sppf.org>.

Pacific Women in Film making:

Pacific Women Television Producers Workshop and Exchange Program http://www.unesco.org/webworld/news/991217_pacific.shtml

Film New Zealand

<http://www.filmnz.org.nz/>

Towards democracy

Speaking in Brussels where he was attending a Council of Ministers meeting in December Fiji Foreign Minister Kaliopate Tavola declared that his interim government will appeal a November High Court ruling ordering the restoration of the administration put out of office by the armed intervention of rebels led by George Speight who held the Prime Minister and parliamentarians hostage for eight weeks. The appeal will be heard in late February or March and it would seem likely that the interim government would be under enormous international pressure to accept the Appeal Court decision.



That the case will be hard fought is beyond doubt: the administration has its own plans for restoring constitutional democracy, as the Minister explained to **Chris White*** during the recent ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary meeting in Brussels.

The interview begins with a conversation stopper: "You should not be talking to me. I do not qualify. You are a journal for parliamentarians and I am not elected," declares Fiji's Foreign Minister.

Mr Kaliopate Tavola appears to have brought things to a conclusion before he has even sat down. There is a long pause. He is, of course, right: as he says, this is a journal for elected representatives. But in the ACP-EU Joint Assembly's first parliamentary plenary he has been stoutly defended by some EU MEP's as an honourable man.

Fiji's Ambassador to Brussels for ten years he is without doubt a man of honour and, anyway, he is here to talk about restoring Fiji to a true and enduring parliamentary democracy.

George Speight, who stormed Fiji's parliament and held its members hostage for eight weeks

is now detained, charged with treason. This is the man who would have denied Fiji democracy by, the minister tells us, "introduction of ethnic exclusivity and denial of people's democratic rights".

He also tells us that, far from being over, the threat from Speight's "very active supporters" remains. While he has not seen any evidence it is clear to him that there may be more than rumours to the idea that the coup "done in the name of the ethnic Fijian people" may have been influenced by George Speight's commercial interests – and that raises the spectre of American involvement, again as yet, unproven.

This uncomfortable issue of his democratic credentials over, we ask him outright: what is the prognosis for the restoration of democracy in Fiji?



"We are quite aware that we are not a representative government. We call ourselves the interim government, or interim civilian government. We were reminded today at the Joint Assembly that it would be more correct to call ourselves the interim administration.

Whatever the designation is: we are running the Fiji government at this point in time and we have a road map to take us back to democracy and the constitutional process. Starting from yesterday the newly instituted Constitutional Review Commission has begun its work and the government has given them a deadline to produce a report by the end of March next year, 2001. We will then have a legal draft of a new constitution by the end of June. What we propose to do is to have a series of consultations with the people to promote the new draft and to try to sell the new constitution to the people at the grass roots. We want to do that by

July or towards the end of 2001 when we will have a promulgation of that constitution and what we propose is to hold general elections immediately after that."

This all sounds fine but we pick up on his comment that they may have to update Fiji's electoral register and redraw electoral boundaries. Is this some sort of subtle gerrymandering? It appears not. He describes his comment as "a precautionary remark". And he explains: "we have given the electoral commission a mandate to come up with a new draft of the constitution and obviously that will have a section in it on the electoral system. A lot of people do believe that one of the weaknesses in the 1997 constitution was the electoral system. One major change will be to come up with a totally new voting system."

He blames the untried alternative voting system for Fiji's political instability and believes

that the country may have to return to the "tried and tested" first past the post system.

"We came up with an alternative vote system which, I understand, had never been tried anywhere in the world. There are similar systems in Australia and New Zealand but not the same. We tried it and it produced a lot of unexpected results so when you talk to people in Fiji now they believe that there is a need for a new electoral system and we may have to go back to first past the post, a system that has been tried and tested and one that we know works. So this is why we are saying that we will come up with a new electoral system. Whatever we have it is likely to have quite an effect on the electoral boundaries so that is why I say we will have changes. There is no question of gerrymandering."

Nor will the 20 strong interim government contemplate any loss of democratic rights for any section of Fiji's people. "Certainly not and I made that comment in my presentation to the Joint Assembly. We do not believe in any ethnic exclusivity of the sort that George Speight was proposing. We are not going to disenfranchise anybody – everyone's right to vote will be protected and defended."

