THE BAMAKO APPEAL

The experience of more than five years of global gatherings of those people and organizations opposing neo-liberalism has led to the creation of a new collective conscience. The world, thematic, continental and national social forums and the Assembly of Social Movements have been the principal artisans of this conscience. Meeting in Bamako on Jan. 18, 2006, on the eve of the opening of the Polycentric World Social Forum, the participants during this day dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the Bandung Conference have expressed their concern with the task of defining other goals of development, creating a balance of societies, abolishing exploitation by class, gender, race and caste and marking the route to a new relation of forces between North and South.

The Bamako Appeal wants to contribute to the emergence of a new popular and historical subject and to consolidate the gains made at these meetings: the principle of the right to life for everyone; the overall orientation of a life together in peace, justice an diversity; the means to reach these goals at the local level and for all of humanity.

In order that an historical subject come into existence – one that is from the people, diverse and multipolar – it is necessary to define and promote alternatives capable of mobilizing social and political forces. The radical transformation of the capitalist system is the goal. The destruction of the planet and of millions of human beings, the individualist and consumerist culture that accompanies and nourishes this system and its imposition by imperialist powers are no longer acceptable, because what is at stake is the existence of humanity itself. Those alternatives should be nourished by the long tradition of popular resistance and also take into account all the short steps forward indispensable for the daily life of the victims.

The Bamako Appeal, built around the broad themes discussed in subcommittees, asserts the collective will to:

- (i) construct an internationalism of the peoples of the South and the North confronted with the ravages engendered by the dictatorship of financial markets and by the uncontrolled global deployment of the transnational firms;
- (ii) Construct the solidarity of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas confronted with challenges of development in the 21st century;
- (iii) Construct a political, economic and cultural consensus that is an alternative to militarized and neo-liberal globalization and to the hegemony of the United States and its allies.

I. The principles

1. Construct a world founded on the solidarity of human beings and peoples

Our epoch is dominated by the imposition of competition among workers, nations and peoples. On the other hand the principle of solidarity has fulfilled in history the functions otherwise more constructive for the efficient organization of intellectual and material production. We want to give to this principle the place it deserves and to diminish that of competition.

2. Construct a world founded on the full and entire affirmation of citizenship and equality of the sexes

The citizen must become in the last instance the one responsible for the management of all the aspects of social, political, economic and cultural life. It is a condition for an authentic affirmation of democracy. Without this, the human being is reduced by the laws imposed on him to become the carrier of a labor force, an impotent spectator confronted with decisions from those in power,

the consumer encouraged toward the worst waste. The affirmation, in law and in deed, of the absolute equality of sexes is an integral part of authentic democracy. One of the conditions of this democracy is the eradication of all forms of the patriarchy, either admitted or hidden.

3. Construct a universal civilization offering to all its diverse members in all areas its full potential of creative application

For neo-liberalism, the affirmation of the individual – not that of the citizen – allows the spread of the best human qualities. The unbearable isolation that is demanded from this individual from the capitalist system produces its own illusory antidote: encirclement in the ghettos of supposed common identities, most often those of a para-ethnical and or para-religious type. We want to construct a universal civilization which looks at the future without useless nostalgia. In this construction, the citizens political diversity and that of the cultural and political differences of nations and peoples become the means of giving to individuals a reinforced capability of creative application.

4. Construct socialization through democracy

Neo-liberal policies want to impose a sole method of socialization through the market, whose destructive impact on the majority of human beings no longer needs to be demonstrated. The world we want conceives socialization as the principle product of democratization without gaps. In this framework, which the market has its place, but not the entire place, the economy and finance should be put at the service of a societal program and not be submitted unilaterally to the needs of an uncontrolled application of the initiatives of dominant capital that favors the private interests of a tiny minority. The radical democracy that we want to promote reapplies all the rights to the imaginary inventive force of political innovation. It bases its social life on the diversity produced and reproduced, and not on a manipulated consensus that wipes out the deep-seated discussions and weakens the dissidents in the ghettoes.

