



TERRAVIVA

The independent newspaper of the VII World Social Forum, Jan 20-25, Nairobi, Kenya



PAULINO MENEZES

► Qurratul-Ain-Tahmina

The estimated 50,000 participants at the Nairobi WSF needn't look far for signs of poverty. A bare seven kilometers east of the bustling Moi Stadium, along a dirt track, lie scattered settlements of mud, plank and corrugated iron houses. And many of the residents here have not heard of the World Social Forum.

It's a world away from the Forum's heated debates on 'Another World' and globalisation. Here young men and women are busy scratching out a living. At a nearby market, Mwangi James, who

sells chicken, said: "I know something is going on over there. But I don't really know what it is."

Peter Muiga, an electrician, added: "I would like to go to the Forum and be educated. But I heard you need to pay a lot at the gate. I don't have the money."

Organisers of the WSF are charging participants registration fees of up to Ksh2000 to plug a shortfall in the \$5 million needed to host the forum – Kenyans have to pay Ksh500.

Nairobi, the capital of one of the poorest countries in the world, presents a study in contrasts: here there is great wealth, as well as deep poverty – with all

the telltale signs of economic inequality that Forum participants want to wipe out.

The UN ranks it 152nd out of 177 countries in terms of human development, and the World Bank says the average annual income here is \$460.

Someone at the market called out, "They are trying to solve problems over there at the stadium" prompting James and Muiga to tot up a list of their problems: lack of money, little scope for education....

"To find something to eat," said Karmja, who has been looking for work for eight years. Another man showed a broken leg from a road accident: "I need

medicines."

Nairobi is also home to at least 200 slums, according to the UN Habitat Centre. Slums such as Kahawa Soweto, a stone's throw from the Forum, whose 4,000 residents say they place their hopes on what the Forum participants are doing and saying.

On Sunday, a Church group took Esthel Wangui and others from the slum to attend a WSF session on housing. "I liked it because they said they'll remove this kind of house that we live in," she said. "I would like to be in better houses. I understand that all these people have come to take care of our problems."

Building a Human Rights City
Mekatilili (4)

Across from gate 7

09:00 am - TODAY

SEMINAR. WORLD SOCIAL FORUM VII, 23 JAN

PART I Future of the Movements

11.00 am

12 IN Lower

PART II Future Movements of the Forum

14.30

12 IN Lower

PART III Political Parties and Progressive Governments

17:30 12 IN Lower

Voices Peter Waterman



When Labour Weds the Justice Movement...

More and more, labour issues are beginning to find common cause with the movement for global justice. It's a marriage of shared values.

Following the WSF at Porto Alegre in 2002, I wrote about 'The Still Unconsummated Marriage of International Unionism and the Global Justice Movement'. If the preparations for the Nairobi WSF are anything to go by, it looks as if we might be on course to celebrating at least an engagement.

There are two striking features about these preparations.

The first is that the newly-merged International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) is coming in forcefully, under the banner of 'Decent Work'.

The ITUC, firmly rooted in Western Europe, is joined in its campaign by a number of other NGOs, mostly of West European origin and with a similar social-democratic or social-reformist background. However, both unions and labour-oriented NGOs from the developing world can be expected to endorse Decent Work, which seems to mean the working conditions and rights that existed for many under the Welfare Capitalism of Western Europe before neo-liberal globalisation.

The second feature is the presence of autonomous labour groups with an orientation toward what may be called the 'Emancipation of Labour', which points to the new challenges facing global labour solidarity as a result of the current restructuring of work and workers.

Northern Trade Union Mergers

One significant labour development, quite separate and distinct from the WSF, is the current wave of union mergers, the

most important of which gave rise to the ITUC in November 2006. This excludes only the (formerly Communist) World Federation of Trade Unions. Another is the recently announced alliance of several major mines/metals/engineering/etc unions in the UK, Germany and the US.

This process is also occurring within countries. Such mergers or alliances suggest that the unions may be passing through a phase in which a major response of unions to capitalist globalisation and outsourcing, and state neo-liberalism was 'concession bargaining' – that is, negotiating how much worker income or how many union rights were to be given away. Most of this activity is centred in the North, and its impact on the South, the East (ex-Communist) or the majority of the world's working people outside unions (80 per cent) is as yet unknown.

Consummation?

Finally we have to remember the millions of Chinese labourers – urban and rural, regular or casual – who have succeeded in imposing themselves against their highly authoritarian state and its official trade union.

Such varied processes may lead to the consummation of a marriage between labour and the global justice movement. Nairobi should provide an indication of how far this process is going and what shape it might take.

Peter Waterman is a lifelong union member, who has taught on and written about trade unionism in the Third World and internationally.

Voices Patrizia Sentinelli



A Continent of Hope and Innovation

Nairobi 2007 is a chance to acknowledge the role of African social activists and provide a platform for an exchange of ideas.

The first World Social Forum to take place in Africa is a unique opportunity to highlight the tremendous work that African civil society carries out everyday in spite of innumerable difficulties.

The message this forum conveys is clear: it is time for the world to consider Africa for what it is – a continent in political and social turmoil. Nairobi will contribute for this to happen, by trying to restore the political dimension that Africa deserves, and prevent it to be merely considered as the land "to be helped" through traditional international cooperation policies.

Nairobi 2007 is also a chance to acknowledge the role of African social actors as promoters of innovation through their daily practices, which has been one of the goals of the World Social Forum since its creation.

Africa's Leading Role

To fight poverty, we must start with local communities, by offering peoples in many African regions the possibility of playing a leading role in their own recovery. I'm thinking, for example, of the many women who have worked to sustain local

economies. We will have an opportunity to meet some of these women and listen to their proposals in Nairobi – and in Bamako on March 2 and 3, at the world meeting of African women which is being organised by the Italian Cooperation.

I hope that through the WSF, the 'Northern world' will understand that for co-operation in the so-called poor countries to be successful, the peoples of those countries must be consulted and heard. The goal in Nairobi is therefore the exchange of ideas, because we have a lot to learn from Africa.

Apart from strongly denouncing the failure of liberal policies and the war that seems to function to keep those policies in force, I hope this Forum leads to concrete ideas on how to preserve our common good – water, land, energy and food – and strengthen human, social and political rights in every country.

Exchanging Ideas

I believe in co-operation that does not come from the top, as has frequently happened in the past, but which listens to Africa's voice. To

put this approach into practice, and at my initiative, the Italian government has decided to contribute financially to the Nairobi Forum.

Africa is a politically significant continent, with an active and organised civil society, which after centuries of submission – first to colonialism and then to liberal policies – wants to hold its own in the global context.

Unlike previous Forums, when only parliamentarians took part, the Italian contribution this year underlines the interest of my country in the world civil society represented in Nairobi. We are here not only to discuss but also to witness that through good practices that it is possible to build a fairer world, with more solidarity. A new world, possible and necessary, radically different from this one, in which war is eradicated and in which peace initiatives focus on the people and the environment, and not on profit.

I wish you all a good Social Forum!

Patrizia Sentinelli is Italy's Viceminister of Foreign Affairs.

OMAR GALINDO



Forum unable to reach millions for lack of resources

Communication not a WSF priority

“Community-level media is a step towards democratisation, but it’s not enough ... If 93 percent of the audience is still captive of the monopolistic structure of corporate media, we will make little progress in enhancing democracy”.

► Alejandro Kirk

For all the talk and debate about the key role of media, communication and information in constructing the social movement and bringing about a just and democratic world order, the issue “is not important enough to be in the World Social Forum budget”, Roberto Savio, head of the WSF’s communication group, said.

The WSF is unable to produce any substantial information, either before or after the gathering. “We are failing to provide information to the media and we are failing in communicating with the wider constituency of WSF followers,” Savio said.

Savio warned that while the WSF attracted over 80,000 inches of newspaper-space worldwide in its first years, this had fallen to just 1,000 inches last year.

Reaching millions

The founder of the IPS news agency and member of the WSF international committee was a panelist at the “Fo-



Spreading the word: Mario Lubetkin and Roberto Savio

rum on Information and Communication”, along with Aram Aharonian, Director General of Telesur, the Caracas-based Latin American television network, Leyla Callejas, of Amarc (World Association of Community Radios), and Rita Freire, of Ciranda, an association of journalists and alternative media.

The debate was moderated by Mario Lubetkin, Director General of IPS.

Lubetkin stressed that only by implementing a communication and information policy would the WSF reach the tens of millions of people who had similar views as those participating at the Nairobi forum but who were not aware or unable to take part.

For Aharonian, “community-level media is a step towards democratisation, but it’s not enough... If 93 percent of audience is still captive of the monopolistic structure of corporate

media, we will make little progress in enhancing democracy”.

Greater Diversity

Aharonian believes the launch of the Telesur news network will assist in giving a greater diversity of news coverage. Telesur network was launched in July 2005 by Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay and Cuba with the aim of counterbalancing CNN and other, mainly-US, media in ways similar to Al Jazeera in the Middle East.

Leyla Callejas, of Amarc, highlighted the effectiveness of community radio in spreading the WSF’s deliberations to millions of people around the world: “The WSF needs a new vision because the notion that information and communication are tools to create awareness and spread information – but not necessarily an open space for debate and action – is still widespread,” Callejas said.

Mapping the Body

► Martin Adhola

Ancient traditions of mapping the body to communicate and express feelings have been revived.

A dozen youths from six countries – Colombia, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Switzerland and Tanzania – used ancient traditions to communicate their inner feelings and to disseminate messages on HIV/AIDS, peace, empowerment and development.

At an exhibition at the WSF, the youth – working under the aegis of the Terres des Homes Schweiz, a Swiss development organisation – said they had resorted to the ancient methods of communication to relay their messages.

Raisa Bonjour, from Switzerland, said this form of art is a unique way of communicating one’s inner feelings: “It is a powerful instrument of communication by the youth to the youth to address the different situations that they go through everyday.”

Taken from African rock paintings, the illustrations have been given colour and are painted in modern batiks that embrace technology, but retain basic communication concepts.

“The paintings that we are seeing today are a powerful statement on the lives of the youth,” said Irene Bush, the project manager.

The young men and women illustrated their past, present and expected futures in the paintings.

Robert Ngatia of the Kasarani Intergrated Programme, said “This is a simple and powerful instrument of communication that can be harnessed by the youth to communicate what they think about themselves and reveal their inner most feelings.”

See picture, page 7 ►

Unions and NGOs: Stronger Together?

► Gavin Yates

The presence of a large number of trade unions at the Nairobi WSF points to a possible warming of relations between the unions and NGOs, which have traditionally been cool.

The trend towards bigger and more powerful trades unions was highlighted dramatically last year when the world’s two largest workers’ organisations – the International Free Trade Confederation and World Confederation of Labour – merged to form the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

Claire Courteille, a senior Policy Advisor with the ITUC, told TerraViva that the dramatic pace of globalisation was the main factor behind the decision to merge.

“The most important reason (to combine) was we would be stronger if were united. Globalisation is evolving so quickly and we needed to react. Unions

are traditionally slow to take important decisions and it was vital that we unified forces,” she said.

More credible?

“We are only three months old so it is early days, but if the World Bank or World Trade Organisation have one organisation to deal with, you are more credible and have more power. We have 168 million members around the world so governments and institutions cannot deny access and they have to talk to unions and working people.

It is not just globalization that concerns the trade union movement but also other issues such as the right to decent work. This is not just in the developing world but also in Europe.

“Workers’ rights are a global problem but it manifests itself in different ways. In Africa the lack of formal work is the real problem; in Asia it’s more about what kind of conditions you are working in. In Europe workers’ rights

need to be protected as companies seek to find the cheapest sources of labour. Decent work is a concept that applies all over the world,” she told TerraViva.

Thaw After Frost

Relationships between unions and civil society appear to be warming after some frosty ties in the past. ITUC itself used the springboard of the World Social Forum to launch their Decent Work for Decent Lives campaign alongside SOLIDAR, Social Alert International and other NGOs, proving that global level unions and NGOs can work together effectively.

Courteille added: “I can talk on behalf of the members of the union as we have a mandate but NGOs can be more flexible and they can go and decide what they want to do. This has created tension between unions and civil society in the past but I believe that the future is one where we work together. We are committed to it.”

Almost 50,000 turn up for the first-ever WSF in Africa, yet there is ...

A 'visible absence' from other South continents

In spite of the logistical nightmare, it was important for the WSF to be held in Africa.

► Zarina Geloo

Nearly 50,000 participants had registered for the World Social Forum by the start of proceedings on Sunday but the high cost of attending have emerged as a major obstacle to increased participation by civil society from the rest of the South.

Oduor Ongwen, a member of the Kenya Social Forum which took the lead in organising the WSF, said 46,000 participants had registered and "there are others who are participating in the workshops whom we have not captured in our data".

Responding to questions regarding a lack of national representation at Monday's WSF media briefing, Ongwen said there was "a visible absence" of participation from other South continents like Latin America and



Photos Paulino Menezes

Crowded media briefing

Asia, for the same reasons that there was little participation from Africa in the forums organised in Porto Allegre, Brazil – money.

Constrained Resources

"In Porto Allegre or Mumbai, African countries did not participate in the numbers they are here today because of financial resources. By the same token the Latin American and Asian countries do not have a heavy presence here

because they too are constrained by resources."

There were also concerns raised about registration charges which excluded some Kenyan NGOs from participating in the Forum.

Ongwen said organisers had to raise \$5-million in order to cover the costs of hosting the conference. It had not managed to raise these funds despite support from some solidarity movements.

Moema Miranda from *iBase* in Brazil

whose group was key in the organisation of the WFS said the Porto Allegre forums were supported by the 'friendly' government of Brazil and so was able to meet the costs of hosting the Forum with little difficulty. This was not the case in Kenya, where the government gave its political support but did not provide funds.

Rocky Road

Professor Edward Oyugi, executive director of the Social Development Network, said the Kenyan government was involved in the planning of the WSF in as far as facilitating issues such as security and immigration.

Africa Social Forum co-ordinator Toufik ben Abdalla said the route to having the 7th WSF held in Africa was a long and rocky.

He said whereas the Porto Allegre WSF was hosted by one country, this year's forum was being organised by social movements in all 53 countries of Africa.

"In spite of the logistical nightmare, it was important for the WSF to be held in Africa. Africa represents the face of poverty and is an example of how bad policies affect the common person. It also forcefully reminds us of the need to take charge of our destiny. We need to reinforce our voice and make it heard."

Europe through Africa's Eyes

► Martin Adhola

Does the act of forgiveness have a role to play in development? Participants at a seminar convened by the Italian Peace Roundtable to review Europe through Nairobi's eyes raised issues of guilt and forgiveness as a precursor to real development.

Lotti Flavio, the convener of the session, took the first step and apologised on behalf of the European community in general.

"I will keep repeating this and am not ashamed to ask for forgiveness from our African brothers. We have wronged these people in the past and in the present and its only fair that we say sorry before we embark on a journey to correct the wrongs," he said.

Genuine Partner

Flavio said mistakes made by

European governments were making it difficult for Africa to accept Europe as a genuine partner in their development.

Fatma Ali, a delegate from Zanzibar, said social movements in Europe needed to pressure their governments to ask for forgiveness before seeking to help Africa: "Europe has not rectified the mistakes of the past and those mistakes are being repeated using different strategies. Until those are done, Europe will be seen as a major obstacle to the development and upliftment of African people."

Reparations

In the recent past there has been a call by activists in Africa for reparations from Europe for crimes such as slavery. In Kenya, for example, freedom fighters are currently undertaking research the viability of suing the British government for the various



Africa is looking towards Europe for real change

atrocities committed during the Kenyan uprising known as Mau Mau.

Brian Kagoro, the head of policy at ActionAid, said it was time Africans started voting out governments that were complacent with the West.

"Any government that goes against the will of its people by undertaking to fulfill policies that are not in the interest of its people does not deserve to be in power," he said.

MDG Debate

Millennium Pressures Mount Amid Broken Promises

“If a country is serious and their development partners are serious, then the MDGs are achievable. It comes down to political will but cannot be achieved alone. It needs pressure from local activists at the grassroots level to be successful.”

► **Gavin Yates**

The Global Campaign Against Poverty (GCAP) on Monday promised an escalation of efforts to pressure governments around the world to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are met.

In September 2000, 189 government leaders committed their countries to eight goals to be met by 2015.

However, campaigners from GCAP told the WSF that civil society pressure would have to increase if MDGs had any chance of being met. They accused Western governments of being short on substance and announced a series of days of action culminating on the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October this year.

Hellen Tombo, who is a Kenyan Youth Movement Leader and the African Representative of GCAP, said promises have been broken: “Our leaders have not been account-



Salil Shetty, Director of the UN's Millennium Campaign

able; our leaders have not been transparent and they have taken us for granted.”

‘Beautiful reports’

At the last count, the majority of governments had failed to make their targets – leading critics to label the MDGs as the Missing Development Goals. Tombo said many governments had produced “beautiful reports” but had let down the developing world. Civil society shadow reports had also been ignored by governments.

GCAP outlined a number of key dates for activists’ diaries commencing with a day of action on International Women’s Day on March 8. This will be followed by events which are due to coincide with the G8 meeting being held in Berlin, Germany, in early July.

On July 7, 2007 – 07/07/07 – the next White Band Day will be marked by a call for governments to hit the target of delivering 0.7 per-

cent of GDP in aid to developing countries.

Achievable

Salil Shetty, the Director of the UN’s Millennium Campaign, told TerraViva that he believed that the MDG were still achievable if activists could persuade governments to stand up to their responsibilities.

“Statistically it’s a mixed bag – the world is on track at an aggregate level because of the economic success of India and China. But this is not the best way to interpret the statistics. Mozambique, Burkina Faso and Bangladesh are on track to hit their targets, so it is possible,” said Shetty.

“If a country is serious and their development partners are serious, then the MDGs are achievable. It comes down to political will but cannot be achieved alone. It needs pressure from local activists at the grassroots level to be successful.”

Use Local Money for Global Goals

► **Judy Waguma**

African governments have been urged to link the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to their local government projects in order to ensure that these can be achieved by the year 2015.

Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi, secretary general of the United and Local Government of Africa, says local authorities have enough resources to achieve the MDGs: “The resources exist within our governments, but we use them for all the wrong reasons. If we included every goal in the projects we have within local government, then Africa will not only realise the 2015 target – it will also wipe out poverty.”

Elong Mbassi said the MDGs were essential to ensure that ‘Another World is Possible’.

The eight MDGs, agreed to by all countries, range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education – all by the target date of 2015.

“It’s a big setback that in our times, we are still losing women during childbirth and that there are people in the slums who still live without a decent meal, yet there are a lot of resources being mismanaged within our governments,” said Silvia Mwachuli, a resident of Nairobi, Kenya.

Linking these goals with the local government projects was a noble idea but “ordinary people” needed to own these local government projects first, said Mwachuli.

Elong Mbassi said organisations needed to ensure there were better mechanisms to monitor how resources were used.

“It is also important to train our personnel and not assume that every one understands what these goals are,” he added.

However, Elong Mbassi urged organisations to focus on results rather than targets so that, “if we do not meet the deadline of 2015, we can still look back and say that indeed, we had improved someone’s life”.

Spreading the Feminist Word

► **Judy Waguma**

Feminism is a movement with a focus to stop all social injustices against women, says Saida Ali, the Programmes Director of the Young Women’s Leadership Institute (YWLI).

“However, we have to reinvent feminism through a new language that is accessible to everyone,” she said.

Ali said that, through sharing experiences at the World Social Forum, young women from around the world had created a platform for common interests.

This platform, she said, would build an alliance with feminists in other countries to find common strategies and forge a way

forward to end injustices against women.

“Fighting for an end to oppression and discrimination against women of all walks is what feminism really stands for,” she added.

Narrating some experiences of women in Kenya, Ali recounted incidents of gender-based violence.

“Women have been undressed in public because of their dress code, and some lesbians raped because the public felt they wanted to prove a point,” she added.

YWLI member Kathambi Kinoti said that Africa still had to come to a common understanding of what feminism was and what feminists stood for.

Californian resident Camilla Chavez



Face of a feminist...

said feminists wanted to play a constructive role: “We young feminists believe it is important to contribute to the construction of a democratic, diverse movement.”



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NGUZU ZA WATU

Kutumia Michoro

► **Martin Adhola**

Mbinu za hapo awali za kutumia michoro kuwasiliana na kutoa hisia zimefululiwa tena.

Vijana kutoka mataifa sita ambayo ni Kenya, Afrika Kusini, Colombia, Switzerland, Tanzania na Mozambique walitumia mbinu za hapo kale kuwasiliana kuhusu hisia zao za ndani, kupasha ujumbe kuhusu Ukimwi, amani, kuwezesha na maendeleo.

Huku wakiandaa onyesho lao la kwanza wakati wa mkutano unaongazia maswala ya kijamii, vijana hao wanaohudumu chini ya *aegis of The Terres des Homes Schweiz*, ambalo ni shirika la maendeleo la Uswizi walisema waliamua kutumia mbinu za jadi za mawasiliano ili kupitisha ujumbe wao.

Raisa Bonjour kutoka Uswizi alisema hii ilikuwa mbinu ya kipekee ya kuwasiliana kuonyesha hisia za ndani: "Ni chombo muhimu kwa vijana kuwasiliana baina yao ili kuelezea hali mbali mbali wanazopitia kila siku".

Ikiwa imetumika kutoka michoro ya mawe ya zamani Barani Afrika, michoro hii imechapwa urembo kwa kutumia rangi na nta (batiki) hali ambayo bali na kudhirisha teknolojia inadumisha njia za mawasiliano.

Irene Bush ambaye ni Mkurugenzi alisema mradi ulifaulu kuwashirikisha vijana: "Michoro tunayoiona siku hizi ni taarifa muhimu kuhusu maisha ya vijana".

Vijana hao 12 walitoa taswira kuhusu yaliyopita, yaliyomo na yanayotarajiwa



Raisa Bonjour

kuhusiana na sanaa ya uchoraji.

Bw. Robert Ngatia kutoka mradi wa pamoja wa Kasarani (Kasarani Intergrated Programme) alisema "hiki ni chombo rahisi na muhimu

cha kuwasiliana ambacho kinaweza kuimarishwa na vijana ili kuwasilisha ujumbe kuhusu wanavyojihisi na wakati huo kutoa hisia zao za ndani".

Tumieni raslimali za humu nchini kufikia malengo

► **Judy Waguma**

Serikali za Bara la Afrika zimehimizwa kujumuisha malengo ya Milenia kwenye miradi yake ili kuhakikisha kwamba shabaha hii imefikwa kufikia mwaka wa 2015.

Katibu Mkuu wa muungano wa Serikali za Wilaya Barani Afrika Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi anasema kwamba Serikali za Mitaa zina raslimali za kutosha kuziwezesha kufikia malengo ya Milenia: "Serikali zetu zina raslimali za kutosha lakini tunazitumia vibaya. Endapo tutahusisha kila lengo kwenye miradi tuliyo nayo kwenye serikali za wilaya, basi Bara la Afrika halitafikia shabaha yake ya 2015 bali pia litakandamiza umaskini."

Bw. Elong Mbassi alisema

malengo ya Milenia ni muhimu kwa kuhakikisha kwamba "Ulimwengu badala unawezekana".

Malengo nane ya Milenia yaliyokubaliwa na mataifa yote yanahusisha kupunguza kwa nusu kiwango cha umaskini, kumaliza ugonjwa wa Ukimwi na kutoa elimu ya msingi kwa wote kufikia mwaka wa 2015.

"Ni jambo linaloturudisha nyuma nyakati zetu tunapozidi kuwapoteza akina mama wakati wa kujifungua na kwamba kuna baadhi ya watu wanaoishi kwenye makao ya mabanda bila kupata lishe bora huku ikitiliwa maanani kuwa, tuna raslimali nyingi zinazotumiwa vibaya na serikali zetu" Akasema Silvia Mwachuli ambaye ni mkaazi wa jiji la Nairobi, Kenya.

Kuhusisha malengo haya kwenye miradi ya Serikali za Mitaa ni wazo nzuri lakini "wananchi wa kawaida walihitaji kuimiliki kwanza" akasema Mwachuli.

Elong Mbassi alisema mashirika yalihatiji kuhakikisha kwamba kulikuwa na taratibu za kutathmini jinsi raslimali hizi zilivyotumika.

"Ni muhimu kutoa mafunzo kwa maafisa wetu na wala si kukisia kwamba kila mmoja wao anafahamu malengo haya" akaongeza.