The government has been compressing its original time frame for holding elections and it is clearly under international

pressure but he appears sincere when he says that all will be done to hold elections as early as possible. "Most likely," he says, "the current time frame will go down to 18 months."

It is a determination to prevent future coups and not some love of office that has prevented the immediate restoration of democracy. "Our history of coups is why we are giving ourselves sufficient time for consultations with the people. In 1997 they did not do enough consultation with the people; this was obviously a mistake and we have learned from that mistake. This time we want to do it properly. We want people in the provinces and the districts to talk to us and understand what their constitution means."

It is impossible to detect insincerity in his voice. There is, on the other hand, a clearly audible anger when he talks about the coup leader George Speight. Speight is charged with treason?

"That is correct and the treason charge has been enhanced, which implies to me that it will stick much better now and that is good news. That is the judiciary acting independently. The case is not politicised in any way."

He turns to the reasons behind Speight's coup attempt. "The people have tried to address the real reasons and there is not one single reason.

There is obviously a composite of reasons. There was a lot of dissatisfaction with the Chaudry government and a feeling among Fijians that the government was being insensitive to some of the issues, particularly the land issues and that was obviously one reason. But the people who carried out the coup might have had other reasons. They said it was in the name of the indigenous people but George Speight had some commercial interests in mahogany and some other things and that might also have been part of the calculations."

It is strongly rumoured that American commercial interests associated with George Speight may have had a hand in planning the coup. Minister Tavola is cautious: "The question of American interests has been speculated. People say that was the case but if they do say that they have to produce the evidence. I have not seen any but it will come into the inquiry and we will know more."

He is keen to return to the reestablishment of democracy. It is clear that doubts about his government's intentions have wounded him. "All the people we have talked to, the various governments, the various people that have expressed their views, obviously want a quick return to democracy and that is a view we share as well. Some say it should come as quickly as possible but while we want



to take the country back to democracy, we want to do this properly. We have had two coups already and we don't want another. We want to do it in such a way that we can avoid this sort of thing in the future. That is why we are placing so much emphasis on consultation – we have to get the people to really understand what the constitution means."

Fiji's Government (above) and Parliament (below). "We have a road map to take us back to democracy" says Fiji's interim foreign minister



*Chris White is Publisher and Executive Editor of *World Parliamentarian*, from which this article is reprinted, a new independent monthly magazine reporting on parliaments around the world in the interests of open democracy.

Information from 9 St James's Place, London SW1A 1PE or on the website: www.wpm.ws.

Kenya's shanty-towns celebrate their football stars

by Claude Adrien de Mun



Young footballers in a Nairobi shanty-town

Thanks to football, a sports association set up in one of Nairobi's largest shanty-towns has managed to transform deprived children into confident young adults able to face the future.

In Nairobi, a world ruled by the law of each man for himself, shanty-towns grow like mushrooms. They spring up in the smallest possible spaces: at the edges of residential areas, in backyards, next to building sites...

The shanty-town of Mathare is one of the biggest and poorest in Africa. Situated ten minutes away from the town centre where the Indian community keeps a watchful eye over their shops, it stretches across hills of mud on the edge of a dirty river. The moment you enter, you are overcome by the powerful odour of rubbish

and urine. This stench gets worse as you go down towards the river, where more and more shacks are crowded ever closer together. Built from a mixture of metal sheets, wood, plastic bags and cardboard, they house whole families in an average space of 4 m². The average income of a family of eight is rarely more than six francs a day. Dozens of small traders set out vegetables individually for sale on wooden tables. This is one of the principal means of survival in Mathare, along with minor work carried out from day to day, prostitution and illegal distilling. Men lie around, blind drunk, on mountains of waste.

Sitting on the bare ground, covered in dirt, children sniff glue. "It's what gives me the courage to

go and beg," explains one of them. Others play football barefoot, using plastic bags tied into a ball with pieces of string. "Children like these were already here the first time I ever visited the Mathare shanty-town. They love football. It reminds me of when I was a child growing up in a small town in Canada," says Bob Munro, the founder of the Mathare Youth Sports Association (Mysa).

Established in 1987, at a time when Kenya was already in a period of economic decline, this sports association aims to help the children of Mathare integrate into society through football. It started out as a modest enterprise. With a small number of balls, a few pairs of trainers and a great deal of enthusiasm, the association set up football teams. Interest spread from shack to shack like wildfire, with almost every youngster in Mathare getting involved. At the start there were a few dozen. Now there are over 12,000, divided into more than 400 teams, all playing football thanks to Mysa.