5. Construct a world founded on the recognition of the non-market-driven law of nature and of the resources of the planet and of its agricultural soil

The capitalist neo-liberal model assigns the objective of submitting all aspects of social live, almost without exception, to the status of a commodity. The privatization and marketization to the ultimate degree brings with it devastating results without precedence: the destruction of biodiversity, the ecological threat, the waste of non-renewable and renewable resources (oil and water in particular), the annihilation of peasant societies menaced by massive expulsion from their land. All these areas must be managed as the common wealth of humanity. In these areas, the decision in essence does not turn to the market but to political powers of nations and peoples.

6. Construct a world founded on the recognition of the non-market-driven status of cultural products and scientific acquisitions, of education and of health

Neo-liberal policies lead to turning cultural products into commodities and to the privatization of great social services, notably those of health and education. This option carries with it the mass production of low quality para-cultural products, the submission of research to the exclusive priority to short-term profits, the degradation up to the exclusion of education and health care for the poorest sectors of the people. The renewing and enlarging of these public services should be guided by the objective of reinforcing the satisfaction of needs and rights essential to education, health care and providing food.

7. Promote policies that closely associate democracy without its limit defined in advance, social progress and the affirmation of autonomy of nations and peoples

Neo-liberal policies deny the specific needs of social progress – a product that some claim is produced spontaneously by the expansion of the markets – like the autonomy of nations and peoples, necessary to the correction of inequalities. In these conditions, democracy is emptied of

all effective content, made vulnerable and delicate in the extreme. To affirm the objective of an authentic democracy demands giving to social progress its determining place in the management of all aspects of social, political, economic and cultural life. The diversity of nations and of peoples produced by history, in all its positive aspects as with the inequalities that accompany it, demands the affirmation of their autonomy. There does not exist a unique recipe in the political or economic spheres that would permit the blockage of this autonomy. The objective of building equality goes through the diversity of means to put it in effect.

8. Affirm the solidarity of the people of the North and the South in the construction of an internationalism on an anti-imperialist basis

The solidarity of all the peoples – of the North and of the South – in the construction of a universal civilization can be founded neither on the help nor on the affirmation that for all who are on the planet, it would be possible to neglect the conflicts of interest opposing different classes and nations that make up the real world. This solidarity must overpass the rules and values of capitalism and of imperialism which is inherent to this system. The regional organizations of the alternative globalization must be placed in the perspective of the strengthening of the autonomy and of the solidarity of the nations and of the peoples on the five continents. This perspective is in contradiction with that of the present dominant models of regionalization, conceived as blocks constitutive of the neo-liberal globalization. Fifty years after Bandung, the Bamako Appeal expresses also the requirement of a Bandung of the peoples of the South, victims of the spread of really existing capitalism, of the rebuilding of a front of the South able to hold in check imperialism of the dominant economic powers and the U.S. military hegemony. The anti-imperialist front does not oppose the peoples of the South to those of the North. On the contrary, it constitutes the basis of a global internationalism associating them all together in the building of a common civilization in its diversity.

II. Purposes in the long term and proposals for the immediate action

In order to progress from a collective conscience to the building of collective, popular, plurial and multipolar actors, it has always been necessary to identify precise themes to formulate strategies and concrete proposals. The themes of the Bamako Appeal deal with the following 10 fields, according to purposes in the long term and to proposals of immediate action:

- the political organization of globalization;
- the economic organization of the world system;
- the future of peasant societies;
- the building of a united front of the workers;
- the regionalizations to the benefit of the peoples;
- the democratic management of the societies;
- the equality of gender;
- the management of the resources of the planet;
- the democratic management of the media and the cultural diversity;
- the democratization of the international organizations.

The Bamako Appeal is an invitation to all the organizations of struggle representative of the vast majorities that constitute the working classes and the excluded from de neoliberal capitalist system, as well as to all the persons and political forces who support these principles, to work together in order to apply effectively these purposes.

Forum for another Mali, Third Word Forum, World Forum for Alternatives, ENDA

Signatures: