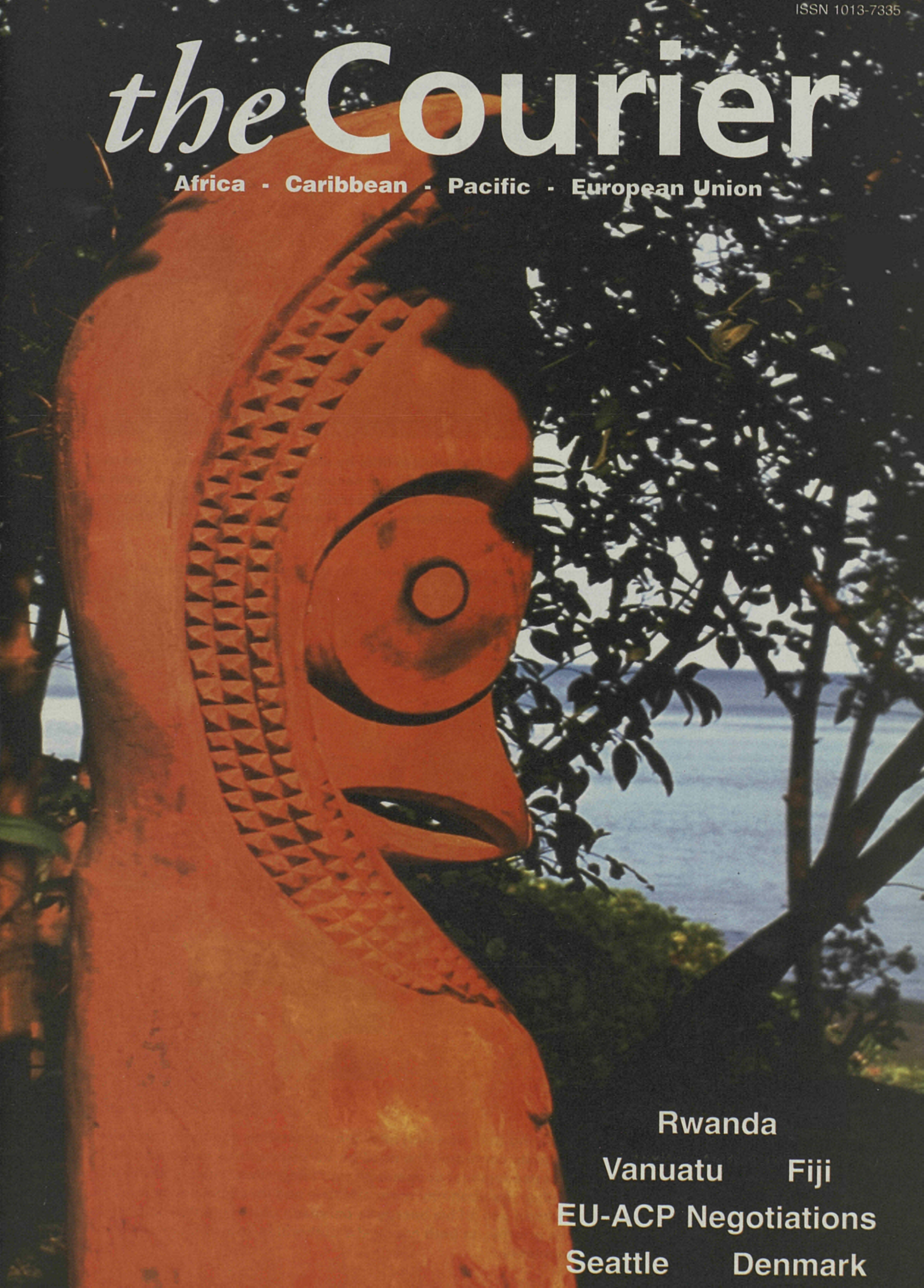


the Courier

Africa - Caribbean - Pacific - European Union



Rwanda

Vanuatu Fiji

EU-ACP Negotiations

Seattle Denmark



Five years after the genocide, Rwanda is rebuilding all its sectors little by little: national reconciliation, rehabilitation and the relaunch of the economy, the reformation of the social fabric, security, and democracy are main areas in the ambitious period of transition which has just been extended. It is a thorough evolution, with its highs and lows, in a context which is still very delicate. Squeezed into an explosive region, Rwanda must above all rebuild itself from a bruised and fragile society.



The Pacific islands have been lying low, gathering their strength after the devastating effects of the Asian economic crisis. The economic consequences of this crisis confirmed the need for these countries to concentrate on the application of structural reforms and to galvanise regional cooperation and integration. The Fiji archipelago has reached a stage when it wants its politics calmer, its economy more effective and its social policy more coherent. In Vanuatu, the new Prime Minister should no doubt use all his energy to persuade observers that stability is nigh, making the development of human resources his priority. In both cases, the authorities know that in any case they can count on the enthusiastic support of the population.

The Courier

Africa- Caribbean -Pacific
European Union

The ACP-EU Courier
No 179
February/March 2000

Postal Address

The ACP-EU Courier
European Commission
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Address for visitors

12 rue de Genève
Evere 1140
Brussels
Belgium

Publisher

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Web Page

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgdev/
publicat/courier.index_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgdev/publicat/courier.index_en.htm)

The Blue Pages

are available on the internet on
DGVIII-Development
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgdev>.
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Ablassé Ouédraogo

Deputy Director General, WTO



"The WTO must change in order to progress"

By appointing Ablassé Ouédraogo, from Burkina Faso, to one of the four positions of Deputy Director General to help him throughout his period as Head of the World Trade Organisation, Mike Moore doubtless intended to respect his commitment to increasing the involvement of developing countries in the multilateral trade system. This is a significant symbol in view of the position traditionally occupied by developing countries within the WTO. Ablassé Ouédraogo is not new to the area of multilateral cooperation and the intricacies of international negotiation. He is said to be competent, serious and hard-working not hesitating to speak out when diplomatic convention would prefer to stay silent. After having occupied the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs for five years, this former UNDP official intends to take up the challenge. At the start of our meeting, we asked him to describe his feelings when he was appointed to this position, as a citizen of a developing country.

"Before discussing matters relating to my appointment to the post of Deputy Director General of the World Trade Organisation by the Director General, Mr Mike Moore, I must first of all briefly introduce that institution. The WTO was founded on 1 January 1995 as the successor of GATT, which was set up in order to regulate world trade after the Second World War. It is now the sole international organisation responsible for the rules governing trade between countries, and its main aim is as far as possible to favour the proper conduct, predictability and freedom of trade. But through this function of promoting world trade, it also plays a crucial role in world social and economic development, as a result of the links between trade and development. The phenomenon of globalisation is now making it easier to understand the role and the importance of the WTO, whose Secretariat administers commercial

agreements, provides a framework for commercial negotiations, settles commercial disputes, examines national commercial policies and helps developing countries with their commercial policies through technical cooperation. As far as my appointment - which is considered to be an historic event - is concerned, I feel proud and satisfied about it but also fearful. I am satisfied and proud because this is the first time that an African has been appointed to such a post for over 50 years. This indicates that account has been taken of the need for greater involvement of African countries in world trade. I am fearful because of the burden of the responsibility and the complexity of the task. Africa's share of world trade is marginal, at less than three per cent, and the expectations created by my presence that this tendency towards marginalisation of the continent will be reversed in international trade are a huge challenge to face, as I am very well aware. I do, however, think that with the support of African leaders, developing countries, less developed countries and the Director General, I will be able to make a positive and very useful contribution to our continent during my period of office.

What is your view of the demonstrations in Seattle?

We were not surprised by these demonstrations because we knew that they were going to occur, as globalisation is making competition much harsher. Globalisation does not just bring good in its wake.

It is, however, necessary to emphasise that the WTO belongs to the governments of the 137 countries that are its members. The demonstrations must also be explained by factors arising within Member States, as the decisions are taken by them. As a result, the grievances against the WTO are really grievances against states and their governments, since the WTO is not a supranational body that imposes rules. It is the only

international organisation in which the Secretariat has no influence on decisions, which are adopted by consensus and are signed by the Member States, which submit them for ratification by their respective national parliaments. In Seattle, the Secretariat of the WTO was made a scapegoat.

Isn't there a need therefore to ensure that public opinion is better informed about the decision-making mechanisms of the organisation and the way in which it functions?

You are right, and that is why Member States must plead the case of their organisation. Without an explanation of the true role of the WTO, people will not be able to understand the activities and measures of this organisation which is responsible for facilitating trade and its regulation, and has created a basis for greater stability, security and peace throughout the world, as without the rules of the WTO, there would have been anarchy and permanent disputes between countries.

Did you feel that these demonstrations had an effect on the outcome of the negotiations?

Some people consider that the outcome was failure. What happened at Seattle was not necessarily failure, but rather an opportunity for the WTO to act differently and more effectively. Some failures are useful in that they enable one to reconsider oneself and to find ways and means of improving oneself. Although it is true that the demonstrators were given considerable media coverage to enable them to reveal that problems exist, the problems were not created by the WTO but by all the Member States taking decisions. Contrary to what some people think, a lot of progress was made at Seattle and huge gains were made that will help to consolidate the activities of the WTO over the coming months and years. I will not venture to express an opinion about any link between the demonstrations and the results of the conference, although they did cause the ministers to lose one precious day.

Why do you think the conference was not a success?

If the world's trade ministers were unable to conclude their meeting in Seattle favourably, this was partly because the subjects discussed were highly complex, but also because the number of Member States has increased and the countries striving to participate actively in negotiations are becoming increasingly mature. To achieve a consensus between 137 countries whose interests did not always coincide was another major difficulty. The guiding principle of the WTO negotiations was: "nothing is gained unless everything is gained" or, in other words "there is no agreement on anything unless there is agreement on everything". But there was also time pressure, which

also affected the negotiations in Seattle, where there was certainly a lack of political will.

Is the WTO currently sufficiently well-adapted and organised to deal with such varied and complex matters?

All bodies created by men need to evolve. That is why GATT was superseded by the WTO, which must also adapt in its turn if it is to progress. What happened in Seattle will enable the governments of the Member States to take the appropriate action to help the WTO Secretariat to adapt to the current context of globalisation. Nothing is impossible if there is a genuine political will on the part of the Member States, which have themselves experienced reforms; after all, this will not be the first time that an international institution has been reformed.

Do you not consider that the political will needed to undertake these reforms is inevitably dependent on huge commercial issues?

That is partly the problem. When the new Director General was appointed, efforts were made to encourage developing countries to participate and to play an increasing part in world trade and in particular in the decision-making process. In addition, as part of efforts to achieve cohesion between the states, it would be desirable for developed countries to agree to help developing countries to become competitive in order to enable them to increase their market shares. That could aid the social and economic development of small countries, as there is a gulf separating them from the developed countries with regard to technology, the human resources and therefore the expertise available, the capital necessary for investment and competitiveness.

You used the word "expertise", a key word for developing countries in terms of negotiating ability and the implementation of agreements. What does WTO intend to do in this respect?

WTO headquarters in Geneva



The WTO is already doing a great deal in this area with the means placed at its disposal. For example, with regard to technical cooperation, there are training modules intended to assist the developing countries to achieve the same level. Efforts are being made to achieve this goal by means of national and regional seminars. Reference centres have also been set up by the WTO in various countries in order to provide trade ministries with IT tools linked to the WTO headquarters in Geneva, to give them access to up-to-date information about world trade in real time. This expertise is necessary, since it has been noted that the negotiating skills of developed countries are superior to those of developing countries, which sometimes influences outcomes.

What about the problems relating to social standards? How can such a sensitive subject be dealt with within the WTO?

The question of trade and standards relating to working conditions is highly controversial. It should be noted that at the Ministerial Conference in Singapore in 1996, the members of the WTO indicated that the International Labour Organisation was the institution responsible for dealing with these problems. These aspects do not currently fall within the remit of the WTO, but they raise three types of problems outside it. There is the legal problem of knowing whether it is necessary to use commercial measures to exert pressure on countries violating basic standards of labour. There is the analytical problem of knowing whether the exports of countries that are less prone to respect these standards benefit from unfair advantages, and there is the institutional problem of deciding whether the WTO is the appropriate organisation to discuss these matters. All these problems clearly have political connotations

and there is a need to decide whether there is a real possibility of using commercial measures to ensure the observance of standards relating to working conditions or whether they are merely a pretext for protectionism. This also raises the problem of employment in developing countries, since there is a need first of all to create the requisite employment and then to think about making it conform to standards. It therefore seems likely that the discussion will be difficult as a result of the different views of member states and the ILO should be able to contribute, since it is better equipped for this purpose.

Since Marrakesh, the WTO has acquired a mechanism for settling disputes. How is this innovation relevant at present?

It should be remembered that the agreement regarding rules and procedures for the settlement of disputes was presented as the main contribution of the previous negotiations, which were completed in 1994. It was this agreement that created the mechanism for settling disputes between states concerning all the agreements of the WTO. The WTO has made substantial progress over GATT in this area. There is now a permanent Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), which is actually the General Council, that is to say the ambassadors representing the 137 Member Countries who meet to form a body for settling disputes. There are now procedures with fixed timescales, that is to say the various stages are initiated automatically in line with a precise timetable and it is no longer possible for a state to block the procedure or evade the decisions of the DSB. There is no right of veto. It is also important that the mechanism for settling disputes makes it possible to ensure that the rights and obligations of each member are applied and respected. The procedure can only be initiated by a Member State of the WTO against another Member State and only

concerns areas covered by agreements. It consists of three stages: negotiations between the states, work by special Panels and recourse to the appeals body. It is a combination of commercial diplomacy and legal procedures.

Despite these mechanisms, the WTO is frequently accused of being insufficiently democratic. Is the idea of an international parliament of international trade, put forward by some people, a good one?

It is unnecessary, since as I have already said, when a government commits itself to an international agreement by signing in the name of its country, it is obliged to implement it in its internal legislation and submit it for ratification by the national parliament. A government that has conducted and participated in negotiations must clearly explain the terms of the agreement and the reason for it to its people. It is therefore especially important for member states to work to increase the democratic image of their institution.

Negotiations are to start in Geneva to make good the failure of Seattle. Isn't there a danger that they will be conducted by small committees, without any transparency at all?

It is no longer possible to envisage working on the sly. When negotiations are resumed after Seattle, everything will be achieved by consultation and no state will be excluded. Here in Geneva, the Secretariat of the WTO is working jointly with the General Council and the most recent meeting of the Council on 17 December 1999 insisted on the need for better consultation regarding the questions left outstanding at Seattle from the start of the year 2000 onwards.

Kenneth Karl

Post-Lomé - new partnership agreed

by Dorothy Morrissey

The European Union and ACP States have concluded a new 20-year partnership agreement to replace the current Lomé Convention which expires on 29 February. Representative of the 15 EU Member States and 71 ACP States met in Brussels on 2 and 3 February, for a final limited session, ending eighteen months of intense negotiations.

The agreement will be signed by the Heads of State and Government in the beginning of June, in Fiji. The financial envelope agreed is €13.5 billion, and an additional €1.7 billion is available in European Investment Bank (EIB) loans. This amount, representing an increase of 5% on the 8th EDF, covers the period 2000 to 2007. Included in this timeframe is a two-year period for ratification procedures. As the current Convention comes to an end, there are considerable unused resources from previous funds - almost €10 billion - and this amount will also be available during the same period. Every two years there will be a review of cooperation in each country, and adjustments if necessary.

"We now have a foundation for a more comprehensive working relationship for the coming years," said Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for development and humanitarian aid.

"This is the biggest financial and political framework for cooperation between North and South in the world, and I am extremely pleased that Europe has managed to renew this relationship, especially in the light of other events globally. This really puts Europe in the forefront of doing what ought to be done when we look at North-South relations."

Representatives of the 15 EU Member States and 71 ACP states were meeting in Brussels for a final limited session — with less than a month to go before the expiry of the current Convention on 29 February — to negotiate the unresolved issues left over from the December meeting.

Major progress at December ministerial

The 3rd negotiating session held in December 1999 was widely regarded as having cleared many of the major stumbling blocks, after a lacklustre meeting in Brussels the previous July.

Group 1 (Political and institutional matters) reached agreement on the sensitive issues of good governance and on how to address corruption. The EU had wanted good governance to be one of the essential elements of the new Convention, on the same level as respect

for human rights, democratic principals and the rule of law, whose violation could lead to the possibility of suspension of aid.

But in the face of ACP divergence, "good governance" will be considered as a fundamental element in the new Convention, which, contrary to an "essential element", does not constitute grounds for suspension of cooperation. Only "serious cases of active and passive corruption" could give rise to this procedure.

Remaining on the agenda for the February meeting was the new dialogue on migration and in particular the proposed EU arrangement to repatriate illegal immigrants to the country of origin. The ACP point of view was that they were willing to accept the readmission of their own citizens, but rejected readmission of non-nationals or stateless persons who transit their territory. They held the view that the proposed clause had no basis in international law. The European Community was mandated by the Tampere European Council in October 1999, and by the recent Justice and Home Affairs Council decision, to include standard clauses in agreements with third countries on the question of readmission. In the view of some ACPs, a clause on migration had no place in the Convention: "We are surprised because this is a development programme," we

Mapez Agency

"What the ACP Council was concerned about was the idea of immediately applying conditionalities and sanctions. Nobody is against the commitment to good governance and to stamping out corruption. But bearing in mind that institutional capacity may not be what it should in some developing countries, isn't it better to help those countries improve capacity building, to put them on a sound footing through some measure of cooperation short of sanctions? Clearly we are all saying that in cases of gross corruption there should be no quarter."

John Horne, President of the ACP Council of Ministers,
Minister of Trade, Industry and Consumer Affairs of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.



were told by Famara L. Jatta, Secretary of State for Finance and Economic Affairs of The Gambia. "Our interior ministers are not even present at these negotiations, just trade and finance who don't have competence in this area. When we brought up the subject of migration, it was to protect our citizens." The issue gave rise to intense discussion, delaying debate on other remaining questions. The Commission was firm on the principal, but not inflexible. The parties reached agreement on the principal of cooperation on migration through negotiated bilateral accords with each ACP state.

Trade

"Trade preferences to ACP countries have been more generous than to any group of third countries," according to Philip Lowe, EU Director-General for development and humanitarian aid. But "these preferences alone won't give the ACPs the security and predictability of a solid trading relationship, on which they can build their competitiveness through access to the EU market." As well as being incompatible with WTO rules, which do not allow discrimination between developing countries, the value of preferences would gradually erode as liberalisation increases. Both sides have reached agreement on a new trade regime, which allows a pro-

gressive opening of their markets. Agreement was reached on the roll-over of the existing preferences during a preparatory period of eight years, until 1 January 2008. During this eight-year period, new trading arrangements will be negotiated, and will take the form of regional economic partnerships (REPAs), which are WTO-compatible. The implementation of REPAs will take place in an additional transitional period after 2008 of up to 12 years. The ACPs will decide themselves on the regional integration process, and the participants of the regional grouping, which can be built on existing regional organisations such as SADC, WAEMU, the Pacific Forum. The EU side believes that the potential for intra-ACP trade is unrealised:

"In Africa, only 6% of trade is with other African countries," says Lowe.

The 39 ACP Least Developed Countries (LDCs) will be guaranteed free access to European markets for essentially all products by the year 2005. For those non-LDCs who are not in a position to enter into regional arrangements, other possibilities will be examined with the EU.

Virtual versus real money

After the December meeting, the ACP group had expressed disappointment with the financial offer of €13.5 billion, with €1.7 billion EIB loans. "At the start of these final negotiations the ACP countries intended to ensure that this offer would be increased," explained Bernard Petit, senior EU official. "We explained that it wasn't so much a question of political signal - the point was that the amounts in the previous agreements were really illusory or virtual amounts. The amount of unused aid - up to €10 billion - meant that a regular flow of resources was not assured with

which to programme development. Part of the problem lay with lack of capacity, complexity of procedures, with three different development funds being managed in each country (STABEX/SYSMIN, NIP, and Regional funds) each with their own objectives and procedures.

"The main problem we have encountered over the last 18 months is that we have been proposing a radical reform of the mechanisms and instruments, to make cooperation more efficient and to ensure a greater impact. The ACPs have got used to 30 years of cooperation on another basis and have found it hard to accept that resources will in future be allocated not just on the basis of their needs but on performance, nor did they like having some instruments removed," was the view of Mr Petit. The offer of €13.5 billion, added to the €10 billion left over, means that there is an amount of €24 billion available for the next seven years. It is envisaged that disbursement could be doubled to €3.5 billion per year. This would entail a series of reforms to the Convention, which have been incorporated into the new text, and reform in the internal functioning of the Commission.

The ACPs were receptive to this argument.

Floating billion

The original EU financial offer was to make €12.5 billion available immediately, with the remaining €1 billion - dubbed the floating billion - subject to a performance evaluation in 2004. The ACP side was not happy with this, seeing it as a double conditionality. The EU softened its position somewhat, excluding this conditionality from the text of the financial protocol itself, but keeping it as an internal Declaration of the Commission.

"As a finance minister I took the view that if you provide funds and they are not used, then it is difficult to ask for an increase in the amount. What we should work on is the reviews of the programmes so that we can access the funds more easily, simplify the procedures so that we can implement faster."

Famara L. Jatta, Secretary of State for Finance and Economic Affairs of the Gambia

The new agreement will radically overhaul previous Conventions, with a more pluralistic development strategy. Civil society and the private sector will be better taken into account as development actors than in previous Conventions. Innovative too, is the pledge to fight corruption, which for the first time is specified in the text.