Competitions, at first confined to the shanty-town of Mathare, have spread right across Kenya and then the whole world. Invited by Pele to Rio de Janeiro for the Eco Games in 1992, the children of Mathare wrested victory from Brazil by 26 goals to 11 over five matches.

This was the beginning of an irresistible rise. Two years later, Mysa formed a professional team, Mathare United, which was promoted to the first division in 1998. Four children from the Mathare shanty-town now play for the Stars, Kenya's national team. And one of them, Evan Nyambaro, belongs to a first division club in Norway.

The secret of such success?

"We have grown up, eaten and worked together," explains Mathare United's coach, Gabriel Njoroge. Born in this shanty-town like all

the players in his team, this man, now aged about thirty, was living in a Catholic orphanage when Mysa was founded.

"My mother used to sell vegetables in the shanty-town and didn't have enough money to look after me and my four brothers and sisters," he recalls. "I left home and lived on the streets."

The youngsters of Mysa do not want just to play football. Above all, they want to improve the living conditions in their shanty-town.

"We formed this professional team to earn money so that we no longer had to rely on donations," emphasises Bob Munro.

The professional players at the club are all volunteers. As they are now comfortably off, they donate some of their fees to the association and each continues to give about 80 hours of unpaid work every month. With the other members of Mysa, they remove rubbish from the shanty-town, train junior teams, take part in campaigns for the prevention of AIDS or help children in prison. Football is therefore still a means rather than an end.

Football gives people confidence in themselves.

Bob Munro is certain of one thing: "The players who make a constructive contribution to their community are better on the pitch." Now, the youngsters of Mathare talk proudly about their shanty-town and have faith in their future. They do not all intend to be professional footballers. Most want to be doctors, lawyers, journalists or photographers.

"The thing I like about myself is that I couldn't care less what people say or think about me because, in the end, I know who I am," confides Maureen Mak'Opiyoko, a young 15 year-old girl who plays in a football team at Mysa. She hopes one day to become President of the Republic of Kenya, and why shouldn't she!

UKIMWI

by Ingeborg Eliassen

translated by K. Stewart Kreisman

They gave me beer and said that those who drank of this brew never again yearn for home.

They said that a person such as I should not have heavy work, should lead others. But they let me pay for my indulgence with work. They let me get blisters on my hands and scratch myself on thorns.

They taught me the words, but I never learned enough to be able to laugh when they laughed. The whole time it was the others and me. They removed sand fleas from my toes and I handed out condoms. I planted grain and ate cornmeal with them. I listened to their stories and told mine. The entire time I waited for the big WE to fill my breast. I was lonely among people who counted me as one of their own.

I sneak away from the feast. Sit myself down and look up at the swarm of stars. First, I look at the nearest, then discover that further out there are yet more. Gradually I get more depth of vision. Countless stars of different size, with different strengths and at different distances. It is beautiful but elusive and foreign. I do not know it now.

My new people had nothing but good feelings for me and I for them, but I knew solidarity for only a short breath. This disappointed me. I decided to travel home. They asked how I could leave them. It pleased me that they wanted me there. They asked if the beer had not worked. I said that I had never been able to become accustomed to the taste – that I presumably hadn't drunk enough.

We had to fetch a calf – a calf of a new breed which would grow and give more milk than the cows they had before. It was not my idea, but they wanted it. I thought that they perhaps would not be able to give the calf the care it needed, that it would get unknown diseases which they couldn't cure. But they wanted it this way, so I pushed the thought from me. I thought instead how it would grow and live here after I had left. I thought that it would give nourishment to children, that it would breed new calves that would give nourishment to new children. I thought it would be a farewell gift.

It is a day's journey by truck. In the grey dawn I pick up Kaijage and Boai by the large avocado tree. They fasten their seat belts. They know that I demand it. They know that I try to anticipate all accidents and unpleasantness. They know that

I don't leave anything in God's hands. Through the foliage of the avocado tree we see the sun come up. It is me and Kaijage and Boai in the car. We have a fine day ahead of us. Kaijage has a bag of boiled sweets from his shop. We each have a eucalyptus drop wrapped in cellophane. I drive down the slope. The way is dry and clear. Down on the plain beneath us lies the town with three small shops, the bar, the post office and the hospital.