Hata hivyo, Bw. Elong Mbassi aliyahimiza mashirika kuangazia matokeo bali na malengo ili "endapo hatutathimiza shabaha kufikia mwaka wa 2015, tunaweza kutazama nyuma na kusema kweli tumeimarisha hali ya maisha ya mtu fulani".

Tahariri **Mario Lubetkin**

Changamoto za mkutano wa Nairobi

Tumewasili katika mkutano wa saba wa maswala ya kijamii, kongamano la kwanza kabisa kuandaliwa Barani Afrika. Tumeshuhudia ufanisi wa mkutano mingine minne iliyoandaliwa Porto Alegre, Brazil na huko Mumbai India. Mnamo mwaka wa 2006, tulishiriki katika mkutano wa kwanza ulioandaliwa Bamako, Caracas na Karachi.

WSF imedhihirisha uwezo na nguvu zake miaka iliyopita kwa kuhamasisha mikutano ya maelfu ya watu kimaeneo, kimataifa na kutoka pembe mbali mbali za dunia na kupelekea kuwepo kwa matarajio na matumaini miongoni mwa mamilioni ya watu kote ulimwenguni, kwamba "ulimwengu mwingine unawezekana". Mikakati muhimu imebuka kutoka WSF kama vile kuandaa juhudi za pamoja mwaka wa 2003 kuhusiana na amani, kupinga vita na kampeini iliyofana sana iliyozinduliwa mwaka wa 2005 kupambana na umaskini.(GCAP).

Baada ya miaka 7, maswali mapya yameibuka kuhusiana na hali ya baadaye ya WSF. Je, vuguvugu hili linaelekea wapi? Je, malengo yake ya baadaye ni yapi? Je, vuguvugu hili litakabiliana vipi na mabadiliko makubwa na kuwa na matumaini?

Kila mmoja wetu anaweza kuwa na maswali mapya lakini ni muhimu kuangazia matumaini ya baadaye ya WSF.

Ni kwa sababu hiyo ambapo mashirika mengi mojawapo likiwa IPS linalokuletea TerraViva limekubali kujihusisha na shughuli mbali mbali zinazoangazia siku za awali za WSF, Nairobi. Madhumuni yake ni kufahamu yaliyotendeka miaka iliyopita kuhusiana na WSF, wajibu wa wanaharakati wa kijamii na kwa mujibu huu wajibu wa mikutano na pia uhusiano wake na mifumo ya kisiasa kwa kuzingatia serikali nyingi zilizoibuka tangu mwaka wa 2001 chini ya wafuasi wa WSF.

Sio tu kwa kupata majibu mahsusni lakini kwa kubuni taratibu za kujadiliwa baada ya mkutano wa Nairobi.

Mawasiliano lazima yachukue nafasi muhimu katika mjadala huu ulio wazi na wa haki. Ni kwa sababu hiyo ndipo tumefanya kazi na mashirika rafiki kuandaa mkutano wa tatu wa kimataifa kuhusu habari na mawasiliano chini ya muktadha wa WSF, kuzidi kuimarisha ufahamu kuhusu mawasiliano na kwa jumla jamii nzima.

Lakini, kwa wakati huo, lazima tuwe na vyombo vya mawasiliano vitakavyotuwezesha kuangazia hatua za kuanzia mjini Nairobi. Kama ilivyokawaida, IPS, itatekeleza wajibu wake.

Kwa washiriki wote wa kongamano la IPS mjini Nairobi, endeleeni kusoma jarida la TerraViva!

► **Mario Lubetkin**
Mkurugenzi wa IPS

Kasarani Musings



Paulino Menezes

Nairobi 2007: Is it time to engage Davos?

Interview Q. & A.

'We Have Proved That We Are Up To The Task'

Organising the WSF at Nairobi presented a daunting logistical challenge, not least because 2007 marks the first year in which Africa is serving as sole host of the event. TerraViva spoke to Onyango Oloo, national co-ordinator of the Kenya Social Forum, which is part of the 2007 WSF organising committee.

► Joyce Mulama

IPS: What were the main challenges that you encountered in organising this event?

OO: The main challenge was perhaps at the psychological level: overcoming perceptions, especially from outside Africa, that this job was perhaps too huge for us to handle as Africans. As one of my colleagues is fond of repeating: there was – is – a huge expectation of our collective failure and a very low expectation of our eventual success. We have proved that we are up to the challenge. The other significant challenge was around resources. It is a miracle that we have been able to make do with the resources at hand, which until recently were below 50 percent of what our budgetary target was.

IPS: What would pass as the most rewarding thing that you have encountered during the organisation of this year's WSF?

OO: The most rewarding thing is how people in Kenya and other parts of Africa welcomed the idea of the WSF to our part of the world. One of the immediate benefits of that has been the flow of volun-

teers rushing forward to help WSF Nairobi become a success.

IPS: What is the thing that you most want to happen at this event?

OO: That people will take from the World Social Forum renewed positive energy, additional contacts and networks, and own the process by going back to their respective local communities to work on specific social, cultural, political, economic and other concerns and issues – with a view to transforming their realities for the better.

IPS: What are your impressions of the forum so far?

OO: We have been working on this for over a year and now we can see the hustle and bustle; participants of all hues; people going to the workshops ... it started as an idea and now it is a reality. The mainstream press have also cottoned on to the issues. But this is only the beginning. The real impact of the forum will only be felt after it has ended. There have been some logistical miscues but an event of this magnitude has never been held in this country – I'm proud to be associated with it.

A Tale of Two Forums

Nairobi and the Swiss resort of Davos are set apart – not only physically but ideologically too. The Davos economic forum's belief in conventional Trickle Down is a world apart from the WSF's faith in building Another World.

► Hilmi Toros

The World Social Forum (WSF) in the Green City Under the Sun is carefree – up to 50,000 participants, many representing some of the world's worst slums, mull over the means to create 'Another Life.' And the downtrodden of the globe trekked or caravanned through dusty roads to fraternise and roam freely in a show of people power and against "the other forum."

The other one is the World Economic Forum (WEF), held in the icy and exclusive Swiss resort of Davos almost at the same time as the WSF. It is rigid and controlled – attended by a select global elite of around 2,400, among them 24 heads of government and 800 CEOs and chairpersons from the world's top 1,000 companies. Gliding down the Alps in private jets, they are surrounded by a ring of security and confined within a single overarching theme: 'Shaping the Global Agenda, The Shifting Power Equation.'

Set apart geographically and ideologically, the two forums may nevertheless have one thing in common: the use of power.

Business in the Driver's Seat

For the glitterati of Davos, the ills of the world can largely be solved with corporate and political power deciding what is best for the masses – business in the driver's seat and its effects trickling down.

At the Nairobi powwow, situated within a few kilometres of slums, power belongs to the people and they have the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

Through their economic and political domination, the Davos elite take decisions and set targets. Meanwhile, the World Social Forum, which originated as a protest against Davos in 2001, displays a raw power that is yet to be harnessed to transform civil society into "the next superpower," as has been predicted by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

If Davos is Davos and the WSF is its alternative, the twain may never meet. But Davos has already taken a bow for civil society. For 2007, it has garnered the support of more than a score of NGOs, including the chiefs of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Oxfam, Islamic Relief, Greenpeace International, International Trade Union Federation and Red Cross

and Red Crescent Societies.

But the WSF is yet to open its doors to the corporate world.

Time to Engage?

"We never thought of it," TerraViva was told by Prof. Edward Oyugi of the Social Development Network, a focal point for the Kenya Social Forum. "Actually, we can have them in a controversial engagement."

In the opinion of Ms. Moema Miranda, the firebrand Brazilian and a WFS organiser, "it would be useful to have interaction with the World Economic Forum, but not formally as WSF. Individual groups could do them better."

Oduor Ongwen, a Kenyan organiser of the WSF, takes a tough view of the WEF. "They are the captains of the industry," he told TerraViva. "Their concept of transfer of wealth is not for people but for the benefit of the corporate world. They don't believe that the life of a corporate chief is equal to the life of a slum dweller."

Then, what is the message from Nairobi to Davos?

"Oh, it's 'another world is possible,'" quipped Ms. Miranda.



Paula Fray

The full version of this interview can be found at www.ipsnews.net



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