Charles Josselin, French Development Minister, described the tone of the final negotiations, as "seri-

ous, at times tense, responsible, with a coming together of points of view which had been disparate in the beginning."

He went on to say that these negotiations "are proof that a North-South dialogue is possible, and it is encouraging that a conclusion was reached."

Cuba, which currently has observer status, has made a formal request to the ACP Council of Ministers to join the new Convention. At the time of

writing, no formal request had been made to the EU.

The signing ceremony

The new agreement is expected to be signed in the beginning of June by the 86 Heads of State and Government. The ACP states agreed that Fiji would be the host country for the signing ceremony, a decision taken after Togo withdrew its candidacy.

New instrument for export earnings - STABEX/SYSMIN abandoned

STABEX and SYSMIN were introduced in the 1970s when fluctuations in commodity prices leading to short-term income losses were considered a major obstacle to sustainable growth policies in developing countries. STABEX and to a lesser extent SYSMIN were to provide short-term financial compensation for export earning losses.

Under Lomé IV their emphasis changed gradually from income compensation to support for structural sector reforms when it became apparent that they could not sufficiently contribute to the latter. In some cases compensation even slowed down or prevented appropriate reform policies, and did not help to improve productivity or competitiveness in agriculture and mining.

Preparing *ad hoc* programmes for STABEX and SYSMIN funds with development objectives identical to the national indicative programmes and structural adjustment policies resulted in duplication of work, bureaucracy and confusion with the beneficiaries.

That the instruments had become ill-adapted to the development objectives was well-demonstrated by the introduction of the possibility of using the financial compensation for diversification of the economy. The link between a *de facto* compensation to farmers and/or producers and the aid was cut entirely.

Finally, the great majority of ACP countries received little or no aid under STABEX and SYSMIN. Thus the EU wanted to replace the instruments with another type of support in cases of short-term fluctuations in export earnings.

The ACP countries agreed but insisted on the importance of the agriculture and mining sector. They were afraid that a general reference to balance of payment problems would divert attention from the serious problems in the primary sectors. They were concerned to help farmers in cases of revenue losses and offer a form of automatic financial support to agriculture. The mining industry feared that without a special envelope for mining, the long-term

investment required might have to compete for EDF funds.

The negotiations were difficult but the outcome should satisfy all parties. The new agreement stipulates that support will be given in cases of short-term fluctuations in export earnings and a simultaneous worsening of public finances.

The dependence of the ACP States' economies on exports, in particular in the agricultural and mining sectors, will be taken into account. And the least-developed, land-locked and island countries will receive more favourable treatment in the initial allocation of funds.

The new system is to safeguard macro-economic and sector reforms and policies in the event of a drop in revenue. By joint agreement the resources may be used to finance programmes included in the national budget, although part of the resources may also be set aside for specific sectors.

In the initial programming of EDF resources, each country will receive an envelope for long-term development cooperation under the national indicative programme. In addition an envelope will be established at the start of the five-year period for unforeseen circumstances. This will include the amount that can be called upon in case of export earning losses - where eligibility criteria are fulfilled.

Thus the volume of possible extra aid from the system can be taken into account in a country's development planning.

One advantage is that there will be no need for an *ad hoc* calculation of aid after an unforeseen event as before under STABEX or SYSMIN. The funds can be used for the purposes specified in the agreed development programme prepared at least one or two years before the event. The support can be called up at short notice and replace lost (tax) income. It can also be used to cover the result of the export income losses.

The new support system introduces generous advance payments. Up to 80% of the support for the estimated losses can be paid as soon as the first calculations of

income losses have been submitted.

A review mechanism introduced under the new rules for programming of aid will ensure that the programmed spending of each ACP State will remain up-to-date. Reviews will also serve to reallocate EDF funds where necessary. Where a country has used up all its funds in the first two years due to severe shortfalls in export revenues and increased public deficits, it may receive an additional allocation of funds after the review.

The system will thus provide regular funding assurances and safeguard the execution of sector policies and economic reforms, a major advantage.

It will therefore give greater predictability and much faster delivery of aid.

Greater coverage of ACP countries will be provided, and losses in export earnings from all goods covered. Thus all countries having difficulties in their external balance will be eligible. The system is targeted to support the overall performance of the economy. Aid can also be used to support macro reforms or any other relevant economic policy. These priorities will have been identified and agreed at the start of the cooperation programme. The support will at all times be included in the national budget, guaranteeing consistency with the overall policy of the country.

Countries that are heavily dependent on the agriculture or mining sector continue to receive special treatment in the new instrument. They will be able to trigger extra aid earlier and possibly more often, when there is a fall in export income. The funds can also be used specifically in those sectors if the countries wish to do so.

In the new Convention different stakeholders will have a more explicit place in designing and implementing development programmes. The role of non-state actors, parastatals or local government can be very important in the above mentioned policies. The new system gives extra support to that dimension of EU-ACP cooperation.

Adrianus Koetsenruijter

ACP-EU Joint Assembly



Serge CLAIR, co-President
(Mauritius)

The ACP-EU Joint Assembly, which was set up in order to satisfy a common desire for closer links between Members of the European Parliament and representatives and parliamentarians of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (ACP countries) which are party to the Lomé Convention, has become a unique institution in the world, its aim being to promote interdependence between North and South. Much of its work is concerned with promoting human rights and democracy and the common human values concerning which joint commitments have been adopted at United Nations conferences. The Joint Assembly's work has an impact which goes far beyond economic considerations and which extends to the basic objectives of human development and peaceful relations between peoples. The ACP-EU Joint Assembly is a democratic parliamentary institution whose task is to promote and safeguard the democratic process in order to guarantee the right of peoples to decide upon the manner and the objectives of their development.



John CORRIE, co-President
(European People's and European Democrats' Party, United Kingdom, member of the European Parliament's Committee on Development and Cooperation, Member of the European Parliament from 1975 to 1979 and since 1994)

The representatives of the 71 ACP countries (South Africa adopted the Lomé Convention on 1 July 1998) meet their 71 opposite numbers from the European Parliament twice a year, for a week-long plenary session. The Joint Assembly meets alternately in an ACP country and in an EU country. Two co-Presidents elected by the Assembly direct the proceedings as a whole. Twenty-four Vice-Presidents (12 European and 12 ACP), who are also elected by the Assembly, form, together with the two co-Presidents, the Joint Assembly Bureau. The Bureau meets several times a year in order to ensure continuity in the Joint Assembly work and to prepare fresh initiatives which are mainly intended to strengthen and improve cooperation. Working parties are established for the purpose of drawing up proposals to be put to the vote at the meetings of the Joint Assembly. The Assembly regularly dispatches groups to carry out research work or inquiries, thus ensuring that its members are in direct contact with the situation in the developing countries which are party to the Lomé Convention.

Committee on Development and Cooperation



Joaquim MIRANDA, chairman
(member of the Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, Portugal - Member of the European Parliament since 1986)

The vice-chairpersons of the Committee on Development and Cooperation are Lone Dybkjaer (European Liberal Democratic and Reformist Party, Denmark) Max Van den Berg (Party of European Socialists Netherlands) and Fernando Fernandez Martin (European People's and European Democrats' Party, Spain).

The Committee on Development and Cooperation is responsible for matters relating to the promotion, the implementation and the monitoring of the European Union's development and cooperation policy (Articles 177 to 181 of the EC Treaty), including:

- political dialogue with developing countries,
- economic, trade and investment policy with regard to developing countries, including the generalised system of preferences,
- humanitarian aid, emergency aid and food aid supplied to developing countries,
- technical and financial cooperation with developing countries,
- other sectoral matters such as health, education and industrial and rural development,
- support for the democratisation process, sound government and human rights in developing countries.

It is also responsible for matters relating to the negotiation, conclusion and application of the ACP-EU Convention and to relations with relevant international, multilateral and non-governmental organisations.

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Trade negotiations in Seattle run off the rails

by Kenneth Karl

The ministerial conference on multilateral trade held in Seattle in the United States from 29 November to 3 December will certainly be regarded as one of the most memorable events of the end of the 20th century. The conference was intended to launch a new series of trade negotiations at the start of the new millennium, but discussions between representatives of the 135 member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) came to a sudden end in what was almost unanimously agreed to be failure. In the absence of a consensus, the ministers were barely able to arrive at a text for a final declaration to mark the launch of the new round of negotiations on world trade. And yet it was the anti-globalisation demonstrations, loudly organised by the NGOs and a large proportion of civil society throughout the world, and extensively covered by the media, that grabbed the entire world's attention.



The authorities of Seattle doubtless hoped that agreeing to host the third ministerial conference of the WTO would be of great benefit to their city. But the street demonstrations and the violence surrounding them destroyed the peace of this port in the west of the United States for several days. Seattle, which is dominated by the computer giant Microsoft and the no-less powerful aeronautical group Boeing, woke up one fine morning in November to the noise of police car sirens interspersed with antiglobalisation and anti-WTO slogans chanted through loud-speakers. It was impossible to find a completely unblocked street in the centre of the city. The main routes, in particular those leading to the Convention Centre, where the conference was held, were progressively occupied by a tide of humanity, as over a thousand non-governmental organisations and associations from all over the world met there to shout out their hostility and, even more emphatically, their fears about the excessive liberalisation of world trade, in the hope of influencing the negotiations. By preventing the

official opening ceremony, before being manhandled out of the area by the local police supported by National Guard reinforcements, the demonstrators scored a decisive goal soon after kick-off. And the talks themselves started in confusion as a result of a large number of delegations that had little inclination to make concessions. The diversity and complexity of the subjects discussed, coupled with the huge interests at stake and public pressure, ought to have made it obvious that negotiations would be difficult. And after four days of bitter discussions, Charlene Barshefsky, the US representative hosting the conference, officially declared it to be closed in the absence of results.

Disagreements concerning the agenda

At the end of the Marrakesh conference, the member states of the WTO reached agreement on the timetable to be used to guide the negotiations in Seattle, which was mainly to be devoted to agriculture and services. During the preparatory work, at the request of a number of the member states, new subjects appeared, inevitably lengthening the number of disputes between the countries. These differences in views regarding the agenda of the conference made the negotiations even more complex, especially as last-minute attempts to reach an agreement were unsuccessful. Three clearly distinct positions became evident before and during the conference in Seattle. On the one hand, the United States wanted to adhere strictly to the initially-agreed programme as they thought that they would best be able to defend their interests in negotiations that were confined to agriculture and services. The European Union, on the other hand, espoused a more global approach. It considered that a wide agenda capable of including new areas such as the environment, con-

sumer protection, culture, competition, investment etc. would best be able to meet the demands arising as a result of rapid globalisation, while at the same time facilitating its regulation. Refusing any compromise between these two positions, India and a handful of developing countries categorically rejected the idea of a new round of negotiations, claiming that it was first of all necessary to complete the agreements of the Uruguay Round. The Indian Trade Minister said it was first of all necessary to complete the first floor of a house before moving on to the second. These disagreements on the contents of the negotiations were hardly conducive to the success of the discussions held by the five working parties set up by the organisers of the conference.

Rows about agriculture

As should probably have been expected, agriculture, which, it should be remembered, was not fully subject to multilateral trade rules until the agreement on agriculture concluded during the Uruguay Round, placed the major exporters of agricultural products at loggerheads and became the most difficult subject at the Seattle conference. The other subjects of discussion, such as investment, intellectual property and cultural questions, were immediately relegated to second place. Throughout the discussions, supported by the 17 countries of the Cairns Group (including Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Argentina) of large agricultural producers, the United States demanded a significant reduction and even, in the long term, the elimination of export subsidies, which, in their view, were causing distortions in trade. This group of countries considered that agricultural goods should not be given special consideration, but should be treated just like other goods in order to reduce imbalances in the normal operation of competition and so progressively open markets up more widely. The European Union was in their direct line of fire, as they accused it of having the most subsidised agriculture in the world as a result of the direct export aid given to farmers. Although the EU denounced the indirect support given in the United States, its main concern was to preserve the European model and to achieve recognition for the "multifunctional" nature of agriculture. With the support of Japan and a number of less developed countries, the 15 member states of the EU called for the many non-commercial functions of the agricultural sector to be recognised and taken account of in trade negotiations in future. This concept of the "multifunctionality" of agriculture put forward by the EU, which was new to some of the participants, elicited a muted response, alternating between curiosity and rejection. According to the view put forward by the Europeans, agriculture does not have the sole aim of producing and marketing foodstuffs. It also fulfils a number of non-commercial functions for the benefit of society, such as the conservation, management and population of the countryside, protection of the environment, security of the food supply, quality of life, which the needs of the market should not be

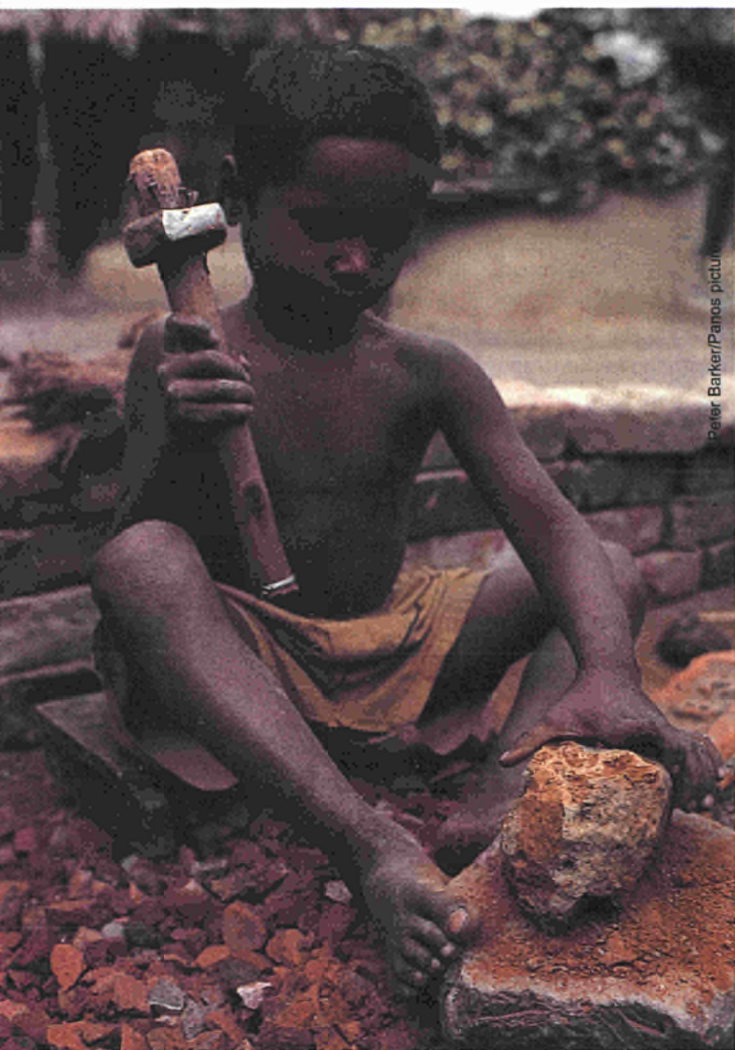
allowed to place at risk as a result of an inability to perform them correctly.

The inclusion of this concept of multifunctionality of agriculture in the trade negotiations was certainly not unanimously accepted by the various negotiators, who actually failed to reach agreement on the terms of the final declaration of Seattle, as the 15 EU member states collectively vetoed the draft wording suggested by the Trade Minister of Singapore, chair of the agriculture working panel. It is difficult to see how the WTO member states could easily reach consensus on an agricultural sector destined for greater liberalisation according to the Uruguay Round agreement of 1994. The "peace clause" concluded at the end of that agreement, forbidding WTO member states from taking action to dispute the subsidies of other member states, will expire at the end of 2003 and countries are already stiffening their sinews in order to defend their commercial interests.

The discussion surrounding agriculture, which, among other things, demonstrates the European Union's intention to obtain minimum regulation in the liberalisation process, is a herald of major battles to come after Seattle. Differences of opinion concerning GMOs (genetically modified organisms) and hormones in meat are still current and respect for the "precautionary principle", intended to increase safety for the consumers of foodstuffs, is defended by the EU but rejected by the United States.

Divisory social standards

Is the World Trade Organisation the appropriate arena for discussion of questions relating to the observance of social rights within member states? The WTO may, in future, be called upon to help to ensure the observance of basic standards at the workplace, ie the freedom to form trade unions and of collective negotiation, freedom of association, non-discrimination at work and the prohibition of forced labour and of child labour in particular. Whereas, in the absence of agreement, the trade ministers at the previous conference held in Singapore in 1996 preferred to "kick the ball into touch" by referring this type of question to the ILO (International Labour Organisation), it returned with even greater force to the agenda of the negotiations in Seattle, and even became a major cause of North/South confrontation. The US proposal for a working panel on this subject to be set up within the WTO, backed up by the uncompromising speech by President Clinton calling for penalties to be imposed on countries accused of violating these social standards, elicited strong reactions among developing countries. Nor was the tension lowered by the more flexible proposal by the European Union for the WTO and the ILO to set up a joint forum and for preference to be given to awareness-raising methods over coercive solutions. In the eyes of most developing countries, of Asia in particular, social standards are actually nothing other than a means to enable rich countries to keep their markets closed to certain products from the South — a Trojan horse concealing protectionist



Are social norms the concern of the WTO?

aims. They also regard it as a way of depriving them of their comparative advantages such as low wage costs. Hostile to any idea of integrating measures that could easily be used to justify unilateral trade restrictions within the WTO, the developing countries, especially the most radical ones such as India, preferred to stand firm. Drawing attention to the United States' refusal to ratify certain ILO conventions concerning the rights of children and the luring away of multinationals to low-wage countries, some of them even spoke of hypocrisy. It is nonetheless true, regardless of the pressure exerted by some and the silence of others, that, quite apart from their commercial implications, the discussion of social standards raises truly fundamental questions on which the member states of the WTO will have to

find common ground in the long term.

Developing countries cry "halt"

The words of an African representative, claiming that as usual the elephants had fought and the small plants had been crushed, indicated the disappointment felt by the developing countries with regard to their participation in the negotiations and the account taken of their interests in decision-making. Complaining that they had not been fully involved in the work of the conference, many of them, led by the Caribbean countries and some Latin American countries, published a press release refusing to adhere to the final agreement. And the African countries complained about the lack of transparency in the negotiations and their exclusion from important discussions of questions of vital importance for their people in a joint declaration, which was approved by nearly all the states of the OAU. It must be admitted that, apart from the plenary sessions, subjects of great importance were discussed behind closed doors, by the select committees, leaving those countries not involved with the feeling of having been left out. But the discontent of the countries of the South is not solely linked to the organisational and institutional problems of the WTO. Although they form a majority within the WTO they are a minority in world trade and enjoy very few of the benefits of globalisation. Many of these countries often find it extremely difficult to implement a great many of the agreements laid down by the WTO and are calling for logistical, technical and financial support and longer timescales in order to make this possible. Some of them wish to obtain greater access to the markets of developed countries to enable them to sell their goods. Others call for the differentiation of standards within the WTO to take proper account of structural inequalities between member states. Many developing countries actually welcomed the failure of the conference and were pleased that they had not

helped to launch new negotiations that would not, they claimed, have taken account of their main concerns, as was the case in the Uruguay Round. Despite their small share of international trade (less than 2.5% in the case of Africa), the countries of the South hope to exercise greater influence on multilateral trade negotiations in future, now that some of them have taken stock of the challenges and the haggling by the major economic powers to which they are subject. It will, however, be recalled that many countries, including the developed countries, insisted on the need for better integration of the countries of the South in the multilateral trade system.

The European Union in unison

Although it was obviously disappointed not to have contributed to the launch of a new round of negotiations that it had wished to be global, the EU returned from Seattle with at least one reason for satisfaction. Unlike the Uruguay Round negotiations, which were conducted without a strategy accepted by all the member states of the EU, Europe displayed much greater solidarity and argued much more confidently when defending its huge programme in Seattle. Better prepared than previously, and displaying an intention to take the initiative in certain areas, the EU showed that it has learnt lessons from the past. The Commission attended the third conference of the WTO with a proper negotiating mandate that had been granted to it by the Council and approved by the European Parliament. Under the leadership of Pascal Lamy, the European Commissioner in charge of trade, supported by his counterpart in agriculture Franz Fischler, the European delegation presented its main aims in Seattle:

- To significantly benefit the world economy by liberating trade in goods and services and improving certain rules applicable to it;
- To control globalisation to enable it to benefit everyone. The

liberalisation of trade should make it possible to achieve this objective while preserving some legitimate values, such as the environment, culture, protection for consumers etc.;

- To increase the integration of developing countries in the world economy by increasing the cohesion between economics and development.

- To build up the multilateral system of the WTO in order to transform it into a truly universal, equitable and transparent tool for administering international commercial relationships.

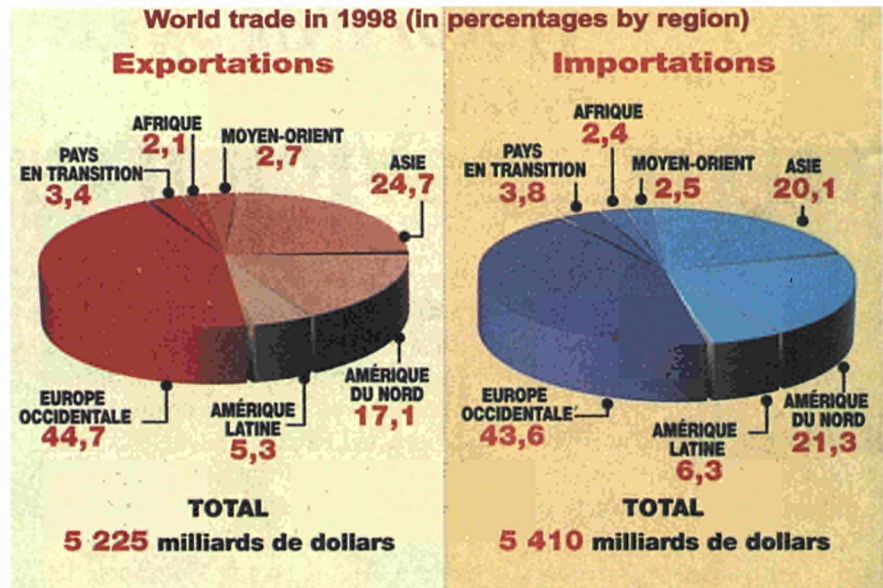
Although minor disagreements did arise during the talks in Seattle, as in the case of biotechnology, they did not destroy the cohesion of the EU. Some member states, for example, accused the Commission of having exceeded its mandate in agreeing to a working panel to deal with this matter and turning it into a tactical negotiating element in the eyes of certain members of the delegation. Coming years will doubtless better reveal the ability of the 15 member states of the EU to influence the launch of the new round of negotiations in the new millennium, equitable to everyone, as specified in its programme.

Election campaign atmosphere

While the problems resulting from the complexities of the matters under discussion and the huge commercial interest at stake were to a great extent responsible for the bug that laid low the Seattle conference, the election campaign atmosphere surrounding the negotiations was a contributing factor. The United States were in the run-up to presidential elections, which the Democrats hoped to win. The US negotiators therefore arrived at this third ministerial conference with very little room to manoeuvre as a result of corporate pressures from a number of different directions and they persistently refused to make concessions in certain areas. In his speech, President Clinton chose to dwell on the Common Agricultural Policy and European subsidies, in order to prove his usefulness to powerful agricultural lobbies, multinationals and Congress. He also attempted to please the trade unions, which account for a not insignificant proportion of Democrat votes, by calling for sanctions against countries violating standards at the workplace and the establishment of a party to deal with this matter within the WTO. Many negotiators, and the EU in particular, now deplore the fact that electoral considerations of this type were able to influence the conference at this point and directly blame the United States for its failure. They consider that the choice of the place and date of this conference was very much an error. The more pessimistic analysts consider that the chances of reaching agreement are virtually zero until the end of the US election campaign.

Don't blame the referee

Weakened by the failure in Seattle, the WTO is now trying to restore its image in the eyes of the world, which is becoming increasingly sceptical. Just when it is required to deal with globalisation and its distorting effects, the young



Source: World Bank, WTO, CEPII

organisation must face difficulties resulting from the increase in the number of states and their various demands. New subjects will probably be added to the area it is called upon to cover and disputes requiring resolution are unlikely to decrease. And, it, too, must take account of the increasing demands of civil society, which intends to try very hard to influence its decisions. The changes occurring in the world economy, which is characterised by the spectacular acceleration in globalisation and the increase in the volume of trade, are obliging the WTO to undergo fundamental reform. Its way of working, its decision-making procedures and the transparency of its procedures must be further improved in order to meet the new needs. It should not, however, be forgotten that the WTO is still currently the only institution responsible for the rules of international trade intended to ensure greater transparency, honesty and fairness. It is an institution led by its member states, whose creature it is. Its decisions are taken by consensus and each state, of whatever size or commercial significance, has a right of veto. It will therefore be necessary for the member states to take measures to reinforce the standing of the organisation and to explain the little-known advantages of the WTO system as well as its drawbacks over the coming months. The phenomenon of liberalisation now requires mechanisms of regulation and inspection, which the member states must set up within the WTO.

Victory in Seattle? So what?

By Yannick Jadot*



There will always be those - Charlene Barshefsky or someone else - who say that the differences of opinion between the major trading powers were the only reason for the failure in Seattle, and that GATT has experienced failure before. So what? Public opinion and social movements can legitimately claim a share of responsibility for this failure. And there was more to it than Clinton's political populism in calling for a social clause "with sanctions". It was difficult for European governments to return home from Seattle with a lame compromise, amounting to nothing more than new phases of liberalisation and disregarding expectations regarding the environment, social rules, food quality, respect for cultures and, increasingly, equity and redistribution. Seattle was in fact the first round of trade talks at which some states, especially European ones, tried to bring regulation into trade. Their attempt was based on the good (?) old methods of negotiation. Were the negotiators themselves completely convinced? If they were, they were certainly ill prepared. How many officials or politicians, at Seattle and before, were walking a tightrope, combining the defence of liberalisation of investment with sustainable development in Southern Hemisphere countries in a single sentence? How were negotiators experienced in technical negotiations, tariff barriers and import quotas, supposed to

integrate social and environmental affairs and quality - unquantifiables in other words? So the failure was predestined. As negotiations progressed in Seattle, some aspects of regulation sank without trace, especially in the European position, which had initially been the most demanding from this point of view. Regulation became the price to be paid for a broad agenda of liberalisation. And, most of all, how could anyone believe that the developing countries would accept new rules, authorising inspection of the social and environmental aspects of their production methods, when most of them were excluded from the negotiations and the WTO had hitherto failed to take any account of their most pressing interests?

So the failure in Seattle was a political victory: "Nothing will be the way it used to be." But it was a victory without substance. Seattle proved the point that needed proving: that regulation and sustainable development cannot be smuggled into trade by the back door. The new priority must be the construction of international governance, creating consistency among international standards and rules - whether they be social, environmental or commercial, whether they relate to health, economic and social rights, food safety or culture. After the MAI and the Asian crisis came Seattle. After the OECD and the IMF came the WTO. The reform of international institutions is becoming inevitable. Does the whole process have to take place under the auspices of the WTO? Obviously not. The issue here is the consistency and clarity of international rules and organisations. The WTO, under cover of a far-reaching reform and because it is an intergovernmental organisation, is legitimately authorised to draw up rules on trade, just as the ILO is for labour, the FAO for food safety, UNESCO for culture and education, the Protocol on Biosecurity for internal trade in GM products, etc. The WTO must recognise the other seats of international governance. It cannot remain the only institution wielding the power of legal constraint. The creation of a balanced international legal structure is an area of activity that must be pursued.

The place of the developing countries within this construction process also calls for complete redefinition. For these countries, in fact, it is multilateralism as a whole that lacks credibility. It has been repeat-

ed often enough that what matters is not just the international rule or standard but, equally, the process by which it is arrived at. It must clearly involve all countries, respecting each of their priorities as far as possible. It must also encompass the arrangements for its subsequent implementation, especially the responsibility for the cost. Much of the developing countries' mistrust of multilateralism originates in the broken promises made by the developed countries, particularly in terms of financial commitments. The coherence of the major United Nations conferences is devastating from this point of view. Can we defend the ban on child labour if, at the same time, we do not accept the temporary responsibility for the loss of earnings by those families required to send their children to school rather than to the factory? Can we impose environmental standards without promoting inexpensive technology and know-how transfer?

And what about social and associative trends? Those trends vary widely, of course, and why shouldn't they? There is not one international civil society but many, motivated by different and sometimes conflicting interests. In Seattle, the supporters of corporatism marched with the international solidarity organisations; religious movements stood shoulder to shoulder with radical movements; the proponents of sovereignty and local autonomy allied with the internationalists (to call for an International of the soil?); and the antis marched with the reformers. If these various movements scored one undeniable victory, it was in raising the profile of their concerns and

rejecting, in unison this time, a world (dis)order created for economic and commercial purposes alone. It was a victory, too, in that it highlighted the inconsistencies of the official speeches and negotiating strategies. And it was a victory, finally, in terms of its capacity for organisation and mobilisation.

But whatever these qualities may be, the battle can no longer be fought in the streets. The social and associative movements must put forward constructive ideas if they want to change things and establish their legitimacy through the construction of new rules. What is needed is the rapid creation of working methods capable of generating an analytical and thoughtful approach to future subjects of negotiation. The negotiations on agriculture and services begin this month; the review of the agreement on intellectual property rights is continuing. What agricultural model do we want to defend? How is the concept of public service to be recognised? What form should protection of species take? How can the development issue be brought in? These are just some of the questions to which we must now find answers. At the same time, the social and associative movements must think about what place they want to occupy in dealings with governments, the European institutions and international organisations - in the process of construction of international rules. That is the price - or burden - of victory! Europe could be the driving force in the construction of "international governance". Does it want to be? As far as the European social and associative movements are concerned, this is the

first level on which the battle must be joined. On agricultural matters, we have seen Europe defending the *status quo* - under pressure, in particular, from the handful of lobbies that profit from the CAP - to the detriment of the expressed preferences of the general public, consumers and taxpayers for a multifunctional agriculture. We have seen the Commission abandon the principle of precaution and accept a working group on GMOs.

The EU-ACP ministerial conference negotiating on the renewal of the Lomé Convention, which was held immediately after Seattle, also leaves a legacy of complexity. Is the mechanism of negotiations so cumbersome that nothing more can be done to learn the lessons of Seattle? Does Europe have no future prospects to offer the ACP states beyond free trade and compliance with the much discredited WTO rules? Having failed to do so earlier, and not for want of trying, Europe must have the ambition, as of now, to construct solid alliances with the 71 ACP states on trade rules encompassing, in particular, the multifunctional nature of agriculture, more equitable forms of protection of biological resources, the principle of proportion, the issue of development, etc. Europe must also benefit from this unique framework of cooperation to begin work on the inevitable challenge of international governance.

***Delegate-General of Solagral**

Solagral is a French NGO which has long been working on the question of international rules and their links with public politics, especially in matters relating to the environment, agriculture, food safety, cooperation and trade. It was present in Seattle.

Site Web : <http://www.rio.net/solagral>

ACP Heads of Government Summit in Santo Domingo

"En route to the Third Millennium"

by Kenneth Karl

On 25 and 26 November 1999 the Heads of State and Government of the ACP group of states met in Santo Domingo, capital of the Dominican Republic, for their second summit. The president of the host country, Leonel Fernández Reyna, presided over discussions on the Group's future, against a particularly charged background in terms of major events. The highest ranking politicians of the ACP States were meeting only three months before the expiry of the Fourth Lomé Convention, a period when negotiations were in full flow, and together they set out their priorities for their future partnership with the European Union.



Standing together to face globalisation

In Libreville in November 1997, at the first Summit in the history of the Lomé Conventions, the Heads of State and Government of the ACP group of states decided to hold further summits to enable them to make their political weight felt more forcefully in a partnership which was set to undergo essential, even unavoidable, adjustments. Visibly fewer in number than at the Libreville Summit, they met on this small Caribbean island to try to provide common responses to the many challenges facing the ACP Group at the close of the 20th century. Among many topics discussed during these two days, some attracted particular attention from observers. Displaying greater solidarity than ever, members of the ACP Group, which arose out of the 1975 Georgetown Agreement, were anxious from the very start of the Summit to reaffirm their unity with a view to consolidating an identity based on sharing and the defence of common interests. In the face

of changes in the global economy and the many problems to be solved, it is no longer sufficient for this group of countries, united in their diversity, to exist solely in relation to the European Union. They now have to make their voice heard in other multilateral negotiating fora, such as the United Nations (UN) or the World Trade Organisation (WTO). At the opening ceremony, the President of Gabon, Omar Bongo, declared that the Group has to preserve unity and to consolidate if it is to become a major player on the international stage.

By chance, the WTO conference, which was to launch a new cycle of multilateral trade negotiations, was scheduled to take place in Seattle three days after the ACP Summit, and was to be an opportunity for the 71 ACP States once again to reaffirm their unity and defiance in the face of globalisation. A number of speakers denounced the inequality inherent in globalisation which, in their opinion, favours those who are best equipped to

profit from it, whilst marginalising those who are weakest. Although not denying the reality of the phenomenon, the ACP Heads of State called for controlled liberalisation of exchange, to take account of the interests of poor countries and allow them to adapt gradually to the global economy. Some of them even launched a virulent attack on the WTO, declaring that its rules had left them no breathing space. Throughout his speech, in which he spoke of the problems the ACP States have in integrating into the global economy, the President of Madagascar, Didier Ratsiraka, denounced the shortcomings of globalisation and urged the ACP States and the European Union to resist the WTO and not give way, as had been the case in the banana dispute. To great applause, he went on to describe globalisation as a totalitarian doctrine based on a single way of thinking, which appears not to tolerate or accept the right to be different, the right to different treatment which the ACP Group would dearly like to have accepted as the fundamental element of the multilateral trade system. It was the desire of the Group that this principle should be applied for at least a further period of 10 years to trade relations between ACP States and the EU in the area of preferential access for the former's products to the European market. The ACP Heads of State consequently called for an exemption request to be submitted to the WTO in the very near future, aimed at maintaining the current status quo. The ACP Group thus hopes, from 2006, to conduct calm and dispassionate negotiations of the terms of a new commercial arrangement with the EU, to enter into force in 2010 and excluding the least advanced and most vulnerable of their number. The intention would be for these latter countries to continue to benefit from privileged access to the European market. In the Plan of Action annexed to the text of the Santo Domingo Declaration, the ACP Heads of State and Government mandated their ministers to negotiate future trade arrangements with the EU.

Good governance is all very well, but ...

As might be expected, the issue of good governance or good management of public affairs continued to be the subject of discussion between the Heads of State, taking up long hours of debate. This subject, which is in many respects a sensitive matter, provoked a number of disagreements between the negotiators responsible for defining the future framework for cooperation which is to succeed the Fourth Lomé Convention. The ACP Group reiterated at Santo Domingo its hostility to the introduction of the concept of good governance into the future partnership as an essential element, failure to uphold which would give rise to the automatic, even unilateral, suspension of

application of the Convention, as mentioned in Article 366a. However, the Heads of State accepted that good governance should be an important factor in the next Convention and, in the text of the Declaration, reaffirmed their "commitment to transparent and responsible management of human, natural, economic and financial resources." A mandate was given to the Council of Ministers to set up, well before the next Summit, an ACP consultation mechanism which would meet in the very near future to examine possible allegations of serious violations of the Lomé Convention formulated by the EU against an ACP State.

Pursuing a renewed cooperation with the EU

All ACP Heads of State stressed the need to pursue and, more importantly, strengthen the cooperation which had been in force for almost three decades between their Group and the EU and which was based on principles of solidarity, sovereignty and equal partnership. However, better conditions of application, aimed at improving any future partnership, would have to be thought out.

Point 4 of the Final Declaration referred to the implementation of that cooperation which had not always been as effective as had been hoped. For that reason, the improvement of the system of implementation would have to be accorded the highest priority in future. Later, it stated that the fight against poverty should be placed at the heart of the new partnership with a view to achieving sustainable development. Particular emphasis was also placed on debt relief for ACP States. In this connection, the Heads of State, whilst welcoming the initiative taken by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, aimed at reducing the debt of Highly-Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), called for additional resources, other than those of the European Development Fund allocated to that programme to be forthcoming within the context of cooperation with the EU. They also reiterated their willingness to contribute actively to peace and to security, to step up their development by revitalising intra-ACP cooperation and regional integration, and to adapt ACP institutions to current changes. Regarding this latter point, it is worth mentioning the appointment of Mr Jean-Robert Goulongana, currently Gabon's Ambassador to Brussels as Secretary General of the ACP group.

Furthermore, the ACP states welcomed the idea of Cuba being incorporated within their Group. Cuba was recently given observer status, but would still have to go through the admission procedures laid down in the Georgetown Agreement.

Changing Institutions

by Trevor Robinson

Too many institution-building initiatives do little more than irritate senior public servants and managers in recipient countries. They frustrate aid agencies, their advisers and consultants. And they do little to develop policy-making or to improve service delivery or to reduce poverty. So why bother?

Because without good institutions development is held back and the world community will not achieve its target of halving extreme poverty by 2015.

What is institution building?

The first question is "What do we mean by institution building; or institutional development or reinforcement or strengthening; or capacity building, development or strengthening?"

Essentially there are three ideas underlying these partly-overlapping terms. There is the one closely associated with Douglass North of institutions as being "the rules of the game", as distinct from the "players" (the organisations and individuals). This broad use would include legal frameworks, organisational structure and interaction, and informal norms of behaviour. Some of the narrower uses of the term focus on the development of the capabilities of individuals. But this definition of capacity needs to be seen in a broad way. In Leonard Joy's analogy in a paper for a UNICEF/UNDP workshop on capacity development, it is not just teaching people to fish, it is allowing them also to ask "Why fish?" and "Why fish in this way?"

In practice aid agencies most often use the term to describe the development of organisations in a particular sector. So institution building for a country's water sector might start by looking at all the laws and policies governing the sector: those dealing with environmental, water and land rights; relevant parts of commercial and parastatal law; as well as the laws and policies governing the main organisations. The next level down would look at the structures and staffing of all the organisations working in the sector: the ministry of finance as well as the water and environment ministries; local government as well as treatment and distribution plants; community organisations as well as pump operators, billing and repair teams; trades unions as well as management. An obvious issue here concerns the roles of the public sector, the private sector, communities themselves and civil society.

In this level of institution building, the processes for planning, deciding priorities, and budgeting would also be reviewed. In most sectors, while money may look like the key resource, staff (in some skill groups at

least) and physical plant and resources are also important. Of course, planning needs to cover periods from a few days to years, or even decades (for example, if water resources risk becoming too small in relation to population expectations). Pricing, regulation in the public interest, and safety or quality standards are likely to be important. Systems for the control, information management and monitoring of human, financial, physical and data resources would need to be reviewed. Monitoring, inspection and audit approaches are the last main area. All of this is easy to write but in practice covering pay and incentive systems to staff training to billing systems to equipment maintenance.

Good institution building needs to work out which of all these areas is most likely to lead to real world improvements in policy-making or service delivery.

What will make a real difference, quickly, but sensibly and sustainably?

Bad institution building concerns itself only with the sort of rational, technical, procedural issues set out above; issues

Few major institutional changes come about without the top person's full commitment to making sure that things do change

associated with a traditional management textbook.

How to make sure changes happen?

Successful institution building depends on bringing about changes; not just defining what needs to be done - whether in government papers, consultancy reports, or aid agency conditionalities. It is not only aid recipients that are trying to bring about transformational rather than incremental changes. Most organisations throughout the world are facing pressures to do things differently. Many private sector companies in competitive but rich economies are being challenged. This has produced a mass of literature on change management, culture change, transformational leadership and similar interrelated topics. Not all of this is clear about what can reasonably be generalised as opposed to what is specific to particular social, cultural, political and economic environments, or to specific sectors, or to particular organisations. So conclusions on what works tend to be subjective rather than based on firm evidence. And some prescriptions are really little more than short-term fashions.

At some risk of looking merely amusing in a few years' time it is worth trying to pull out some valid lessons. Much change seems to happen when some sort of external threat or crisis or pressure means that the institution has little choice but to change; or at least when the uncertainties of the change look less worrying than the certain problems of not changing. All individuals are going to look at changes, at least partly, in terms of "What does this mean for me?" And this can cause apprehension rather than enthusiasm.

It seems that few major institutional changes come about without the top person's full commitment to making sure that things do change. At national level this means the head of government. In the public sector it means the minister or commissioner or equivalent. In private sector or not-for-profit organisations it means the chief executive. At community level it means the head or most respected person or group of persons. The transformation of a whole country (Turkey) under a strong leader (Kemal Atatürk) is a striking example.

But diktats from the top are not enough. There needs to be a group of people in the organisation who are there to make sure there is change; and who see their personal well being as dependent on it. This might be the whole tier of people below the top. In practice it is likely to be one or more reasonably senior individuals, with close access to the top person, and with quite a small supporting team. If

they are not the core senior managers at the start of the process then at least some of them may end up as such. By the end it is desirable that the core senior man-

agers are all people who are operating in the new ways; but this is easier to ensure in ruthless cultures.

There then needs to be a way of ensuring that everybody throughout the institution knows what is going on, why it is going on, what the personal implications for them are, and what the timetable is in the near future and in the long term. In just about any organisation those in the know always think they are communicating a lot; and those lower down the information pyramid want more and feel left out. Communications need therefore to be planned, managed and monitored.

Finally there is the reassuring view expressed by Michael Armstrong in his *Handbook of Personnel Management* that in practice there is only a limited number of practical things one can do to change an organisation's culture. Paraphrasing: one can change the organisational structure; change the incentives

system, including use of performance management systems; appoint different staff; train staff; communicate clearly; change systems and procedures; or seek to promote team working. This looks reassuringly like the sort of prose that managers and others have been speaking all their lives.

All of the above is simple to understand. It is fairly obvious. And it is unlikely to seem radical or very new even to those in charge of institutions which are clearly in a bad way.

So why are so many institutions having problems?

Focusing again on aid from international agencies to institution building in the ACP countries, what are the constraints on progress? There are some high level explanations from Fred Riggs in the 1960s (and before him) through to the present that the problems are at the level of society. There is a more cynical view that in all societies organisations are run by and for their elites; or more simply that all organisations are run for the people they are run by. (The *status quo* suits many of the key decision makers.) There is the argument that many of the problems are simply a lack of resources: skilled people; money to pay them; equipment, whether textbooks, medical supplies, telephones, computers. But none of this is very helpful in deciding what aid agencies might do differently starting now.

The Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation was quoted in a recent Financial Times Supplement (6 December 1999) as saying "We have often bothered

developing countries with our latest hobbies. We have been micro-managing". The President of the World Bank was quoted in the Financial Times (29 September 1999) as saying "It is shameful that Tanzania must produce 2,400 reports each quarter for its donors". The British development secretary's White Paper (November 1997) says "It is about ensuring that the poorest people in the world benefit as we move towards a new global society. It is about creating partnerships with developing countries and their peoples, on the basis of specific and achievable targets, to bring that about".

But at the practical level the trend has been for the aid community to interfere more and more closely in more and more areas. Over time efforts have moved from building dams, to installing billing and accounting systems, to tariff studies, to civil service reform, to structural adjustment, to good government, to sector

Diktats from the top are not enough. There needs to be a group of people in the organisation who are there to make sure there is change; and who see their personal well being as dependent on it

Few if any societies are capable of comprehensively reviewing their entire machinery of government or even their budgets, except perhaps when at war; of achieving consensus on new approaches; and of then implementing a major change of course

wide approaches, to governance. Is institution building now getting close to saying that aid agencies don't much like the way some elites are running their countries (recognising that in some cases they have indeed made treaty undertakings on basic rights)? If so what rights do the aid agencies have to do more than walk away? And if they are to stay do they have enough staff with the intellectual and personal abilities to engage in productive dialogue with interlocutors in national elites?

Two tentative suggestions

Perhaps aid agencies should accept that very few large organisations anywhere in the world ever manage to transform themselves radically. Few if any societies are capable of comprehensively reviewing their entire machinery of government or even their budgets, except perhaps when at war; of achieving consensus on new approaches; and of then implementing a major change of course. So perhaps institution-building goals need to be much simpler. The world would be better managed if managers at all levels could be persuaded to write down (on the back of an envelope if necessary) the four, five, six things they really want to achieve in the immediate future; to explain to their staff and their superiors what these are; to get on with these priorities as time and resources permit; and then to take stock, and with luck have a modest celebration of success.

And perhaps the nearest approach to a magic bullet is information. It is difficult, without appearing unreasonable, for anybody to oppose technical work on collecting, analysing and disseminating basic factual information. Even quite simple measures of the resources used as input and the results achieved as output will prompt questions by conscientious managers. Presented to the public in intelligible form it will prompt pressures for improvement. Good information allows better decisions to be made, not least about priorities. Hard-edged measures allow progress to be assessed. This is true at all levels, even starting at the top with the aim of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015.

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Where does Cuba go from here?

Extracts from the Development Committee visit in October 1999, and a personal viewpoint from John Corrie, President of the ACP/EU Joint Assembly

Cuba is the only Latin American country with which the European Union has not yet formally concluded a cooperation framework agreement, even though the level of bilateral cooperation has gradually increased throughout the 1990s.

At the request of the ACP countries, Cuba had observer status at the recently-completed negotiations leading to the revision of the Lome Convention which expires on 29 February 2000. This represents a shift in the pattern of the relations between Europe and Cuba, from a bilateral approach to a multilateral perspective. For the time being, both parties have abandoned attempts to conclude a bilateral cooperation agreement, a process which began during the Spanish Presidency in the second half of 1995 and which ground to a halt on 9 May 1996 as a result of political differences. Despite the lack of a cooperation agreement the EU is Cuba's main cooperation partner and its second largest investor after Canada.

The legal basis for ECHO initiatives is to be found in the regulation of humanitarian aid. ECHO began to assist the Cuban people in 1993 in response to the needs stemming from the effects of a major storm. Selective humanitarian initiatives have been carried out, as have six General Plans. Following a Commission decision of 22 December 1997, ECHO also has a budget to support the humanitarian microprojects undertaken by European NGOs.

Owing to the increase in needs resulting from the economic crisis and the shortage of basic medical and social products, the General Plans drawn up in association with the Cuban authorities are now designed to help the most vulnerable sectors of the population by means of medical and social infrastructure and through the supply of foodstuffs, medicines, clinical equipment, sanitary items and textile products.

The Commission's food security and food aid programme in Cuba began work (through NGOs and multi-lateral agencies) in 1993, since when it has made €20 million available to finance a number of projects. To date, 480,000 people have directly benefited from the programme. The European NGOs all have as a counterpart a Cuban association involved in the operations relating to the drawing up, implementation and management of projects. The provinces in which projects are being undertaken are Havana, Havana City, Cienfuegos, Villa Clara, and Holguin.

The purpose of the projects being carried out in Cuba has been twofold: to support economic reform and to encourage development of the private sector. The

Commission has also promoted cultural exchanges in order to help the Cuban people become familiar with European values.

The delegation was pleased with the way in which the visit proceeded smoothly, in accordance with the programme. Its members did, however, gain the impression that there was a certain coolness in the way in which they were received in Cuba and they wonder if there is any political reason which would account for the delegation's visit being regarded with a degree of suspicion by the Cuban authorities.

According to the Cubans to whom the delegation spoke, the political climate is hardening once again after a year of political *détente* following the visit by the Pope, which led to the release of many political prisoners.

The Cuban Government defends its model of democracy and human rights against the concept based on political pluralism which is prevalent in the west. Carlos Lage repeated to the delegation what he had said to the UN Commission on Human Rights: "Human rights means social justice, genuine equality and distribution of wealth".

In accordance with such a definition Cuba's constitution restricts freedom of expression and the freedom of the press to the purposes of a socialist society and the right of association to the framework of bodies controlled by the State.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the USA's hostile policy provides an important political source of legitimacy for the Cuban Government. The threat from outside, together with the unhappy experience provided by the brief periods of political pluralism in Cuba since 1902 (characterised by electoral fraud, corrup-

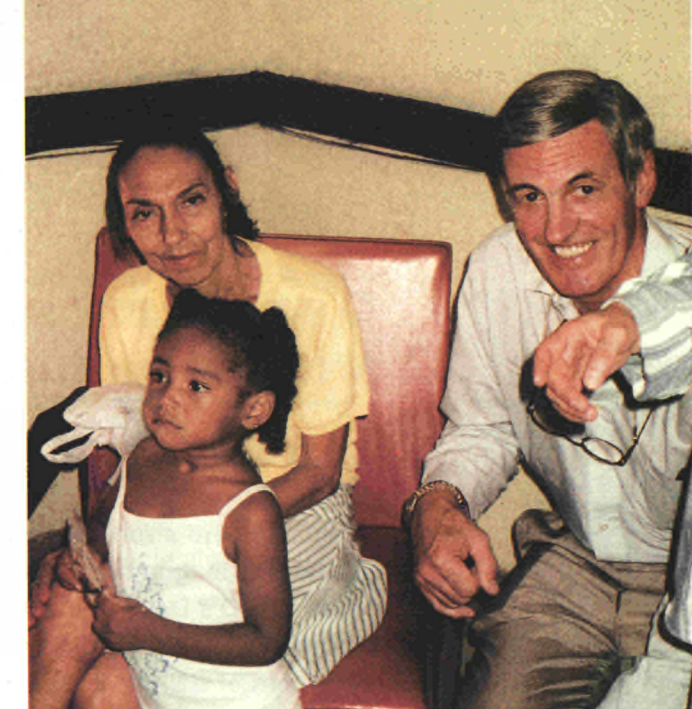
tion, vote-buying and dependence on the USA) are arguments against political pluralism, which implies division in the face of the "enemy".

It should also be borne in mind that over 50% of Cubans are coloured and that the revolution has done a great deal for them.

Although the Cuban political system has not fundamentally changed, the 1990s have seen institutional reforms intended to promote a generational change within the political leadership and at the same time to decentralise and restructure the state apparatus. The most important reforms took place in 1992 when changes were made to the Constitution and to electoral law, whilst the number of ministries and state agencies was reduced. Although in this new context there has been no opening-up towards other political sectors, institutions such as the Catholic Church and organisations active within civil society are creating a certain amount of space around themselves and are gathering political influence, and it may be said that Cuban society is entering a transition process.

When referring to the embargo the Cubans to whom the delegation spoke preferred the term "blockade" since they consider that what is involved is a much more complex network than a simple trade embargo which directly or indirectly affects all aspects of life in Cuba. They mentioned a number of examples such as the need to buy powdered milk from New Zealand or the fact that a vessel which docks in Cuba cannot visit a US port until a period of six months has elapsed. Exports of nickel to Japan were also affected.

There is no doubt that its visit



John Corrie visiting the local hospital

has enabled MEPs to obtain extremely valuable first-hand information regarding the realities of life in Cuba, the various aspects of the current social, political and economic situation and also the problems and challenges which the country will have to face in the immediate future. It appreciated the frank, open dialogue it had with the Cuban authorities and it considers that such dialogue must be continued and strengthened, as must cooperation between Cuba and the European Union.

I would like to see further cooperation and dialogue with all sections of the Cuban population (the authorities and civil society) and for consistency on the part of the European Union in its policy towards Cuba, a matter which the EU Presidency should consider with a view to producing a revised Common Position.

There is one common bond that holds the Cuban people together, and that is the embargo.

It does not work in that the poorest people suffer the most. It camouflages the disastrous policies pursued by the Cuban Government. There is no trickle solution to the problem.

It will be a Big Bang solution causing a lot of hurt - probably led from Miami.

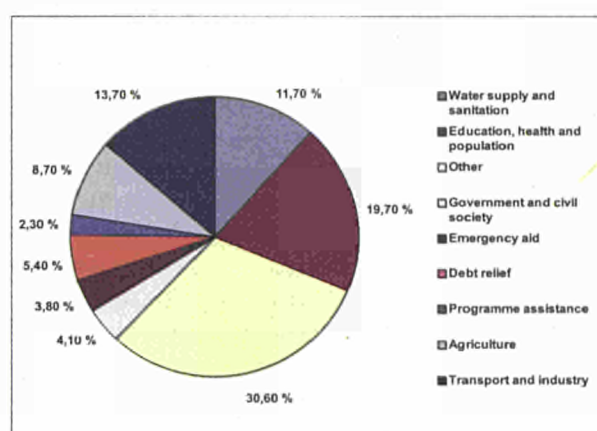
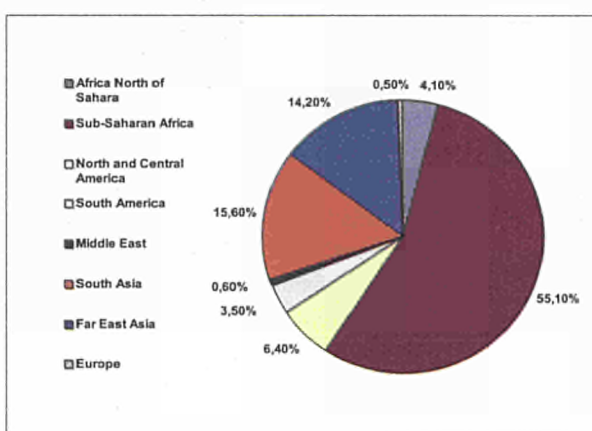
The fastest way to break down this disastrous poverty and change the political situation is to lift the embargo.

Denmark's Development Assistance a longstanding positive example

by Sue Wheat

Denmark's aid effort has consistently headed the league table of the 22 members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), fluttering slightly around 1 per cent of GNP level since 1992. This is

well over the recommended United Nations' ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GNP and head and shoulders above most other DAC members, which averaged an effort of 0.22 per cent in 1998, an all-time low.



Where is Danish aid spent?

What is Danish aid spent on?

from *The Reality of Aid 2000*, an independent review of Poverty Reduction and Development Assistance (Earthscan)

Putting a critical eye to Denmark's foreign aid policy is a difficult task.

The precise amount of development aid Denmark gave in 1998 was £1,704 million, or 0.99 per cent of GNP, up slightly on last year's 0.97 per cent.

DAC Peer Review, 1999

When Denmark's development assistance policy went under a DAC Peer Review in March 1999, the ensuing report read like an A student's school report using terms like "extraordinarily strong [aid] effort", "pioneering", and "a long-standing positive example". Like any good student, it is quality of work as well as quantity which makes Denmark stand out from the rest.

"The Danish aid programme is very

impressive, both in terms of the volume of aid and its implementation," says Christian Flamant, Principle Administrator in the Peer Review and Policy Monitoring Division of the OECD.

"It's the best aid system amongst those that I've reviewed, far ahead of many of the big members. It's very compact, there is no duplication, it's highly efficient and the right policies are in place."

The peer review notes the benefits of having Denmark's development assistance agency (DANIDA) integrated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA):

"This has managed to combine policy coherence in Denmark's relations with developing countries and professionalism in the aid programme, enhanced by an effective

decentralisation of responsibility to embassies in programme countries."

Since 1991 the MFA has taken policy responsibility for all matters relating to development cooperation, foreign policy, trade and other policy aspects. This has provided an organisational structure which is highly integrated, unlike many other countries, where the ODA, foreign affairs and trade departments are separate and working to different agendas.

A Strategy for Danish Development Policy: towards the Year 2000 was drawn up

education and health as prerequisites for developing human resources; and popular participation in the development process, by building a society based on the rule of law and good administrative practices. The strategy also identifies a number of major issues which cross into the main policy areas, including: strengthening the role of women in development activities and processes; promoting public awareness of environmental issues; and the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights.

means that aid policy is not a source of contention politically," he says. "There is a great interest in our population about development issues. It starts at primary and secondary school and carries on."

And evidently, he is disappointed at the reluctance of other countries to take their fair share of the development burden: "It's clearly understandable why Portugal or Greece can't meet the UN target of 0.7 per cent, but it is less easy to see why the US, the UK, and other rich countries don't do more. You would think the argument for more

**"It's very compact, there is no duplication,
it's highly efficient and the right policies are in place."**

in 1994 and has been worked to ever since. The direction set by this plan was then followed two years later by DAC members in their joint strategy: *Shaping the 21st century: the contribution of development cooperation*.

Poverty alleviation as a priority

Denmark's Strategy 2000 puts poverty alleviation in centre place with growth being seen as an essential ingredient. It also seeks to promote development of the social sectors, with an emphasis on

The importance of solidarity

"It's true, Denmark has an exceptionally strong commitment to providing development assistance," says Michael Zilmer Johns, Head of Policy and Planning Division for the MFA.

"This is a reflection of the general support in Nordic countries of a welfare society, perhaps because we are small countries and realise the importance of solidarity. Broad-based public support for development assistance

burden-sharing would be very strong in Denmark because of this, but in fact Danes seem prepared to take the lead."

A key part of Denmark's Strategy 2000 was to concentrate its bilateral assistance (which makes up 59% of Denmark's total aid) on 20 programme countries, specifically those in greatest need, "a discipline not well met by many DAC members", points out the DAC Peer Review. 18 of the countries are low-income countries, and 11 of these least developed countries, particularly in Sub-

Saharan Africa. Tanzania, Uganda and Bangladesh are the top four recipients of Danish aid. Agricultural projects are given particular support, in line with Denmark's poverty reduction strategy, and the poorest areas of each region are given particular emphasis.

NGO contributions

NGOs play a crucial part in Danish assistance, with some nine per cent of total bilateral assistance channelled through them in 1998. Unusually, compared to other DAC countries, most Danish development NGOs get 100 per cent government funding for projects. This may seem overly indulgent to some, but when the general level of expertise and professionalism is so good, it seems churlish to criticise. Not having to spend valuable time and resources fund-raising must increase efficiency amongst NGOs considerably.

Tying Aid

So is Denmark utterly without blemish in its development policy? "The main area of criticism is that of tying aid," explains OECD's Christian Flamant. "Although Denmark is of course not alone in this and doesn't do it any more than other DAC countries."

Zilmer Johns points out that creating links between Danish business and developing countries through informal ties is an important factor in maintaining broad public support for development cooperation, but he does appreciate the arguments against aid tying. The problem, he says, is that DAC proposals to untie aid were strongly biased to the benefit of the US and other large countries.

"We are not against untying aid, but the proposals we faced suggested that we should untie contracts worth 0.3 per cent of our GNP,

Broad-based public support for development assistance means that aid policy is not a source of contention politically

In an attempt to provide other DAC countries with the benefits of their experience and successes, Denmark has pursued a policy of "active multilateralism" since 1996. It uses its alliances with like-minded countries and the political leverage of increasing or decreasing the amount of its contributions to international organisations to influence greater focus and efficiency in multilateral aid programmes. In 1998 Denmark's multilateral assistance was US\$690 million, 41% of its total aid, which was slightly up on 1997. The amounts contributed are often larger than would be Denmark's normal share, for instance, Denmark was the fourth largest donor of the United Nations Development Programme in 1997, giving US\$90 million.

whereas the US would only untie contracts worth 0.01 per cent, which we felt was grossly unfair. The US, UK and Germany also insisted that assistance to middle income countries such as Egypt be exempted, which they have many contracts with, whereas most of our aid is to low-income countries. Again, this was not fair nor done in good faith."

Denmark is currently pressing for more balanced effort-sharing among donors as a prerequisite for untying aid.

"We had said we will accept untying of up to 0.15 per cent of our contracts, which is still a lot more than the US and others, but is not so ridiculously biased."

Next issue: Italy

Rwanda

by Thibault Gregoire



Five years on

This October is a busy month for Kigali's big hotels: guests include expatriates seeking accommodation, experts and consultants seconded by research offices and development agencies, and so on, a situation which testifies to the fact that Rwanda is still functioning only thanks to foreign assistance despite the gradual revival of its economy. These same hotels are also the temporary bases of foreign politicians, researchers and historians attending a conference on national reconciliation. In addition to these, there are other guests, seated at tables on hotel terraces, their mobile phones on standby, sometimes a car registered in neighbouring Le Kivu in the car park, discussing ores to be sold and the forthcoming opening of an office at Goma.

Dateline: 6 April 1994.

The aircraft bringing Presidents Habyarimana and Ntaryamira from a conference was brought down by a missile. At the moment, no official document unequivocally identifies the authors of that attack, although a variety of theories have been put forward. The one certainty is that, in the hours that followed the plane crash, the Presidential Guard and the Interahamwés surrounded and sealed off the capital. Within scarcely four months of these tragic events, between 800,000 and one million people perished. Human tragedy had once again reached a climax. After Armenia and La Shoah, the world was once again plunged into mourning in the wake of a new genocide.

Much has been written about the history of the Rwandan tragedy, on the Tutsi hegemony accentuated by colonial powers. A great deal has been said about the creation of the MDR-PARMEHUTU and the initial bloodletting which preceded independence in 1962. An explanation



has been given of the ensuing repression against the Tutsi minority and, over the years, against part of the Hutu population. Many long chapters have been devoted to the *coup d'état* fomented by General Habyarimana in 1973 and to the setting-up of the MRND (National Movement for Democracy and Development), which controlled Rwanda's government in all its aspects. Clarifications have been provided as to the reasons for the flight of millions of Tutsis to neighbouring countries, together with much in-depth analysis of the country's evolution to the FPR (Rwandan Patriotic Front) invasion in 1990. Much time has been given over to studies of the 1993 Arusha peace accords which guaranteed equitable power-sharing. Finally, countless university theses and innumerable discourses have set forth and continue to set forth the secrets of a carefully-orchestrated final solution.

The genocide in Rwanda was not simply an ethnic war, but first and foremost the fruit of a bitter struggle for power in which the ethnic factor became politicised, the fruit of a conflict which had been eating away at the country for decades. Without question, it is primarily the Rwandan authorities who have to take responsibility for this - the integrist policy implemented by the MRND (also *vis-à-vis* certain Hutu fringes), the Interahamwé militia, the media of hatred and all those who took up and struck out with a machete. Some also pointed to age-old policies implemented by certain governments "who knew what was going on but did nothing". Belgium, as the former colonial power, must also bear some of the responsibility. There are those who would say that it was the Belgian administration which, in order to make government of the territory easier, with the complicity of the

Catholic church, created ethnic rivalry out of nothing and fomented and cultivated antagonism. Hutus and Tutsis have the same language, the same religion, practically the same history and have for centuries shared the same space. Those same people would say, for example, that it was the Belgian authorities who imposed the system of registration cards for a minority of the population termed "*évolués-évoluants*". The upshot was that Rwandans ultimately came to believe that ethnic differences did indeed exist.

Then there are those who believe that the genocide arose principally from demographic problems, overpopulation in such a confined area as Rwanda, with more than 300 inhabitants per square kilometre. What is more, that population quadrupled between 1950 and 1993! Did anyone pause to consider the following: in a poor, densely-populated country, where land suitable for cultivation is scarce and already intensively worked, and where there was latent social tension, could such a massive influx of returning refugees actually be accommodated?

All are Rwandans

History is not being rewritten. When the FPR took control of Kigali on 4 July 1994, the whole country was in ruins, irrespective of sector. Everything had to be rebuilt: institutions, social infrastructures, the economy, culture. Those who perpetrated the genocide had fled the country, with nearly two million Hutu civilians taking their weapons and baggage with them. In Rwanda itself, this left thousands of orphans, widows, disabled and displaced persons, adding to the nation's suffering. Rwandan society overall was badly wounded and rivalries had left deep scars, weakening social links. The country faced an enormous challenge.

The government of national unity rapidly set up in July 1994, however, accepted the challenge. It had no electoral mandate, but saw itself as a rallying point for all factions, in accordance with the spirit of Arusha, except for parties involved in the genocide. A National Assembly was then created, once again without a mandate, MPs being appointed by political bureaux. The Assembly adopted a package of texts organising Rwandan public life in May 1995, texts inspired by the 1991 constitution which inaugurated the multi-party era, the Arusha peace accords and an agreement protocol concluded between the different political parties

after the genocide. A five-year transition period was declared, this being deemed the necessary time for national reconciliation, economic revival and rehabilitation, and reconstitution of the social fabric to take place, guaranteeing democracy and security.

Reconciliation: this is still the word on everyone's lips. The new authorities refuse to seek vengeance. Ethnocentrist policy divided the country and brought genocide in its wake; the time has come for understanding, and for political and social relationships to be viewed from a non-ethnic standpoint. Hutus, Tutsis and Twas have to share their common territory. Moreover, there is no longer a set of ethnic groups, but one people. All are Rwandans, all equal. To prove this, Pastor Bizimungu, a Hutu, has been appointed President of the Republic, whilst Major General Paul Kagame, a Tutsi, has become Vice-President and is also responsible for the crucial portfolio of Defence. Admittedly, both of them are FPR members, as are, moreover, figures in other key posts such as that of Minister of the Interior. It is important to acknowledge that, in practice, although all parties have a say in government, it is actually that party which was born out of the Tutsi diaspora from Uganda which is at the helm in Rwanda.

There is scarcely any difference between the political parties, at least amongst those still in existence; for although the multi-party system still officially exists, political parties themselves are currently on hold, awaiting further orders. Campaigning, meetings, the display of colours and other traditional activities are banned, party-political life being strictly limited to political bureaux and to Parliament. The few disagreements which do arise relate only to issues of implementation and not to problems of substance - a situation which was recently confirmed when it was decided to extend the transitional period to 2003.



Kigali. A sign riddled with bullet holes, probably used for target practice during the war



It is vital to explain to young Rwandans what has happened

A delay in the process

Despite the challenge having been accepted in part, five years were to prove insufficient for a number of reasons, the principal one undoubtedly being the war which is still being fought outside Rwanda's borders and which means that national security is the government's main concern. Coming a close second is the massive return of refugees and the presence of thousands of displaced persons to be reintegrated into society, all of which requires the delicate handling of issues such as land occupation (see *Umudugudu* for refugees, page 41). The as yet unresolved thorny legal dispute has also placed significant restraints on those who would support national reconciliation. The setting-up of the *gacaca* courts was to serve as a solid basis for progress (see *A need for justice*, page 38). Others pointed to the sometimes slow start to the provision of aid from certain donors, exacerbated by periods of interruption which sometimes punctuated this period. In particular, this was the case of the EU after the 1995 Kibeho massacres. The lack of both human and financial resources was to be a major stumbling block for the new administration.

This delay explains why, for example, the Commission for Unity and National Reconciliation and the Human Rights Commission have only recently

been created, despite being essential players in Rwanda's reconstruction. The latter is principally responsible for the promotion and training in human rights issues of Rwanda's young people. According to the organisation's chairman, Mr Gasana Ndoba, "such a programme generates extremely interesting exchanges, because our young people need to understand what happened".

Another of its functions is to examine past human rights violations and also those being committed now. Studies of the recent past, ie since 1990, need to start without delay. Mr Ndoba added, "if we comply with the timetable and if resources are then provided, from January 2001 we are planning a second study into the period which gave rise to the culture of impunity and the factors behind the generalisation of human rights violations."

The transition period was to have ended in general elections, initially planned for 1999. They have now been postponed, without a date being set, undoubtedly owing to the FPR's fear of elections in which ethnic issues might play a principal role. The population is still primarily Hutu, even though identity cards no longer refer to ethnic group. For the dominant party, democratic elections could signify far-reaching debate of the situation. Local elections did indeed take place in March 1999, the first since the genocide, the poll electing some 90,000 leaders of "cells", the country's smallest administrative entity, previously appointed by the administration hierarchy and directly answerable to central government. These elected representatives in turn appointed "sector" leaders. Voters turned out in their thousands, with participation approaching 90%, and no incidents disrupted the poll. This was no secret ballot, however, nor was there any electoral campaign. Voters were required to point to those who they thought should stand as candidates and line up behind their chosen representative. According to the government, this system made it possible to break with the climate of violence which characterised elections in the past, and served as a test for the forthcoming legislative elections.

As they await electoral mandates, elected representatives still risk summary dismissal, a fact which very often stifles political debate, particularly since an accusation of alleged involvement in the genocide has become a redoubtable political weapon. However, this has not prevented the National Assembly from recently stepping up its control over the executive, particularly as regards the budget. Not long ago, two ministers involved in corruption scandals were forced to resign in the wake of a no-confidence vote. Other ministerial reshuffles have also, from time to time, modified the make-up of the executive over the last five years, but the government's much-publicised unity and FPR control have remained unaffected. The opposition remains

on the fringes, particularly in the eyes of certain European countries. For its part, civil society is relatively silent, although it sometimes raises its voice to express concern about respect for human rights.

Rwanda's next major deadline is therefore 2003. The new transitional period will be devoted essentially to drawing up the constitution - a set of texts which should allow all Rwandans to exercise civil and political rights, something which can be facilitated only by a favourable economic and social context.

Manna from outside

According to Donald Kaberuka, Minister for Finance and Economic Planning, "the rehabilitation and even stabilisation period is now over." Now is the time for development proper, priorities being the maintenance of the major macro-economic aggregates, sustainable economic growth and the gradual reduction of poverty. The about-turn has been truly spectacular. In 1994, the government of national unity inherited an economy in decay, from agriculture to the financial sector. Five years on, the potential of many sectors has been restored, figures bearing witness to exemplary economic growth (11% in 1998): a GDP close to that achieved in 1990, re-established agricultural production, a sizeable tertiary sector, and even excellent relations with international financial institutions.

Agriculture is still the primary sector in Rwanda and provides work for over 90% of the population. Tea and coffee production still account for over 90% of national exports, although whereas tea is faring relatively well (it even saw its best harvest of the decade in 1998), coffee is in free fall; principally due to a lack of motivation in the wake of 1998's 50% depreciation in international coffee prices. The other main crops are bananas, sweet potatoes and manioc. In addition to diversification, the government is currently advocating an intensification of land use (particularly for food crops), in spite of past expansion. How is the trade balance - in deficit to the tune of \$250 million - to be turned around? According to Mr Kaberuka, the privatisation of agriculture has to continue, "... and very quickly, too, in the case of coffee and tea, as these crops offer the country comparative advantages." Not only that, factories have to triple their output.

Alongside a struggling secondary sector, characterised by high production costs and very badly affected by the genocide, services are experiencing unprecedented growth. This is true not only of telecommunications but also of tourism - visitors are once again coming to see the gorillas - and the banking sector. Commercial banks are deriving most benefit from this good state of health. Three new banks have been created since 1994, doubling their numbers, which was facilitated in part by the lifting of tax restrictions on their provisions at the Central Bank.



Off to the market
in Kigali

Nevertheless, Rwanda's economy is still largely dependent on international aid. Financial autonomy is a long way off; foreign aid accounts for 34% of the operating budget and 92% of the development budget. Although the volume of aid is now diminishing, in June 1998 the World Bank, IMF and other financial institutions granted Rwanda new rapid payments, amounting to \$250 million, as part of the three-year second structural adjustment plan with an ambitious programme containing the customary liberal components: privatisation of certain State enterprises, civil-service reforms, agricultural growth, promotion of the private sector, reduction of the much-needed principal financial imbalances, etc. For the most part, these adjustment measures have been set in motion and could lead to more public and foreign investment. The Minister of Finance deplores the fact that "we have neither natural resources, such as oil or diamonds, nor a major market nor sufficiently low production costs."

The opening-up of the country is, of course, also on the agenda. A number of major road routes are currently under repair, and others are at the planning stage. Those linking Rwanda with its neighbours have been given priority. The construction of a railway line to

Tea pickers in the north. Tea production is going quite well.



Tanzania was studied during the 1980s and, according to Vincent Biruta, Minister for Public Works, Transport and Communications, could again be regarded favourably. In his view, "it should be possible to implement such a project now, and it would mean so much, not only in terms of opening up the country but also in terms of job creation." Modernisation of the airport and the development of air traffic is also under way.

There remains, however, the crippling weight of debt, a legacy of the previous government, using up some 80% of multilateral aid. Estimated at \$1.2 billion in 1998, it nevertheless represents only 58% of the GNP, as opposed to 70% two years before. If the IMF views the adjustment programme as positive, in 2001 it could grant Rwanda access to the special initiative for highly-indebted poor countries.

So, are the results good? It should be stated, perhaps, that certain sectors have been normalised, but this does not prevent a continuation of serious structural difficulties, which were already in existence before the genocide. Not the least of them is, quite clearly, demographic pressure and the resulting agricultural deficit. Given that population density in Rwanda is one of the highest in the world and the fact that the country's agricultural land is limited both in terms of space and yield, pressure on land is considerable. The result of this is a serious food deficit which contributes to chronic poverty, exacerbated by the long years of war. Currently, 70% of Rwanda's population is living below the poverty threshold, and 60% is illiterate. New social divergences and new inequalities have made the situation even worse.

Diamonds from the Congo

Five years on, Rwanda's sensitivities are still very much to the fore. There is still a real risk of a settling of accounts, although this is not as great as immediately

after the genocide, and over the first few years after that. It is not, however, an episode that people can readily put behind them, some fearing that their past will be reported to the authorities and others experiencing general feelings of insecurity. On top of this, there is still the active threat of a Hutu rebellion launched from neighbouring Congo.

The cease-fire agreements signed in Lusaka in mid-July 1999 required the identification and disarming of those responsible for the genocide who were still on Congolese territory, and for negotiations between the two Congos. Achievements currently fall far short of expectations. The war continues to rage between the Congolese government, accused by Rwanda of having entered into an alliance with the Hutu militia, and rebel forces, largely supplied and supported by the authorities in Kigali. In order to guarantee its now genuine domestic security, Rwanda is consolidating its position. It has its sights set on Le Kasaï, in the east, the capital of which is Mbuji Mayi, the "city of diamonds". Is this pure accident? According to the Rwandan government, all that matters is the pursuit of the Interahamwés and ex-FAR members, as Patrick Mazimhaka, Minister to the Office of the President, explains: "it would be false to state that we have an interest in appropriating the Congo's fabulous wealth. Naturally, a trade in ore has become established, and there are all sorts of profiteers, but it is all small-scale and in no way reflects Rwanda's economic interest. Which does not mean that we might not be interested! No, our relationship with the Congo, as with our other neighbours, is one of cooperation between governments, one of compromise, and not one of plunder. It is therefore imperative that the Congo should be demilitarised."

The duty of memory

A school - 10 or so brand new buildings against a magnificent backdrop of terraced crops, banana groves and eucalyptus, coffee bushes and sorghum fields. But the doors are padlocked, and there are no children's shouts to be heard in the playground. Just silence. Oppressive and leaden. Behind a door lie hundreds of bodies, side by side on wooden beds. Dozens more are sprawled on the floor. Some stretched out full length, some curled up. Skeletal bodies, of all heights, literally skin and bone. Each open door reveals the same macabre scene. Men, women, children - sometimes babies. No shroud except a white coating of lime. A door opens into a different room - a large hall, no doubt once used as a dining-room, where hundreds of garments hang from cords. Stiff, set, as if by too much starch. A single colour has come to dominate all others: the brownish shade of dried blood. Then, on the floor, too, there are scattered articles, and the smell of death.

Murambi is a place of genocide. There is no signpost to show the road that runs from Butare to Cyangugu, but everyone knows where it is. Everyone knows that thousands of people were massacred there. No one can forget that those who were not killed by the grenades were finished off with guns, clubs, machetes and spears. Some bodies have been claimed by their families - at least, those families that could recognise their relatives. Others have preferred to leave them lying where they are, unburied, to make sure they are not forgotten. The government, too, plays its part in this duty of memory - to ensure that everyone knows. And many people come here and remember - Rwandans, of course, but passing foreigners as well. In the big memorial book, every language can be found, though the words are often close in meaning. *Nunca mas! Plus jamais ça! Never again!*

The man acting as caretaker tells his story in subdued tones: nearly all his family lie within these walls... in Rwanda, you can collect literally hundreds of statements like this. They all report the same atrocities. They all say that in most cases the victims knew their executioners. The *Interahamwe* militia were their neighbours, acquaintances, even relatives in some cases. Men were incited to hack their sisters' small children to death with machetes, children beat their former classmates, women were raped after witnessing the massacre of their husbands, Hutus were forced to kill in order to save their own lives, and anyone believed to be an RPF sympathiser was murdered. And, when they were not thrown into the river, thousands of corpses lay sprawled in the streets, abandoned to the vultures.

In barely three months, Rwanda lost between 800,000 and 1 million people, including nearly 700,000 Tutsis, men, women and children. The originators of this final solution were determined to exterminate more than a race - they targeted opposition of any kind. That included all the Tutsis, obviously, but also the moderate Hutus - for example, those earmarked under the Arusha Peace





Accords for important posts in the transitional institutions. A minutely precise campaign, planned in fine detail for months and months, even years. The *Interahamwe* militia had been drilled and trained by the army. Countless lists of people to be eliminated had been drawn up. The presenters on Radio Mille Collines had been broadcasting exhortations to murder since well before the fateful date of 6 April 1994. The only political party, the MRND, established at every level in the ruling hierarchy, was the orchestrator of this indoctrination of hate.

"The situation had been explosive for a long time," says a diplomat who was in post on the eve of the genocide. "Everyone knew about it. The humanitarian disaster was predictable."

Five years later, life has returned to normal, quickly and naturally. A shared life - in every town, on every hillside. Hutu and Tutsi children again sit side by side on the same school benches. Families have been rebuilt, even if their members had no ties of kinship previously. Orphans

have been adopted. Villages are mixed, once again. Of course, the trauma remains; some wounds are still gaping. And the country could use another army, an army of psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers - which it does not have.

One Hundred Days

Nick Hughes, from Britain, was a cameraman in Rwanda in 1994. Now he is back in the country, planning to shoot a feature film. *One Hundred Days* tells the story of a young Tutsi girl who took refuge with some of her family in the church at Kibuye. There, she was raped by a Hutu priest, while her relatives were massacred by the *Interahamwe*. A true story, acted out by amateur Rwandan actors of all tribal backgrounds. For example, a doctor who spent three days lying unconscious in a ditch and woke up to find his parents and neighbours dead plays the part of a perpetrator in the film.

The aim: to familiarise as large an audience as possible with the reality of the Rwandan genocide.

Pierre-Célestin Rwigyema

"You can't reason with a hungry man"



Prime Minister since August 1995, when he replaced Faustin Twagiramungu, Pierre-Célestin Rwigyema is also President of the MDR, the Democratic Republican Movement.

The transitional government has just extended its mandate by four years, until 2003. why is that?

Under the 1993 Arusha Peace Accords, an initial 22-month period of transition was laid down. The genocide changed all that. The government brought in on 19 July 1994, made up of the FPR and other parties that had not been tainted by the genocide, set itself a period of five years to embark on reconstruction of the country. That was a gigantic task, involving the restoration of security, the re-establishment of the national economy and the principles of democracy, the reconstruction of the social infrastructure, attending to the survivors of the genocide, etc.

There was a difficult problem in the form of the hundreds of thousands of refugees waiting on the borders. Remember, the *Interhamwe* militia and the former armed forces had fled the country, and a very large proportion of the population went with them, into neighbouring countries. It was a matter of urgency to bring those people back, so that things could return to normal - so that we could have all the basics, all the necessary economic ingredients to prepare a budget and decide priorities, so that we could start building on a solid base. But that task was to prove very difficult. First, because the international community, including the European Union, was not convinced of this government's good faith. And secondly because the refugees only began to return in October 1996 - and then it was on a massive scale, virtually out of control. There were armed units, militia and former FAR men mixed up with the civilian population. As they came back into the country, pockets of dangerous territory began to spring up here and there, especially in the north-west.

That was the point at which the government, in close cooperation with the National Assembly, arranged to visit some of those areas - Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, the strongholds of the old regime. The idea was to persuade the population to work with us and with the local authorities. The successful process of collaboration that followed resulted in people being grouped together in villages - we called this "villagisation". We also contacted the various providers of funds, asking them to help us settle these people and protect them. We wanted them to come and

meet the people and see for themselves that there was no other solution. And that our motives were good.

All those activities meant that we lost nearly three years. For example, it is only now, with the security situation completely under control, that we have been able to set up the various national committees - something we could not have done earlier. The political staff of the parties represented in parliament got together and decided that it was impossible to end the transitional period until the whole process was firmly established. As a result, we agreed upon a further four-year period of transition.

Isn't it true that another reason for extending the government mandate is that it is still too early to hold parliamentary elections?

Yes, it really was impossible to organise elections against that background, in that climate of insecurity. But we have already organised elections at grass-roots level - at cell and sector level. And I can tell you that when we started talking about it, people didn't believe us. But those elections have taken place, though very differently from the way it happens in Europe. All the members of the various committees were elected publicly, selected by the population, not on any ethnic basis but in accordance with their real abilities. Those elections were a very important test, because they mean that we Rwandans can now break free of tribal stereotypes and that a process of reconciliation is possible.

Has a specific programme been drawn up for this new period? Is there a timetable?

Discussions have already been held along those lines. If only as regards the beginning of this new transitional period, some parties thought it was time to launch a genuine party political system. So we agreed that the parties could begin operating at prefecture level in a year's time.

As regards the Constitutional Commission, it should start work immediately on drawing up a draft constitution.

Otherwise, the government programme is unchanged. The aim is to continue what we started during the first phase of transition. The only difference relates to the priorities that have been identified. To take just one example, one of the priorities for the Rwandan army is to



One key to national reconciliation is improving people's living conditions

become involved in production programmes - animal and crop farming, civil engineering, etc. We also want them to work on military cooperation with other countries. That was unthinkable five years ago, when the priority was to re-establish internal security.

Undoubtedly, one of the essential elements of the new transitional period is going to be catching up on the backlog of court cases. The reintroduction of the *gaçaca* courts will make that easier. Does this involve full public participation?

Gaças have always been a feature of Africa. If someone did something wrong, there was always a committee of elders in the hills that had jurisdiction to resolve the dispute, after hearing both sides.

The genocide that took place in our country was on a nationwide scale. A great many people at every level participated in it. That is why there are nearly 130,000 people being held in our prisons. So it is essential to find out the truth, what-

ever it may be. And the *gaças* seem to us to be the ideal tool because if the people in the hills all say the same thing, it is going to be easier to sort things out between the innocent and the guilty.

Once we are in a position to know the truth, we shall be well on the way towards speeding up the trials. The *gaçaca* courts themselves will propose the penalties, at least for the three less serious categories where they have jurisdiction.

Finally, the involvement and cooperation of the entire population and the conclusions it gives rise to will enable us to speed up the process of reconciliation.

As for this process of reconciliation, was that your aim last April when you publicly called upon the people to forgive the MDR - of which you are the President - for its involvement in the genocide?

Some people wanted all the Hutus to ask forgiveness. That is not the way we see it. As the MDR is a successor party to the MDR-PARME-HUTU of 1959, a party that originat-

ed from the Hutu majority that excluded the Tutsis, we felt we were in no position to preach. During those years when we fought the Tutsis, the reason was that they had a monopoly on power. That was wrong. Not all the Tutsis were chiefs, while we were generalising and persecuting everybody. The MDR was a government party until 1973. In that year, Habyarimana's MDR drove out not only the Tutsis, but the southern Hutus along with them. When the party was reformed in 1991, nothing had really been done to differentiate it from the party of earlier years. That is what we have now done.

You must realise that the MDR is a party with no tribal label. As its name indicates, it is a democratic party, and we stand by that principle, that ideal. You can take a look anywhere you like in this country, and you will see that when there is a malaria epidemic the Hutus and the Tutsis both fall sick in the same way. They are made the same way. The problem arises with power-sharing. That is why the MDR must include both Hutus and Tutsis. That, in fact, was the appeal I launched when I reformed the party. Today, both tribes are represented in both the political office and the steering committee. So we do condemn those within the MDR who preach the gospel of genocide. That is why there is no reason to ask forgiveness on behalf of all the Hutus.

The road to national reconciliation leads through the courts, there is no doubting that. But does it not also, necessarily, involve improving the socioeconomic circumstances of the individual citizen?

Of course. We can talk endlessly about reconciliation and the great principles of democracy. But that doesn't mean a lot to people living on the poverty line: "You can't reason with a hungry man". That is why,

on the list of eight points that form the outline of the government's programme, the restoration of the national economy takes pride of place. That means putting a roof over everyone's head, ensuring that everyone has enough to eat, that everyone has access to a basic education, etc. That is what we are recommending by setting aside, for example, five per cent of the national income to establish a fund for the genocide survivors and the worst off.

Another of the basic principles is combatting corruption. This is an area where the National Assembly has been notably frank just recently, both about controlling the government budget and about procedures for conducting enquiries into the conduct of certain ministers.

But what is the function of the National Assembly if it is not to create laws and monitor the actions of government? Its actions were within its powers. I would say that the National Assembly was doing no more than making up for lost time. What the members are doing now is something they should have done earlier, because a minister is responsible for his actions. Now, is it about his current actions or his former ones? I personally think he is only responsible in the context of his current ministry, not for his past actions. The National Assembly should have taken appropriate steps earlier.

Rwanda today is a relatively stable country, but it is surrounded by areas of instability. There is war in the DRC, an explosive situation in Burundi, pockets of infiltration on the Tanzanian and Ugandan borders...

Internal security is a priority for the government. Of course, there is no way to ensure it without taking due account of external sources of instability. The DRC is one of them - a huge one.

When the Zairians took the initiative and toppled Mobutu, we supported them, to the point of raising Kabila to power in Kinshasa. But once he was in power, instead of setting things right for those Congolese citizens of Rwandan origin who had been suffering from serious injustices for many years, he hired the former FAR men and the *Interhamwe* militias. As a result, he destabilised Rwanda. The Congolese incursions from the East were becoming intolerable, which is why we are still hounding them today, driving them right back into the interior of the Congo. It was the only thing we could do, we have not been enjoying ourselves in the Congo.... But since we have been there we have finally had security within our own country, and we have also signed the Lusaka Accords in good faith. Having said that, though, while the forces of instability remain in the Congo, so will we.

As far as our other neighbours are concerned, our difference of opinions with Uganda is a thing of the past now. We are also willing to help Burundi solve its internal conflict, by

helping the various factions to get together around a table.

Finally, what do you think of your partnership with the European Union as your most important provider of funds?

The EU is our most important multilateral partner. The actions it takes are specific and generally rapid - if only they would not attach conditions to them! We deplore that. When it isn't about security or human rights, it's the return of the refugees which is the subject of the accusations, or democracy, or the NGOs which we have evicted from the country, etc. Of course, the European Union is entitled to adopt that approach. But it should also consider the specific problems our country faces. If we hadn't been subjected to all these financial delays, there is no doubt that the transitional period would now be further along the road. So the EU, too, must take its share of responsibility for the transitional government's delays. Because it is impossible to overcome the problems without resources.

A market place in Kigali
"Ensure that everyone
has enough to eat"



Patrick Mazimhaka, Minister to the Office of the President

«We have to have faith in Lusaka»

Formerly Minister for Reconstruction, Patrick Mazimhaka now has a key role in Rwandan diplomacy as direct adviser to the President. Here, he discusses his views on Rwanda's regional situation and more particularly on his country's relations with its neighbours.

At the time of our visit to Rwanda last October, events at Kisangani were still very much in the news. Since August, in fact, encounters had been taking place on Congolese territory between members of the Rwandan and Ugandan military. "All that's now in the past", Mr Mazimhaka explained. "I don't think that what happened at Kisangani is representative of the relationship between Rwanda and Uganda. It goes beyond this current stage in history, beyond this misunderstanding. Disputes have arisen between us in the past and, although this incident is now behind us, we should not pretend it didn't happen."

He went on to say that both governments are now attempting to



improve communication between their countries and to set up the machinery to prevent a repeat: "It is essential to demonstrate that the Congolese issue can be resolved by better cooperation, and I am very confident about the future of our relationship."

Nevertheless, the Rwandan armed forces are still present in the DRC, leading some to suggest

that Rwanda might just have its sights set on its neighbour's wealth. The Minister was adamant in refuting such allegations, whilst agreeing that Rwanda does indeed have an economic interest in Congo, as it does in the entire region, as do its neighbours. In his view, the important thing is to understand what is meant by the term interest.

"Our hope is that we can again generate genuine economic cooperation with our Congolese neighbour, do joint research, generate electricity on a joint basis, etc. Our interest is therefore economic in the widest sense of the term, not pure commercial interest. Our wish is not for trafficking, as some would have people believe." He added that those who speak of the Congo's phenomenal riches are completely mistaken.

"They are simply not available because they are already in the hands of major international corporations. What could a tiny country like ours do? We don't have the resources to invest in the Congo in order to take over its wealth!" The Minister stressed once again that the only reason for the presence of Rwandan troops in the Congo is to put an end, once and for all, to the genocide, which means pursuing the Interahamwe militia and the ex-FARs, and all those who committed atrocities.

He accepts that most such people have, it is reported, now joined up with Laurent Kabila's troops and resolved to complete their task, namely to finish their genocidal action from these new

All kinds of merchandise is for sale at Kigali's market.



The National Assembly building in Kigali. Shell holes bear witness to the terrible war



bases. The Arusha Accords, signed last July by all parties present on Congolese territory, aimed in particular to identify such people and to disarm them, this applying to all forces hostile to a re-establishment of peace. Patrick Mazimhaka regards the accords as very favourable, particularly, he says, since they clearly identify the major problems involved in the Congolese crisis. He tempered his optimism by saying that it is essential for the accords to be implemented.

"I'm not so sure that all those involved in the Lusaka peace accords are convinced of their quality. For our part, we are convinced that, if Lusaka is effectively implemented, which will take some time, it will be possible to rebuild a stable region with a promising future."

In Mr Mazimhaka's view, the DRC is also suffering from a very serious leadership problem.

"The country is being governed in a way which is insensitive to the problems of its neighbours. Ultimately, the powers that be are incapable of respecting international laws. In fact, there is no serious governance in the Congo, which causes an enormous number of problems, not only in the Congo itself but also for its neighbours."

Next door, Burundi, is also experiencing a very unstable period, one which gives cause for concern.

"We support our friends in Burundi, in their attempts to solve their problems," he said. When asked whether the government feared a new influx of refugees, the Minister told us that although that would

create problems, particularly of a material nature, Rwanda had already taken in hundreds of thousands of refugees, and it mattered little whether they came from the Congo, Burundi or elsewhere.

"We face no political threat from that quarter," he said.

What about Rwanda's relationship with the international community? We asked him, in particular, what his country now expects from that community, five years after the genocide.

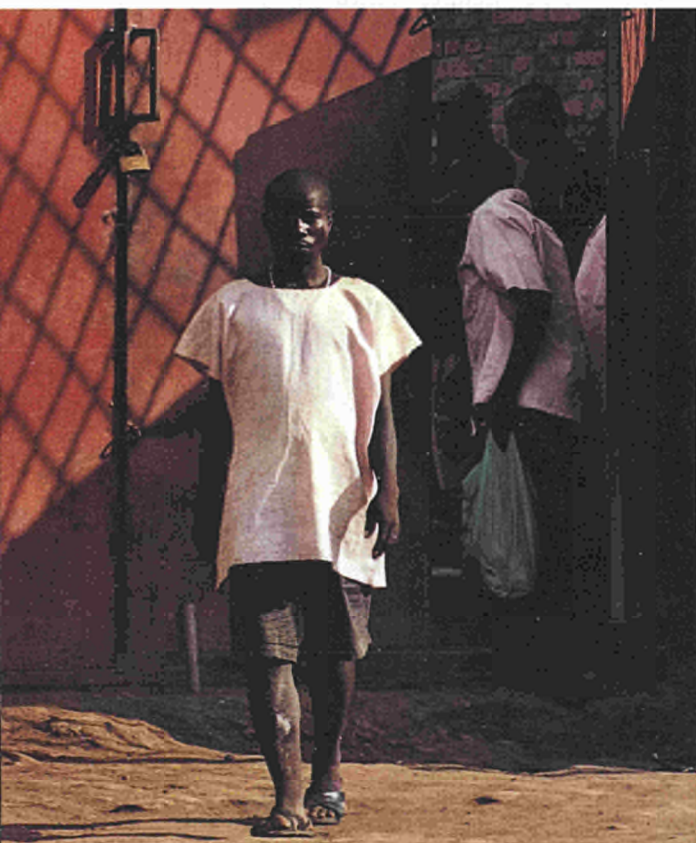
"So far, we have been unable to persuade the international community to accept its share of responsibility for the genocide. We are not trying to criminalise the international community, only to persuade it to accept fully that the genocide took place and that it has a share of responsibility for it. This is very important to us. If there is one thing we would like from the international community it is that it should make an active contribution to ensuring that justice be done; for instance, setting up an international tribunal for Rwanda at Arusha would be one thing, and ensuring that all those who are suspected of genocide are brought before that tribunal is another. We also think it important that the international community should adopt our approach to the issue, that they acknowledge our right to solve disputes and to provide justice for hundreds of thousands of victims. Just as essential is that individual countries should acknowledge their responsibility."

A need for justice

The culture of impunity. For many observers, this is indisputably one of the main sources of the tragedy that has struck Rwanda. After all the long years of slaughter, the killers have always escaped unpunished.

The destruction of this culture, then, is essential. The guilty men must be brought before the courts. Justice must be done for the hundreds of thousands of victims of genocide, justice for the 125,000 held pending trial.

The guilty men must be tried if the shreds of the social fabric are to be reassembled, and if the process of reconciliation is to begin.



The entrance to Rilima prison

Rilima prison, near the border with Burundi, is just one of Rwanda's many detention centres. Nearly 8,000 people are being held there, and most have been there for four or five years. The prison population is virtually all male - it includes barely 300 women. Living conditions are atro-

cious. Men crowded together in the dark, sometimes lying on the bare ground, in what is little more than a sewer. Hygiene and sanitation are minimal. The communal food bowls are empty for days at a time. It is difficult not to feel pity. But harsh reality soon drives out pity when a conversation begins, "Why are you here?" - "Because I killed 14 people." This cold answer came from a detainee who had already confessed. It is difficult to take sides. ...

However many detainees there may be in Rilima awaiting trial, only a very few have already come to court. The fact is that justice takes time. And money. The genocide trials did not really begin until late December 1996. The task was a gigantic one, with more than 130,000 people allegedly guilty of the crime of genocide. In fact, over a period of three years, barely 1,500 detainees have been tried and sentenced - 1% of the total. About 4,000 others have been freed, because no case has been prepared against them or there is insufficient evidence to sustain one. At this rate, it will take over 200 years to deal with the backlog. There are three simple reasons for this slow progress: dilapidated judicial machinery, a lack of human resources, and a critical shortage of equipment. All this despite the efforts made by the government, the international community and many NGOs

active in Rwanda, such as *Avocats sans frontières* and the Citizens' Network. And despite the attempts, largely unsuccessful as yet, to organise joint trials or extract confessions (in return for a reduced sentence).

In the name of the people

Confronted with this Kafkaesque situation, the Rwandan authorities have come up with a bold alternative - the formerly popular *gacaca* courts. Thus the absolute right to a defence, enshrined in and protected by both international law and internal Rwandan law, remains inalienable. The *inkiko gacaca* (*gacaca* courts), a feature of Rwandan customary law, formerly dealt with most disputes by trying to bring about a settlement between the parties. Now, restored to favour, the function of these courts will be to deal out participatory justice. Since the crime of genocide was committed completely openly, "it is up to the Rwandan population to judge its peers". So those who participated in the genocide at a particular place will be judged by the population of that same place.

Specifically, each prefecture in the country will have four levels of *gacaca* court: the cell, the sector, the commune and the prefecture. While the first three will have jurisdiction to judge the detainees of categories 4, 3 and 2, respectively¹, the prefecture

¹ Category 1 comprises those who planned, organised, incited, supervised and staged the crime of genocide, together with all those who exercised any form of authority and those who committed acts of sexual torture. Category 2 comprises the perpetrators, joint perpetrators or accomplices of acts of manslaughter. Those guilty of other serious crimes against the person will be classified in category 3. Finally, the fourth category comprises those guilty of offences against property

gaçaca will serve as a court of appeal. Crimes in Category 1 will still be heard by the ordinary courts (estimates agree that nearly 90% of detainees will be ranked in category 2). Within this structure, the *gaçacas* at cell level (the country's smallest administrative unit) will be of considerable significance, since it is they who will collect all the evidence, record all complaints and draw up the list of those who were killed and those who took part in the killing. It is they, too, who will be responsible for assigning the accused to the various categories and so referring them to the competent courts.

Each *gaçaca*, at every level, will comprise a general assembly of persons of integrity elected by the local population. This assembly will elect 20 judges (*inyangamugayo*) from its ranks, who will constitute the "bench". They, in turn, will select a "coordinating committee". The powers of these popular courts will be as broad as those of the ordinary courts. They will be able to issue search warrants, subpoena any witness, summon the public prosecutor to explain various earlier inquiries, and, of course, impose sentences and ensure that they are carried out. As far as this is concerned, the law of retaliation will not apply - the penalties will be those laid down by legislation.

PRI

According to Klaas de Jonge, in charge of Program Reform International, working in Rwanda's prisons is "politically difficult". This NGO has set up a programme of microprojects enabling certain detainees to carry on small-scale farming activities. It is also working to train prison staff and providing assistance to the Ministry of Justice.

Clearly, the *gaçaca* courts, which should begin work in late January 2000, will give an essential role to the local people. They will be called upon to bear witness to what they saw, they will be required to produce evidence of the acts committed, and they will impose sentence on each accused. Those who have not yet been prosecuted despite involvement in crimes will be denounced, and the survivors of the genocide restored to

their rights, together with the innocent detainees (estimated at between 10 and 15% of the total prison population). The *gaçacas* will be important, too, for the moderate Hutus, because guilt will be fairly attributed and the sense of general culpability will become obsolete. The *gaçaca* courts thus offer the enormous advantage of allowing all Rwandans to obtain justice and so to play their full part in the reconstruction of the country - though that task is one involving many pitfalls.

No shortage of problems

Not the least of the pitfalls is ensuring public awareness. The Rwandan people need to be prepared for this new form of justice, to have time to assimilate all its subtleties, and to be ready to come and bear witness and tell the truth (there will be severe penalties for untruthful informants). The same applies to the detainees - a difficult

It is essential to promote public awareness of this new form of justice





With the support of PRI, prisoners are working small plots of ground

The Verdict

This monthly periodical, produced by the Liprodhor (League for the Protection of Human Rights in Rwanda) documentation centre first appeared in March 1999. Its task is to provide instruction and information on the trials, and especially to tell people their rights. It also provides a debating forum, for example on the *gacacas* and national reconciliation. Every month, it produces what is virtually a twenty-page database on the trials.

problem, because apparently inside the prisons themselves very heavy pressure is applied to prevent certain forms of testimony or confession². Training the judges for these 15,000 or so new courts is also an essential prerequisite. It goes without saying that if identifying so many individuals of "integrity and impartiality" may be a problem in itself, it is equally impossible to make judges overnight. On-site training, at commune level, will take time.

Another problem concerns the taking of evidence from women, who now make up 60% of the population and one-third of the heads of households, and the part they will play in the proceedings of the courts. There is no shortage of denunciations of rape and other forms of sexual mutilation that were a genuine instrument of genocide. There are already calls in some quarters for the hearings dealing with these acts - which must be brought to justice - to be held in camera.

While various NGOs have highlighted other practical problems (What about those who perpetrated crimes in more than one place? What will happen regarding sentences already imposed? etc.), there is another stumbling block: victim compensation. The compensation fund, planned months ago, has still not actually come into being in Rwanda. And no one really knows, as yet, how it is to be financed, although it seems that international aid will be the only contributor. At present, the enforcement of judgments is confined almost exclusively to carrying out sentence, which is giving rise to widespread protest. The problem is all the more difficult in that the survivors' associations, which together form the *Ibuka* collective, are complaining of very inadequate financial support by com-

parison with the millions spent on ministering to the needs of prisoners accused of genocide.

Mea culpa international?

If the *gacaca* courts were to prove successful, it would undoubtedly be a major step towards national reconciliation. That in no way devalues the traditional machinery of justice, which will still have jurisdiction over category 1 crimes. The courts will soon be relieved of a gigantic volume of files and, so we are told, will also be assigned additional personnel. That leaves the International Criminal Tribunal (ICTR) for Rwanda, based at Arusha in Tanzania, which has special jurisdiction to try suspects who have fled to foreign soil. For some time now, the court's relations with the Rwandan government have been deteriorating steadily. The recent release, on a technicality, of a former Rwandan dignitary, the founder of Radio Mille Collines, has made the situation even worse. Jean de Dieu Mucyo blames the situation on a culpable lack of determination: "Some senior officials have been arrested, admittedly, but only five have so far been brought to court!

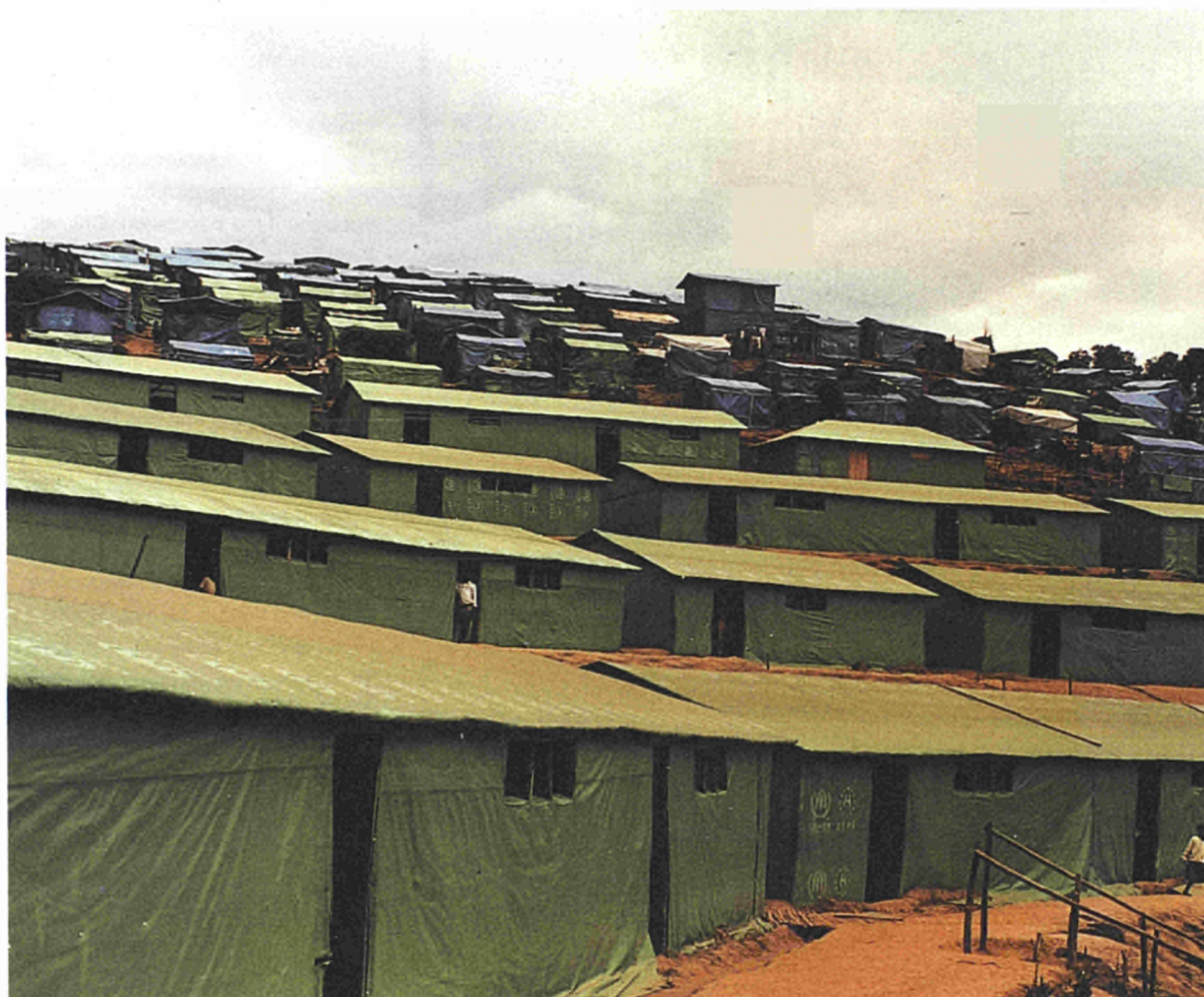
With all those resources! Why so few?" The Minister of Justice also mentions that witnesses have been badly treated in general, especially as far as protection is concerned. "The ideal thing would be for the ICTR to have an office here in Rwanda and for the hearings to be held locally, in Kigali." Pursuing the same line of argument, he deplores the fact that some countries have residents who were guilty of genocide and refuse to hand them over to justice³. "We should never forget that genocide is anything but an ordinary crime. Claiming that there are no extradition treaties is meaningless when we are talking about crimes against humanity. That's not the answer. And if they are unwilling to extradite these people to Rwanda, why not bring them to Arusha? Promises are not enough. ..."

Ultimately, there are many in Rwanda who believe that the international community, too, must put its books in order. It has a moral duty, as it were. Belgium, the former colonial power, has been thinking along these lines. A parliamentary commission of inquiry produced a report nearly 600 pages long in late 1997 containing a detailed study of Belgian and UN involvement in the Rwandan genocide and the responsibilities that derived from it. The report says, for example, that Belgium had known for months that genocide was being planned, and that UN forces could have stopped the genocide if the UN had obtained a mandate quickly enough. In the following year it was the turn of the French parliament to set up a "fact-finding mission" responsible for casting light on France's involvement. The United Nations, too, has begun to re-examine the issue. There is plenty of work to do. ...

² Rwanda's prisons are a caricature of society, with the same different social classes, the same power struggles and the same hierarchy. Consequently, it is difficult - and may be dangerous - to confess to a crime which involves other detainees or to denounce offenders.

³ Most of the instigators of the genocide are living in exile in neighbouring countries or Europe, with total impunity.

umudugudu for refugees



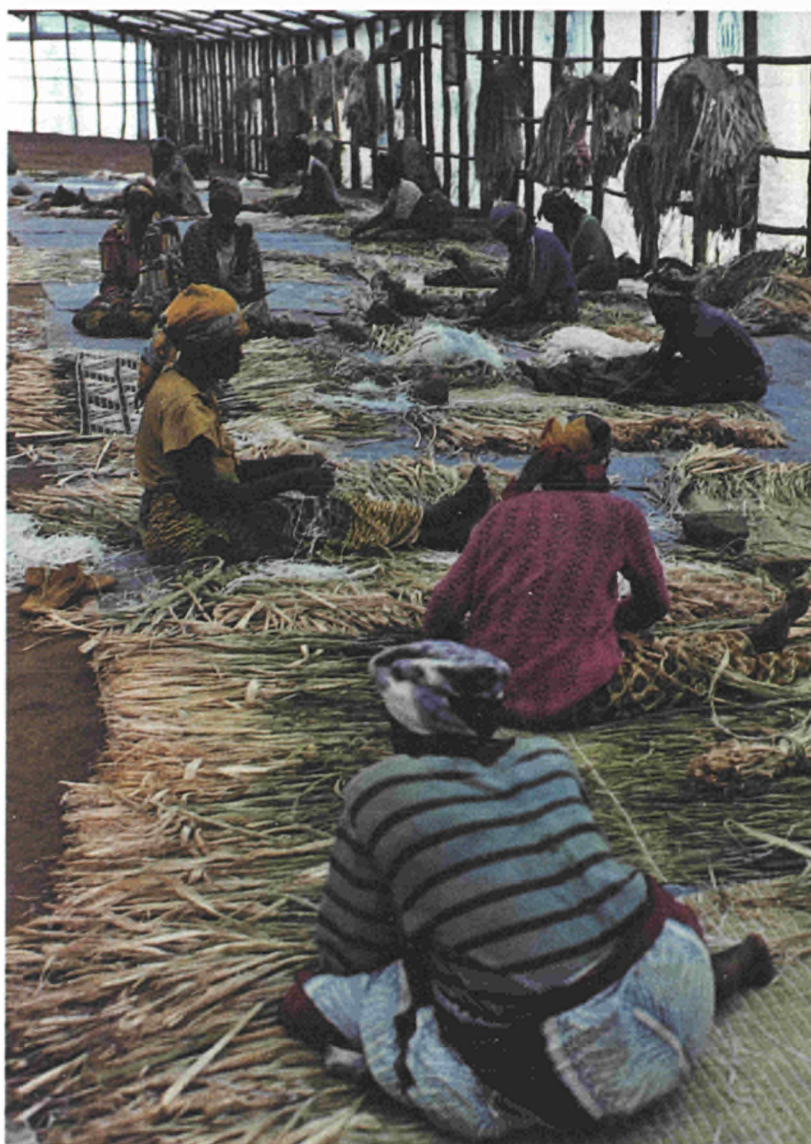
Byumba camp,
perched on
a hillside

The Byumba camp is one of the last large refugee camps remaining in Rwanda. It houses between 18,000 and 20,000 people under plastic roofs. Natives of the Masisi region in DRC, nearly all the inhabitants were formerly based in another camp at Gisenyi where they were attacked by insurgents. Mostly Tutsis, they were resettled here for their safety.

The victory of the RPF has led to a huge exodus of more than two million Hutus to Tanzania, Burundi and above all to the former Zaire. The Rwandan army and the former MRND (National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development) authorities, who were behind this exodus, were quick to take political control of the enormous camps created. In the almost universal state of indifference that resulted, arms trafficking, precipitate justice, military training manoeuvres, forced impositions, intimidation and the promotion of ethnic propaganda became part of daily life. Nor is the genocide over. It is now being sponsored in the refugee camps of the Kivu region. Attacks against Tutsi farmers who have been settled in the region for as long as anyone can remember are set to escalate. The north-west border will see ever more frequent traffic, as bloody raids are made against survivors and witnesses.

Faced with a situation of this kind, the Rwandan Patriotic Army is stepping up its campaign of reprisals. It moreover strongly backs the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) led by Laurent Désiré Kabila, which will lead to the dismantling of the camps. This marks the start of the mass return of refugees. A second wave of people, fleeing the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but bringing with it weapons, an ideology of hatred and many insurgents. The actions of the Hutu rebels refuse to subside and are transforming virtually the whole of northern Rwanda into a war zone. In the hills, the local people often find themselves caught in the crossfire between rebel attacks and cleansing operations conducted by the army, writing the rather less glorious chapters in its history. These new clashes are set to give rise to hundreds of thousands of displaced people.

The Rwandan government has had to resettle more than three million people since 1996, this figure including not only those mentioned above, but also all those who have returned from Burundi and Tanzania. Three million Rwandans have returned to the country, either voluntarily or otherwise. Reintegrating such a huge number of people has represented a major challenge to the government



A weaving workshop has found its place in the heart of Byumba camp

which has had to reckon with post-genocide reconstruction, the desire for reconciliation and a background of persistent insecurity. The Kigali authorities have also had to attend to 800,000 old case load refugees, these being refugees from the diaspora which had fled the country since 1959. These people have been returning since the end of the genocide and occupied the houses left vacant.

Old and new refugees do not enjoy the same rights. The Arusha accords stipulate that nobody can seek recovery of property abandoned prior to 1960. "New" refugees are therefore entitled to recover their land and property unlike "old" refugees. This means that houses claimed straight after the genocide

must be returned to their owners, which is a source of vexation for the "old" refugees. To resolve this confused state of affairs, it was decided to resettle all the homeless refugees or displaced persons in new villages, in some instances after a short period in new camps, but this time round on Rwandan soil.

Villagisation

The policy of villagisation was adopted in January 1997 and focuses on the promotion of *imidugudu* - the name given to these new types of villages located at roadsides, in which the houses are grouped in a bid to encourage the establishment of centres of development in rural areas. These villages have been furnished with all basic socio-economic

infrastructures: provision of water supplies, a market, schools, etc. Primarily intended for the homeless, access will later be granted to all those with no means of support. The aim of grouped settlements is to create an atmosphere of reconciliation throughout the population. Official statistics reveal that nearly 100,000 such houses have been built since 1995 at carefully chosen locations. Each site is home to between 150 and 3,000 people, or between 25 and 500 families and has been mainly financed by the HCR (High Commission for Refugees).

But in practice, this policy has failed to achieve the results expected. Many of these new villages are empty, the houses having never even been occupied, while others have been abandoned. There are a number of reasons behind this. The main one is undoubtedly the genuine upheaval that *umudugudu* represents for the population. Traditionally the hills were dotted with *rugos*, family compounds with houses clearly separated, plenty of privacy and surrounded by banana trees, where individuals cultivated their own soil and reared their own livestock.

Another reason - openly acknowledged by Kigali - is that social and economic infrastructures are noticeable in most instances by their absence. Furthermore, many sites show flaws: in some, access to drinking water is too difficult; in others the fields are too far from the village, which wastes time, and in yet others the soil is poor or even entirely unsuited to farming. In many cases villages were built and sites chosen too quickly.

This leaves the political angle and sensitivities. Some see this process of villagisation as a forced displacement to areas under strict government control. Others, through fears for their safety, balk at leaving their home region and prefer to live a hidden life or to emigrate to the towns.

One thing remains certain: 370,000 families remain in urgent need of housing in Rwanda.

A good place to live

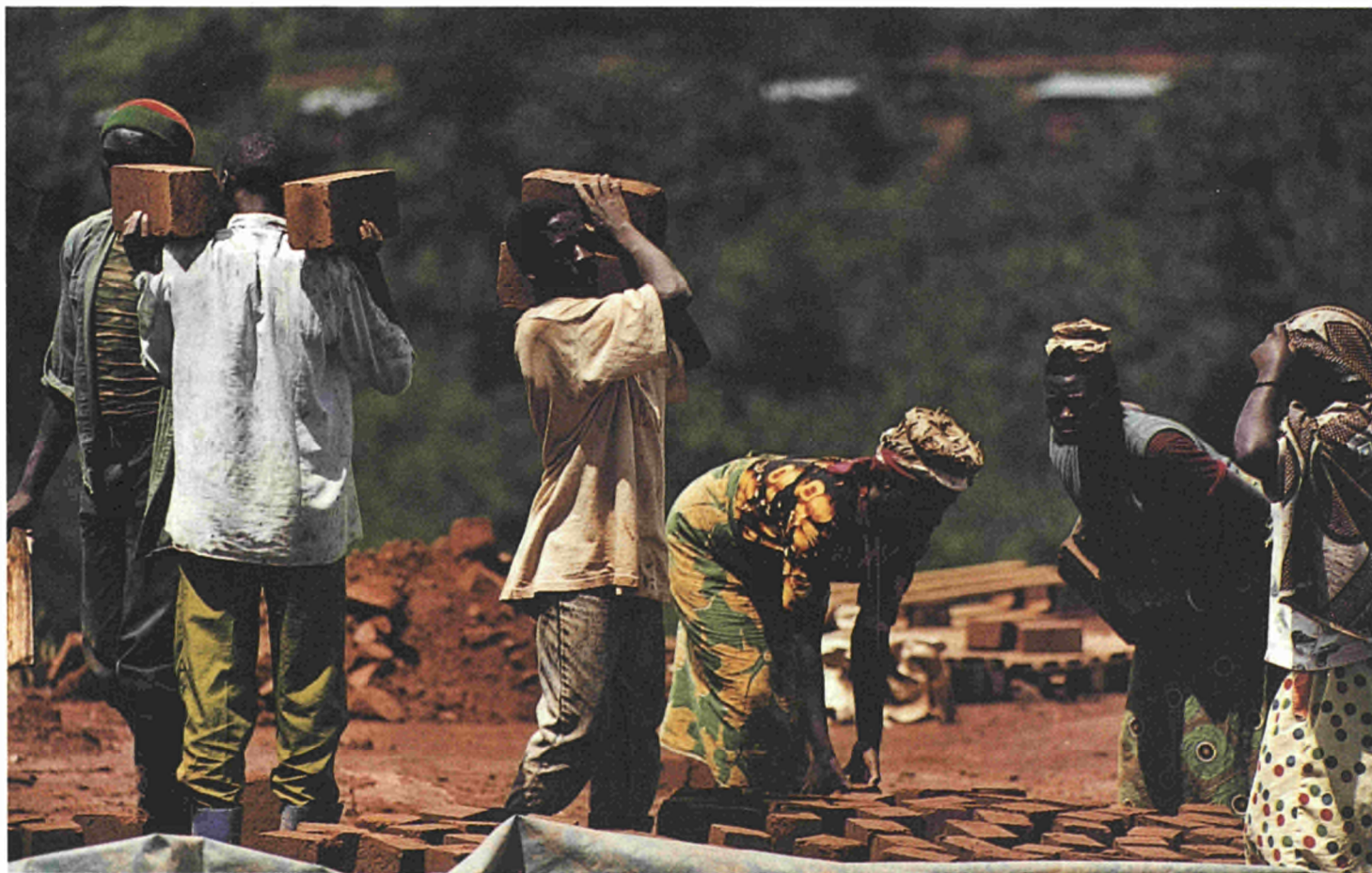
Men usually carry two, one on each shoulder, or even a pair on the same one, changing sides every so often. Most of the women prefer to carry them on their heads in the more customary fashion. The bricks, a clever mix of sifted earth, sand and lime - or cement - are made here using hand presses and are left to dry for four or five hours. There is lots of bustle from brickyard to truck and back. From time to time, the job is taken over by a pair of oxen. The bricks are then taken to the house whose walls are now nearing completion. After the bricklayers will come the carpenters. The roof, of red eucalyptus, will be covered with corrugated iron. All that will be left is for the joiners to fit the whitewood doors and windows before these can be whitewashed and painted. Only then can a latrine be sited next to the house. These makeshift homes which had (and sometimes still do have) plastic sheeting for a roof are home to many refugees.

Most of the thousands now living in Gatsilima fled the war leaving all their belongings behind them. On their return, all were offered a plot of land under the national settlement plan set up by the Rwandan authorities. It was against this background some time ago that the Austrian Help Programme (AHP), an Austrian NGO, built a village of 200 homes, financed at the time by ECHO. This aid programme met only 40% of housing requirements, hence the need for a second programme, which was specifically requested by the people. The Integrated Programme for Rehousing in the Gatsilima Valley, in the municipality of Kyiombe, Byumba prefecture, therefore came into being in late 1998, this project being financed by the EU to the tune of €1.5 million.

Water and forests

Widows were given priority in the allocation of plots of land, so they occupied the first homes built. Most of these, with their red, yellow and

Carrying bricks on their heads or in their hands, everyone is involved in building houses

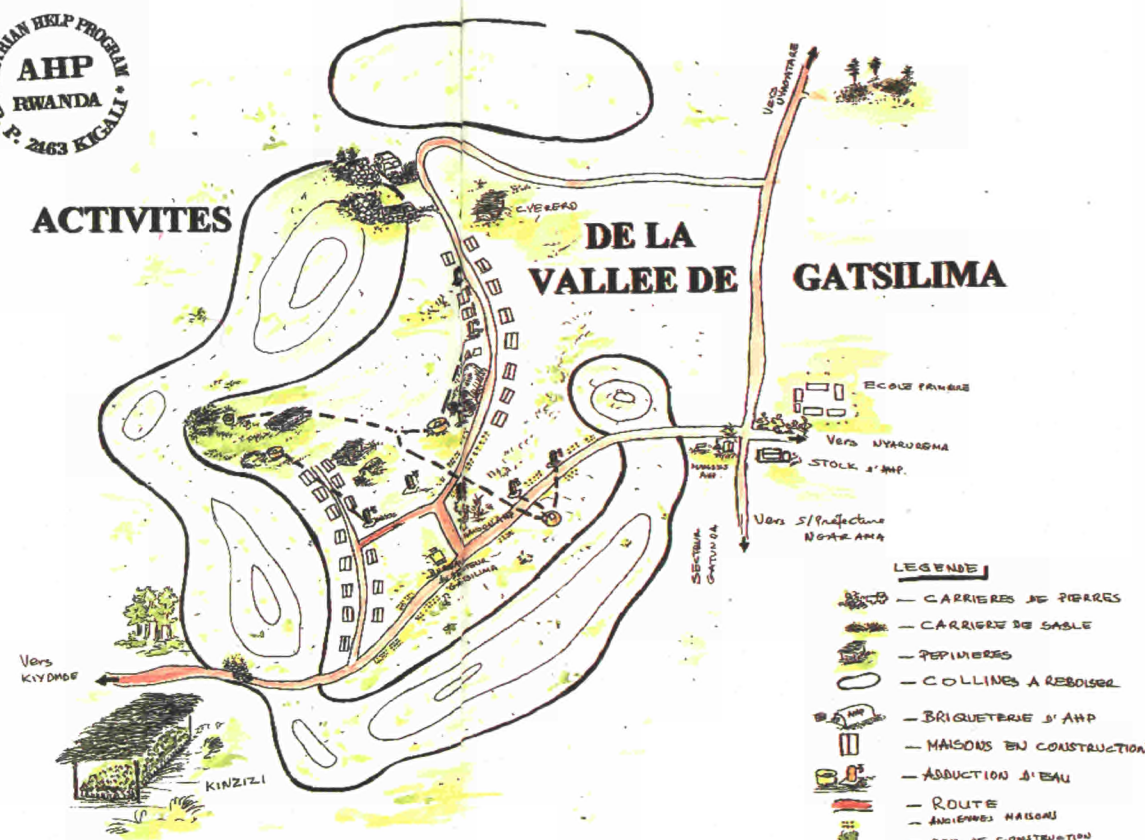


The reason for this is the fact that the programme has not been limited merely to building homes (170 in all, equal to the number of recipient families). The supply of drinking water has also been a major compo-

It should be emphasised that the local population has been fully involved in all stages of the programme, to encourage sustainability. AHP was keen to involve recipient families not only in carrying out specific work, but also in the overall planning of the various pro-



DE LA VALLEE DE GATSILIMA



The programme also aims to restore the heritage of forestry and agroforestry which vanished during the genocide, and to preserve the environment. Four tree nurseries have been planted, of 4,000 saplings each. Most of these trees will be used to reforest the hills in the surrounding areas. Others will be used in agroforestry: locust trees, cedars and other pine trees are to be planted in the farmers' plots, at the roadsides to shore up the embankments, or as measures to combat soil erosion.

In Gatsilima, rural people make up most of the population. The AHP planners therefore had to make room for a farming revival in the programme. This involves the revival of traditional farming methods along with the introduction of new methods. The aim is to increase, improve and diversify farm production. A plan for weekly

While these activities are contributing towards the redevelopment of the Gatsilima valley, a collection of small secondary activities are also helping to improve everyday life. A primary school has been renovated, an emergency medical centre set up, and, a little way away, a windmill has been provided for use by the community, to save the toil of grinding grain to flour using mortars.

A large traditional hut has also been erected in the centre of the village for social and cultural activities for young people. Roads and bridges have been repaired as have small animal rearing facilities.

As the transporting of bricks comes to an end for the day higher up in the village, a woman in the central office finishes stuffing a toy elephant. Another makes little sheets of dominoes with numbers and pictures. The manufacture of educational tools is a very new activity in the rural Rwandan environment. The aim is for parents to make equipment for children to help them learn and develop their intelligence.



Profile

Rwanda



General Information

Area
Population
Rate of population increase
Capital

26,338 km²
8.1 million inhabitants (1998 estimate)
3.2% (1997-2015)
Kigali.
Other principal cities: Butare, Byumba, Gisenyi, Gitarama
French and Kinyarwanda
Hutu, Tutsi, Twa

Official languages
Principle ethnic groups

Economy

GNP
GDP per capita
GDP growth rate
Rate of inflation
Foreign debt
Currency
Principal sectors
Principal exports
Principal imports

US\$ 1.7 billion
US\$ 660 (1997)
12.8% (1997)
10% (1998 estimate)
US\$ 1,164 million (1997)
Rwandan franc (1€ = RF 350.3)
Agriculture, stock-rearing
Coffee, tea, cassiterite
Consumer goods, capital in kind, food

Political structure

President
Political system

Pastor Bizimungu
Transitional presidential system. Legislature composed of a non-elected parliament of 70 members.
The transition period, which was initially due to end in 1999, has been extended until 2003.

Composition of National Assembly

Rwanda Patriotic Front, FPR (13 members);
Democratic Republican Movement, MDR (13); Social
Democratic Party, PSD (13); Liberal Party (13);
Christian Democratic Party (6); Others (6); Armed
Forces (6).

Social indicators

Life expectancy at birth
Infant mortality
Adult literacy rate
School attendance
Human development index

40.5 years (1997)
105 per 1000
55.6% - women; 70.7% - men (1997)
42% - women; 44% - men (1997)
0.379 (164th/174)

Sources: Economic Intelligence Unit, UNDP Human Development Report (1999).
EU/ACP cooperation in 1997 (EU, DGVIII).

The maps reproduced here do not imply recognition of any particular border,
nor do they prejudice the status of any state or territory.

Vanuatu

by Aya Kasasa



Vanuatu, timeless land



The Republic of Vanuatu is made up of 83 small tropical and subtropical islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, its close neighbours being the Solomon Islands, and the islands of Fiji and New Caledonia. The majority of the Ni-Vanuatu are Melanesian, said to be descended from emigrants from South-East Asia more than 2,500 years ago. A small proportion of the population is Polynesian and less than two per cent originate from Europe, Asia and other islands in the Pacific.

Contact with new diseases brought over by the Europeans in their boats decimated the population. A number of islands remain very sparsely populated as a result of the epidemics of the 19th century. Two-thirds of the population occupy the four main islands of Efate, Espiritu Santo, Malekula and Tanna. The remainder is scattered over small areas of territory on the archipelago, geographically distant from the two main urban centres, the capital Port Vila and Luganville.

Alliances and misalliances

This is perhaps an apt description of the complicated game of politics. The Republic of Vanuatu gained its independence in 1980. At the head of this parliamentary democracy is a president elected for four years, the symbol of national unity. Political reform is a key factor in the social and economic development of the country. The relative political stability of the early years of independence gave way to increasingly marked volatility in the 1990s. Closer scrutiny reveals that the country has moved from alliances to misalliances, the most recent upheavals having brought the new Prime Minister, Barak Sope, to the head of government in November 1999. In 1996 alone three different governments steered the country, resulting

in a total freeze in the political and business environment.

The current political divides in Vanuatu politics are partly to be explained by the colonial heritage of the Anglo-French Condominium. From 1906 to independence in 1980, Vanuatu, then known as the New Hebrides, was under joint Anglo-French administration. This dual colonial structure is reflected in education, law, policing and the prison service, citizenship, money and of course language. Although a great deal has been done to relax this duality, it persists in many aspects of life in Vanuatu today.

Until 1987, Vanuatu was governed by the New Hebrides National Party, later renamed Vanua'aku Pati (VP), of the Anglican priest Walter Lini. Largely identified with the English-speaking electors, these 11 years of rule were considered by the French-speaking section of the community as a period of administrative segregation against their interests. The party ultimately split into three fractions, the Union of Moderate Parties (UMP) mainly representing the French-speaking community. After the 1987 elections, the general secretary of the VP, Barak Sope, challenged Father Lini for leadership of the party. This led to a boycott of parliament by 18 members of the UMP and a split in the VP. In September 1988, Barak Sope announced the formation of the Melanesian Progressive Party, the MPP.