"Stop," says Kaijage. They fumble with the belts. Kaijage must help Boai to release the button. They bid me stop. Here. Right now. They want out of the trunk. I ask them to explain. They point at a nurse in newly pressed white uniform who has appeared at the edge of the road. She waves. They must get out. I, too, step out of the vehicle.

"Come," she says. Her black fingers grasp the air before me, as they do when they wave someone towards them.

On the slope down the road, in the shadows, a dark form is half sitting, half lying. A young woman. Her gaze is empty. Across her lap lies a wet baby. The umbilical chord from its navel pulsates.

Kaijage and Boai have disappeared. The nurse bids the young woman hold on to the baby while we lift her up. It's a long way up to the truck-bed. She is slender but heavy. We must lay her down on the road in order to get a better grip. The nurse scolds her for not having a firm hold on the wet baby. We lift her into the truck.

I pull up outside the hospital. Other nurses come and take hold of the young woman and her child. I have a strange thought about the baby perhaps being named after me, or perhaps being called "She Who Came With Truck".

"Blood!" I cry in my own language. I have blood on my dress and down my body. On my feet. "Help me, God!" I think. I have a scratch down on my foot from the thorn thicket.

I think of how I have been working during the recent clearing, shifting thorn bushes, and there been scratched, while people around me had thrown away condoms and infected each other. Half the population of the village had tainted blood.

I feel emotion swell in me. I want to be angry with her, the nurse who stopped me, who caught me up in this. I look at her; she stands with the incongruous pillbox hat on the frizzled head.

She, too, has blood on herself, on the white uniform-dress, on her hands.

"Blood," I say. "Yes," she says and goes inside. She comes back with cottonwool and a large bottle of disinfectant. I rinse my hands. The wet cottonwool ball absorbs the blood and becomes red. I pour disinfectant over the wound on my foot. I moisten a new one.

I rinse my arms and body. She stands by my side and washes away the blood from her body. My tears fall silently down and mingle with the disinfectant. I had better wash the wound on my foot again. Soundless weeping. Let the tears cleanse. Find a roll of toilet paper in the glove compartment, blow the nose.

"We should have used gloves," I say. "Yes," she replies "We should have used gloves... but I was on my way to work... just got there... didn't think."

Is it over now? I ask myself. The thought does not linger, it is washed away by tears. I hear the nurse rather than me – Msahada – the word means both "help" and "gift". We take each other's hands.

I drive home. Remove the dress. Wash the face, hands and feet. Will investigate the wound, check if I have more small scratches. I look at the wound but don't know what I see. I feel strangely light. Put on a clean dress. Try to think about the young woman and the newborn child. The thought will not hold. They should be just two strangers on the road. But the nurse – we stood side by side and washed blood. I had taken care not to use too large cottonwool balls. I thought they had so few resources at the hospital. It was just the two of us. Forever linked by the same dread.

I put the sandals in the wash basin and find a pair of shoes. Walk out to the vehicle. Climb in. Drive. Kaijage and Boai are waiting in the shadow beneath the big avocado tree. Kaijage takes out the crumpled bag containing the eucalyptus drops. I ask why they had disappeared. They say that a woman would feel degraded at being seen by a man while in such a condition. They say that this is their custom. But when you make the baby under a bush with a woman, I say, you have no trouble helping? They laugh. I tell them that I feel that this custom is very convenient for men. They laugh even more. I don't mention the blood and the wound on my foot. Kaijage begins a new round with the eucalyptus drops.

The calf is a beautiful red-brown, like the cows at home. I watch while Kaijage and Boai and two youths lift the calf into the truck. The day draws to a close. When we pull up by the fencing the sun sinks in the western sky. The other cows come and greet the new calf.

I go into my house. Light a lamp. Think that I am tired, but that I will be unable to sleep. I lie down and await the angst. It doesn't come. "UKIMWI." I'm searching for words behind the letters: "infection which weakens the strength to resist." I am of a mind to pit myself against it; it is their disease, not mine. There is a fifty percent chance that her blood was infected. I try to judge how great is the chance that my wound is vulnerable. Fifty, thirty or ten? I think that the chance is small, and if I take fifty percent from a small chance it becomes even smaller. I realise this yardstick is useless. I have no control over this. Not I, not the nurse, not the others. As for us, I think, we must take what the morrow will bring.



Has Europe become a magnet for migrants?

by Valérie Michaux

In June of last year, customs officials in Dover discovered the bodies of 58 Chinese nationals who had suffocated in the back of a truck as they attempted to infiltrate "Fortress Europe". "Dying to gain entry to Europe" is just as much of a reality in the Straits of Gibraltar, where every day African exiles lose their lives in their desperate attempts to reach the shores of Spain. Amid all this, illegal immigration networks are growing all the time, revealing a veritable trafficking in human beings. It's a lucrative business and one that looks set to thrive. We talked to Jean-Louis De Brouwer, Head of Immigration and Asylum in the European Commission Justice and Home Affairs Directorate-General.

We are in an impossible situation. As long as Europe needs migrants for its more thankless tasks, and as long as unemployment figures continue to fall and workforces continue to decline, potential exiles in ever growing numbers will continue to do everything they can to gain entry, illegally if necessary. The UN has published a report advocating immigration as a means of combating the problem of "declining and ageing populations". According to this report, Europe will have to admit somewhere in the region of 80 million people by the year 2050 if it is to bring its workforce back up to acceptable levels. For the time being, immigration remains the responsibility of the individual European States. Given the increasing numbers of immigrants, however, Europe's 15 Member States are looking to coordinate their immigration policies...

Europe seems to be moving towards harmonisation of its immigration policies. What kind of framework are we looking at?

From now on, the European Union will be in a position to decide collectively on immigration issues. We are in the process of drawing up a much more coordinated and transparent approach leading to more streamlined control within the individual countries. We're talking here about jurisdiction at national level, but the Member States will work together to agree a number of shared key objectives and to establish common central policies that will not have

to be sanctioned by Brussels. As things stand at the moment, European policy can be defined in terms of four key objectives: relations with third countries and countries of transit, protection of those in legitimate need (ie respect for the right to asylum), integration and fair treatment of migrants who have acquired legal status within the European Union, and efficient management of migration flows, which in fact concerns the fight against illegal immigration. This humanitarian dimension was introduced in 1999 at the Tampere summit in Finland, largely as a result of the crises that followed the break-up of former Yugoslavia, which caused a mass influx of refugees into Europe. What you might call the European asylum system - although in reality no such thing exists - ground to a complete halt. Indeed, the majority of European countries have had to address the issue of asylum at some time or other, either theoretically in political debate or practically in response to a real crisis. The Tampere summit therefore recognised the need to develop a specific approach to the asylum issue.

"Co-development" is one of the four key objectives, which implies a link between emigration and development aid. How does this work?

Co-development is just one small aspect of the much larger issue of relations with third countries of origin and transit. I think it would be in the interests of all concerned if they just handled everything to

do with relations with third countries of origin and transit together under the single heading "co-development". The French Presidency sees "co-development" as a form of relations with the country of origin whereby the migrant plays an active role in the development process while taking advantage of his time in the host country to acquire formal training or capital, which he can then transfer to his own country. Conversely, "co-development" sees the migrant as a vehicle for importing goods, services, and cultural signs or symbols in the anthropological sense of the term. We are looking at a highly specific form of managing relations with the country of origin, using the emigrant as an active player. It's an interesting approach and certainly worth pursuing. The problem lies in its actual implementation. Although the idea works well on paper, it is not likely to be something that will transpose easily from one Member State to another.

Do you think that pouring more aid into development is likely to stem the flow of immigrants?

In the long run, structural economic development measures, together with measures geared towards political stability, will help to alleviate migratory pressures. However, the issue is far from clear-cut. A meeting of ministers to finalise the Cotonou Agreement triggered a lengthy and heated debate on the subject. A great many politicians, international organisations and NGOs have categorically contested such an argument, viewing it as a form of exploitation of development aid. The way I see it, a common immigration policy can only succeed if it is implemented on a global basis and incorporates the issue of relations with third countries of origin and transit. If you talk about migration without considering the conditions of development and wealth of the countries in question, that is intellectual fraud. On the other hand, I think that saying "let's give a bit of money to Morocco and Tunisia and there won't be a single Tunisian or Moroccan migrant left" is also a form of intellectual fraud. The people most likely to emigrate are generally subject to political or safety constraints; they might be fleeing poverty, torture or civil unrest, and no amount of development aid will



50 illegal immigrants take refuge in the Saint Ignatius chapel in Antwerp

stop them fleeing. I am sure that in the long run, as the situation is slowly redressed, it will be possible to eliminate some of the push factors, but it will take time. Meanwhile we're faced with intellectual fraud in the form of a supposedly humanist argument that leaves public opinion under the impression that promoting development aid will put a stop to all those Guinean children freezing to death in the undercarriages of planes flying to Brussels. That just isn't the case!

would it be true to say that the European Union has adopted a rather 'schizophrenic' attitude in all of this, welcoming highly qualified immigrants but also turning its back on those without the necessary qualifications?

This takes us back to the United Nations report on demographic balance. Population studies have brought to light a number of failings, but estimates of how far they extend vary widely. Personally, I feel we would be better advised to choose alternative political instruments to "replacement migration". Having said this, it is true that gaps in the population, and their associated damaging effects can be "offset" by a greater intake of immigrants, at least as a temporary measure, but expert opinion is divided on the matter. The way I see it, as far as migration for work purposes is concerned, we have to think logically and recognise that it is in our own interest. The reason we let in seasonal workers to pick early crops in Spain, or experts in new technology or

nurses, as in the case of the Netherlands, is simply down to labour shortages. And it's no good letting the whole "brain drain" notion worry us. On the other hand, there is a class of migrants over whom we still have no control. Dubbed "the Uninvited" by a British journalist, they neither seek protection nor have they been invited on account of their professional skills or areas of expertise, nor are they here to join their families. They are simply here because they've heard conditions are better than in their own countries! Currently, the most problematic area for us is asylum, and this is precisely where you find people in the "Uninvited" category. The challenge facing us today is that of reducing this category by introducing immigration policies geared towards unskilled workers, who make up the majority of "the Uninvited". The only solution is to ensure that these people have no desire to leave their countries...

Is the EU not contradicting itself by announcing its intention to help the countries of origin become stabilised and develop, but then depriving them of the most highly trained and skilled members of their workforce?

I've always believed that migration policies are unnecessary in the case of people with a high level of skill, regardless of the area of their expertise. These people are going to travel how and when they want, anyway. Geographical mobility increases with culture. The more educated people are, the greater their cultural experience and the greater their aptitude for mobility. If a surgeon who is highly trained and very skilled at his job has no desire to return to his country of origin, there will always be a place for him on the European job market! It's no good having qualms because of this brain drain theory! It is the less qualified people that pose the greatest threat; they are less mobile and take the asylum route, believing it to be their only means of getting into a Member State.

Have you set up any partnership agreements with countries to discourage their people from exile?

One of the strategies subscribed to by a good many Member States and international organisations

— such as the IOM (International Organisation for Migration) — is the introduction of information campaigns in the countries of origin. These may take the form of dissuasion campaigns of the type "don't come", an approach adopted by the Australian authorities, who introduced terrifying dissuasion campaigns. In my view, there are more subtle methods of persuading populations that traffickers will take them to hell and not heaven. Or they may take the form of a message informing people of the conditions they have to meet in order to gain entry to an EU Member State. It's a path we need to examine more closely because the people behind these campaigns are convinced they're successful.

Several Central European countries are in the process of applying for EU membership. Won't this make the EU a new eldorado for migrants from these countries?

It is vital that we play down the whole "enlargement and migration" debate. Numerous studies show that the impact will not be as great as people seem to think. The problem will be most pressing during the transition period, as was the case with Spain and Portugal. It will take several years to reduce the economic differential to an extent where the desire to emigrate will disappear. What we should be worried about, however, is migration between the potential members and their neighbouring countries that will remain outside Europe. According to the IOM, the majority of countries that look set to be part of the enlargement process are experiencing exactly the same problems of declining populations as the current EU Member States. Given the fact that the standard of living in these countries will increase when they join the EU, they in turn run the risk of becoming extremely attractive targets for the flows of immigrants from immediately adjacent regions, such as the Ukraine, Moldavia, Byelorussia, and even countries in central Asia such as Chechnya and Kyrgyzstan. This would transform the issue of migration into a completely new issue of border control!

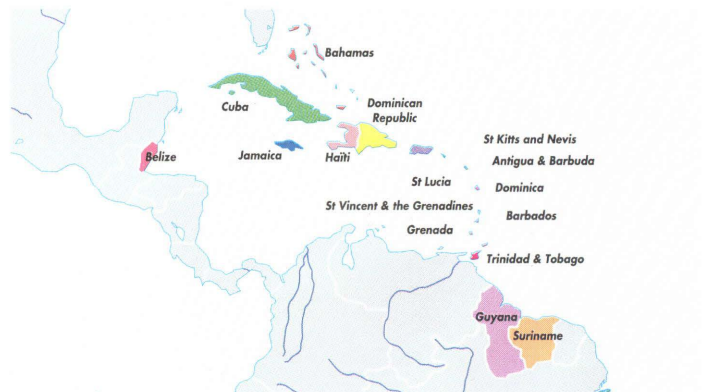
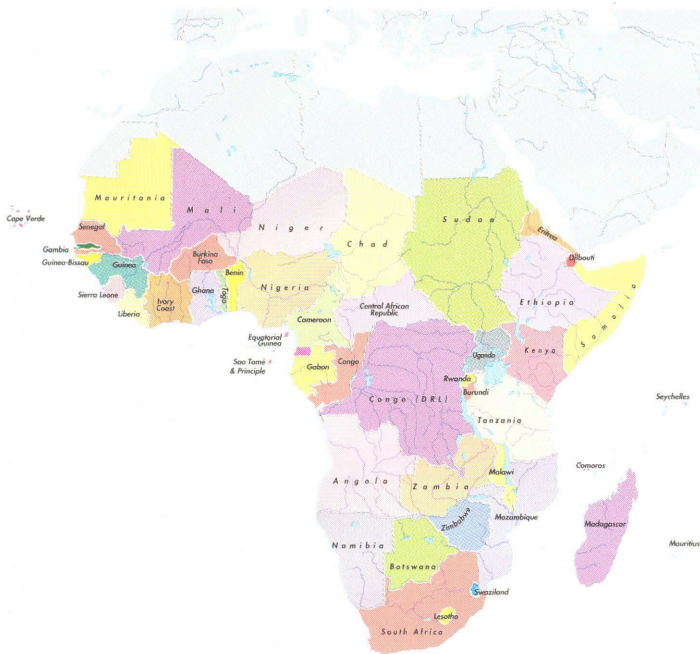


Austria
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 Sweden
 United Kingdom
France
Territorial collectivities
 Mayotte

St Pierre and Miquelon
Overseas territories
 New Caledonia
 and dependencies
 French Polynesia
 French Southern and Antarctic
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Netherlands
Overseas countries
 Netherlands Antilles:
 Bonaire, Curaçao, St Martin,
 Saba, St Eustache
 Aruba
Denmark
Country having special
relations with Denmark
 Greenland

United Kingdom
Overseas countries and territories
 Anguilla
 British Antarctic Territory
 British Indian Ocean Territory
 British Virgin Islands
 Cayman Islands
 Falkland Islands
 Southern Sandwich Islands
 and dependencies
 Montserrat
 Pitcairn Island
 St Helena and dependencies
 Turks and Caicos Islands

The European Union



The 78 ACP States*

Angola	Dominican Republic	Malawi	Senegal
Antigua and Barbuda	Equatorial Guinea	Mali	Seychelles
Bahamas	Eritrea	Marshall islands	Sierra Leone
Barbados	Ethiopia	Mauritania	Solomon Islands
Belize	Fiji	Mauritius	Somalia
Benin	Gabon	Micronesia	South Africa
Botswana	Gambia	Mozambique	Sudan
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Namibia	Suriname
Burundi	Grenada	Nauru	Swaziland
Cameroon	Guinea	Niger	Tanzania
Cape Verde	Guinea Bissau	Nigeria	Togo
Central African Republic	Guyana	Niue	Tonga
Chad	Haiti	Palau	Trinidad & Tobago
Comoros	Ivory Coast	Papua New Guinea	Tuvalu
Congo	Jamaica	Rwanda	Uganda
Cook Islands	Kenya	St Kitts and Nevis	Vanuatu
Cuba*	Kiribati	St Lucia	Zambia
Democratic Republic of Congo	Lesotho	St Vincent and the Grenadines	Zimbabwe
Djibouti	Liberia	Samoa	
Dominica	Madagascar	São Tomé and Príncipe	

* Cuba was admitted as a new member of the ACP group in December 2000, but is not a signatory of the Cotonou Agreement.



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