The split between the English- and French-speaking communities therefore grew deeper following independence and new political manoeuvring ultimately led to the formation in 1995 of the United Front, a coalition of four parties to stand for the elections of the same year. Post-electoral manoeuvring was further complicated by a split within the UMP, with each side using the same initials. The political instability intensified in the wake of these elections and led to the victory of a coalition that saw Donald

Kalpukas made head of government on 31 March 1998. This period of calm was short-lived since Mr Kalpokas, threatened with a motion of no confidence in Parliament, resigned before Sope was elected Prime Minister in November 1999. The Ni-Vanuatu take the view that more effort should be made to manage the alliances than to govern the country. There is furthermore the opportunity to try out all kinds of alliances since there is no true right-left-centre fraction in Vanuatu.

Corrosive corruption

Marie-Noëlle Ferrieux, a Vanuatu of French origin, was appointed Ombudsman in 1995 and has shown a certain political muscle. An essential figure in Vanuatu politics in recent years, she has shaken the political class and has made a number of enemies. Her office has published several reports which are extremely critical of important figures in the government, uncovering what can only be described as corruption, embezzlement of public funds and violations in the awarding of contracts. Observers are of the opinion that even in the West nobody else would have dared go so far. More generally, Marie-Noëlle Ferrieux-Patterson calls into question the dearth of knowledge and political experience of the ruling classes. "The basic problem in this country is the legal system which is desperately short of qualified and experienced individuals. People are suddenly catapulted to positions for which they have not received the proper training. Despite their best intentions what can you expect them to do? When Kalpokas was appointed, he declared that action would be taken... this has never been followed through." Kalpokas claims it has not been possible to prosecute incriminated persons through lack of evidence. But Ferrieux-Patterson's opinion is that there have been too many purely cosmetic changes, with nothing being done to support the public prosecutor, who is unable to carry out his duties. "The situation is even worse for the judiciary. The president of the

supreme court is currently working on a temporary basis. Despite his abilities, he has been overcome by the scale of what he is expected to do and cannot dispense justice as he does not have the necessary resources at his disposal."

A jumpy economy

The islands of the Pacific are no strangers to a degree of economic vulnerability. The main reasons for this are their distance from the world markets, high reliance on natural resources for their survival and their dependence on exports of agricultural raw materials whose prices are fixed by the world markets. Vanuatu has a dual economy, with 80% of the population dependent on subsistence farming, and a service sector dominated by tourism and the civil service which is concentrated in the two urban areas of Port Vila and Luganville. Although agriculture dominates, it regrettably only represents 24% of the economy. 63% of GDP for 1997 came from the service sector. The industrial sector is fairly small, representing only 13% of GDP. The economy can be regarded as undynamic and structurally weak, since even if resources were maximised, Vanuatu could never make much money. Some believe it is motivation that is somewhat wanting. The fact is that despite the problems, life is good in Vanuatu. As one inhabitant of Vila explained, people do not need cash

unless it is to pay for their children's education or arrange ceremonies, etc. And in this case they simply sell a pig (corresponding here to the notion of the piggy bank, given the value attached to them here) or cut down a tree to sell. Otherwise it is easy to find something to eat, and needs are minimal.

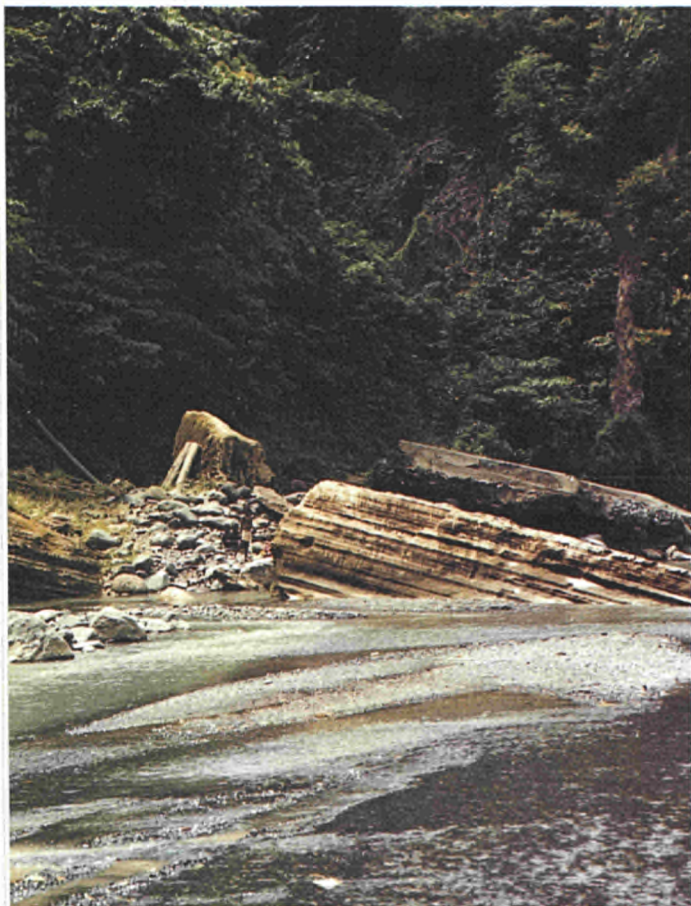
Economic development in Vanuatu since the 1980s has been uneven. The Asian Development Bank, the ADB, observed that growth in the 1980s was fairly strong at nearly 3.2%, dropping in the 1990s to 2.9% - modest rates which have failed to track population growth, resulting in a stagnation in quality of life. Vanuatu has a costly structure, with a low-performing public service, underdeveloped infrastructures, a scanty private sector and an urgent need for human resources with the necessary education and expertise to allow the country to participate in modern economic activities.

Reform

The combination of these various factors, severe recession and the social upheaval following the publication of a report by the Ombudsman, led the Kalpokas administration to call on the Asian Development Bank for assistance. A comprehensive reform programme, the CRP, was launched, with the main aim of reassuring financial backers and investors. The programme relates to all aspects of the

Many governments have followed each other, in too short a time, according to the wishes of investors





Cyclone Nigel destroyed all the lines of communication on Espiritu Santo

economy, the objective being, by 2002, to shore up institutions, meet the targets of good governance and organise reform and restructuring of the public sector. The programme has also been devised to make structural adjustments to the economy and encourage sustainable growth by promoting the private sector. Marie-Noëlle Ferrieux-Patterson sees much good in the programme, which has led to an in-depth revision of the law, the introduction of VAT, etc. However, right from the start she has seen a fatal flaw: "Laws have been introduced, but no action has been taken to apply them and impose penalties. We do not have an effective penal system."

Unfortunately for the former Prime Minister, Donald Kalpokas, the political cost of supporting such a programme has been high. The effectiveness of the CRP has been questioned on a number of occasions, those having to deal with its complexities seeing it as a solution

forced on them from outside. Since 1989, the bad tax situation has been worsened further in recent years. Government spending increased three times more quickly than revenue between 1989 and 1997. The government has been in constant deficit since 1989 and has exhausted its reserves, leaving nothing for contingencies.

The government forecasts real-term economic growth of 1% for 1998, 3% for 1999 and 4% for 2000 and beyond. Much hope has been placed in returns from the tourism sector, the largest area for financial returns. In addition, the industrial sector is set to benefit from the construction of a new power station in the capital and a more favourable climate for increasing private investment.

Eric, Nigel, Uma and Dani

Natural disasters represent a major part of the vulnerability of islands in the Pacific. Contributing factors are the scale of the impact of

All you need is a Smolbag

In Vanuatu it is not uncommon to hear a conversation beginning: "What island are you from?" This question, the locals say, hides a fundamental problem; the tensions that exist between different communities. These problems are becoming more pronounced and could erupt at any time. Take the example of the shantytown near the capital which is home to Ni-Vanuatu originating from Tanna; a number of traditional groups would like to see it pulled down and the police have had to be called in to calm spirits.

Corruption, inequality, rising criminality, violence directed against women - all these issues demand closer attention. But generally in the Pacific, people tend to avoid tensions and confrontations. Those working in the social sectors fear that Vanuatu will one day have to deal with situations which could be defused if they were better addressed today.

Certain people have decided not to expect the worst and have set themselves a challenge: why not go out to the people, help them discuss their problems...by illustrating these problems on the stage? This is how the Wan Smolbag Theatre came about: "It means 'small bag' in Bislama," explains Lucy Seresere, player in the company, "as we are a small company ready to go anywhere. All we have to do is pack a few bits and pieces." The Wan Smolbag Theatre was formed in 1989 by around 15 volunteer actors. The troop performs plays relating to health, the environment, the popu-

lation, etc. "Most people from Vanuatu never got the opportunity to complete their primary education. They can hardly read and write. To get a message to those living in remote communities, you have to go to the islands. The development agencies cannot be everywhere and Smolbag is a perfect vehicle for getting their messages across. In addition to plays put on in the villages of Vanuatu, the company records radio series and short public service announcements, to reach as great an audience as possible. "It was an instant success! We prided ourselves on having done the campaign for the 1998 elections. The public service announcements were drawn from a play we performed in around 100 villages a few weeks before the ballot, to advise people of their rights, the problems caused by corruption and the concept of good governance; the organised discussions that followed the performance were a true learning experience for many."

Theatre can act as a catalyst for action in rural communities. Wan Smolbag succeeded in its mission and is going further. In a country where many deeds and patterns of behaviour are taboo, where you do not question the decisions and whims of your chiefs and superiors, your father or husband, the company has succeeded in opening a niche which continues to expand. Dozens of companies have been set up around the islands, including groups of children who are also helping to spread the word.

The mother tree

The improved Grand Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Red Dwarf and Grand Vanuatu hybrid or the Grand Vanuatu and Grand Rennel hybrid. These are not some mystical figures from tales of fantasy, but the names of species of coconut tree on which CARFV has been working for a number of years.

The Vanuatu Agricultural Research and Training Centre (VARTC), a Vanuatu national body for research on coconuts, coffee, cocoa and cattle farming has been in existence for over 30 years. It has set itself new challenges: farming diversification, increasing yields and producing more sizeable returns. The country's financial resources stem mainly from tourism, economic aid and the export of farming produce: copra, cocoa, kava, beef, etc. 1998 saw the launch of a campaign aiming to increase the effect of research and development on farming through the organisation of rural farmers. Known as the Producers' Organisation Project (POP), the plan is to identify new niches in the market for products of the soil, employing methods developed in other regions, based on projects financed by European funds. These activities come within the broader framework of preserving the country's genetic inheritance. Five groups of producers are involved: the plan is to be able ultimately to sell organically-certified cocoa in France, for example.



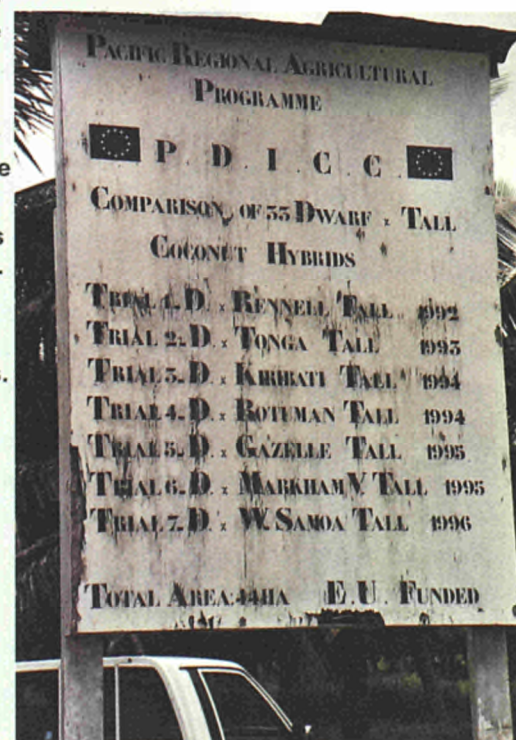
As far as the eye can see

But for visitors perhaps the most interesting work is the "perennial crops" project, one aspect of which is the work undertaken by the coconut division. This division is working on a system to optimise coconut-based production, surveys on local coconut cultivars and their uses, the collection of plant material from around the archipelago and the maintenance of these collections, and conducting coconut hybrid trials under the Pacific Regional Agricultural Programme (PRAP).

Behind Bernard Dolacinski and his team, here we are in a vehicle making our way through the rows of trees in a giant nursery. In the full sunlight the trees stretch out as far as the eye can see.

In addition to the conservation of individual species, the VARTC is attempting to introduce new varieties by crossing different existing varieties. The aim of these hybridisations is to increase coconut production and quality and make them more resistant to disease and natural disasters. One particular cross withstood the passing of hurricane Dani, proving itself genetically better suited to the conditions in the region. This regional programme will ultimately offer varieties more suited to the soils of countries in the region. There are currently 40 different combinations on trial over an area of 55 hectares - some 9000 trees. Each tree is numbered and its fruit carefully analysed. The first hybridisations were conducted in 1992 and the trees have been producing for three years. The researchers will need eight or nine years to evaluate the different species. Then work can begin to produce the improved plants so that they can be distributed to planters.

The government of Vanuatu has entrusted management of the centre to the Centre for International Cooperation in Agronomic Research for Development (CIRAD). CIRAD is thus providing Vanuatu with valuable scientific support, with the presence of eleven experts. Bernard Dolacinski explains: "The Centre's philosophy is that the Ni-Vanuatu should receive training and that management responsibilities should gradually be transferred to them." To do this, young graduates have been recruited since 1998 and more will be taken on until 2001. The transfer must be effective, since they are to take over the three main activities of the VARTC: preservation, collection and conservation - for improved dissemination.





Traditional Vannatu house.
People in rural areas survive mainly on subsistence farming

such disasters in relation to the small size of the countries affected, the fragility of the islands' environment, the fragmented spread and sometimes extreme remoteness of the populations, accelerated urbanisation and the weakening of traditional measures of response. Between 1970 and 1985, Vanuatu suffered major losses caused by the passing of 29 tropical hurricanes. In 1985, hurricanes Eric and Nigel hit the same central Pacific islands just one week apart. For a number of years after hurricane Uma

passed in 1987, Vanuatu recorded a real growth rate of -9%. The hurricane destroyed commercial cocoa and coffee plantations, caused 48 fatalities and affected more than 48,000 people. This is by no means the end of the story - the countries in the region are at genuine risk from ecological disasters. These may be associated with other types of natural disaster such as storms, floods and landslides. Although environmental disasters may have their causes external to the region, their repercus-

sions are sadly too keenly felt internally; slash-and-burn farming, deforestation, animal incursions, etc., which can add greatly to the physical impact of natural disasters.

A hurricane needs to be waited out - like it or not - for anything from a few hours to a few days. The most recent uninvited guest was Hurricane Dani in January 1999. This left wounds that still need dressing and destroyed bridges, fords and more besides on Espiritu Santo. The roads are of vital importance to Vanuatu, not only for the tourism sector, but above all for the local populations. Glen, a tourist guide from Efate, explains that to sell their products in Luganville, the inhabitants of Big Bay had to make the journey by boat, taking an average of 24 hours.

"Sometimes they only got one boat every six months. You can well imagine the state of panic in the event of illness! The new road was very important, but Dani came along to put a spanner in the works. River levels in the Big Bay River have already been responsible for many deaths. It simply must be made passable again." A road-repair programme is underway with European cooperation from the STABEX funds (924,000 Euros), helping to reconstruct crossing points destroyed by this natural disaster.

No war of languages

After years of stand-off, the English- and French-speaking populations of Vanuatu seem to have finally decided to bury the hatchet. For the Ni-Vanuatu, the split is the result of Anglo-French disputes exported to the Pacific. Certain people even cherish the Utopian dream of seeing Bislama replace the two European languages within the administration. But it would be wrong to conclude that bilingualism is common; it is hard to get by if French is your only language. The two paths do not cross, so much so that you would think this was an entirely English-speaking country. In the 1980s, the French-speaking community tended to turn in on itself. It became almost politically incorrect to speak the language of Voltaire.

In diplomatic circles, however, reconciliation and collaboration are the order of the day. For the new French Ambassador, defence of the French language has taken a defensive and aggressive course. English was on the way in and the French-speaking minority, feeling threatened, occasionally responded aggressively. The situation today is that English is in the majority, but French is a distinct plus. This biculturalism is a treasure from which Vanuatu can only profit if both sides listen to and learn from each other. "What we do not want is a timid, withdrawn French-speaking community!"

The British High Commission would tend to agree: "There is a need in this country for both countries to work together. We must avoid competition at all costs. We are fully aware of the importance of the French background. Division is a bad thing. In symbolic terms it would be good to one day see a VP-NUP coalition in this country."

Welcome to Ulei



A very pleasant place at the water's edge at Havana Harbour. Some distance away to the right I can make out young girls, lazing on the grass, sharing a joke and plaiting their hair. Washing hangs from a line stretched between two buildings.

We can hear the muffled voices of the young people. This is Ulei, one of 39 secondary schools in Vanuatu, and among those receiving support from European cooperation, in accordance with the wishes of the government.

Kalnaure Kalfatak became headmaster at Ulei two years ago. This former teacher overflows with enthusiasm, despite the difficulties encountered by his school. With a sweeping movement of the hands he points out the boundaries of Ulei Secondary School, a school like so many others in Vanuatu. Ulei currently has 150 pupils, from the seventh to the tenth grade, the end of compulsory studies. Built by missionaries, it is now only attended by pupils from the seventh grade up. As a school in Vanuatu it consists of a complex made up of classrooms, dormitories, a kitchen, a

dining room and lodgings for the teachers and headmaster. Many pupils live far away on neighbouring islands and transport cannot be arranged every day.

The school is short of a great many things: a science lab, a library, an assembly hall and sufficient housing for teachers. It is stretched to the limits by the many pupils and has to make do with the facilities it has. The girls' and boys' dormitories are separated by the headmaster's house. The young girls spotted on our arrival are resting in front of their dormitory. They reply in chorus to our greeting.

Kalnaure Kalfatak actively involved in the improvement of the secondary level of his school



Heidi is from Mela, a village on Efate. She enrolled last year and will shortly be sitting exams. She intends to study maths to realise her ambition of becoming an accountant. She takes us round an overfull dormitory: just a

few centimetres separates the bunks which fill the room. The dormitory accommodates nearly 60 boarders, the richest having the newest beds.

Leaving the girls to their rest, we make our way to a hut, from which a cloud of dense smoke is rising: this is the kitchen. On duty today are Priscilla and Naomi, cheerfully labouring over this evening's meal to fill 170 hungry stomachs. A typical day at Ulei starts early; wake-up call at 6 to begin the morning routine, breakfast at 7 before starting lessons half an hour later. After lessons come shared duties such as collecting wood for cooking. At weekends and in their free time, pupils do sport and gardening, growing bananas, cassava, cabbage and other vegetables which they will later eat.

A sector in urgent need of development

As underlined by the Minister for Education, Joe Natuman, the educational system in Vanuatu introduced by the missionaries has inherited various discrepancies from the period of the Condominium, namely different philosophies and teaching systems. Since independ-

ence, the government has worked to unify the two systems. "Our government is committed to a massive programme of reform. The situation is fine in primary education, with 80% of children being able to attend school. The problems start in the seventh grade. Every year a number of young people are unable to find a place. The lack of space has reached desperate proportions: only 33% of those who qualify from the primary level are enrolled into secondary school, fewer than 7% make the eleventh grade and only 1% remain to bid for places at higher levels." This is the result of the policy that has been pursued for many years, under which the governments of the Pacific nations made the promotion of higher education their priority, in a bid to nurture an elite to later run the country. Donor countries are now aware that the focus should be on basic education.

This sector of concentration has been earmarked to receive 75% of the resources allocated to the country under the Vanuatu national indicative programme (NIP) - a sum of 7.5 billion euros. The logic is clear if you study the educational objectives pursued in the country: to double the number of

pupils completing the first academic cycle (10 years of study), to improve the quality of education provided and ultimately to improve the management of the entire education system. Armand Hugues-d'Aeth, the EU officer in charge of implementing the project, believes that the EUVED can be summed up in three words: extending, repairing and renovating secondary schools, "so that pupils have enough space to work, teachers are effective and textbooks are available". All this work by the government is recorded in a document from the Ministry of Education, approved by Parliament in 1997.

Its stated objective is to substantially increase the number of students qualifying at the tenth grade by pursuing the policy of repairing existing schools (at least 40) and adding extra capacity for grades 7 to 10 as required (minimum 12 schools). The target is to at least double the number of those qualifying from the tenth grade by 2002 and to achieve a balance between girls and boys. It is also necessary to improve the quality of the education provided by focusing more on gender-sensitive research, supporting the improvement of teacher training, broadening the curriculum and producing educational

equipment. Finally, management of the sector has not been overlooked, since it is proposed to strengthen the Provincial Education Offices and the central office of the Ministry in terms of planning, development of school programmes, management of grants, collection and analysis of data and the geographic distribution of schools. These activities are to focus on rural areas which are home to the majority of the population.

Ulei is one of the 19 school sites chosen by the government for repair or erection of buildings, and the provision of equipment for classes 7 to 10. The project also covers training teachers for these classes. France has taken entire charge of teacher training for the French system at the Vanuatu Teachers' College. The education system is failing: there are not enough schools, not enough teachers and not enough classrooms. Furthermore, the number of school places available cannot keep pace with the explosion in the birth rate.

Although new means of communication such as the Internet hold a great deal of promise in terms of their ability to shorten the distance between remote schools, a means of reducing the high cost of these

methods and the restricted access to this technology has yet to be found. The development of basic and secondary education needs immediate attention. It is vital that more children be given the opportunity to learn as they do at Ulei, which in the local vernacular means: "It's a cool place anyway."



King Kava

He greets you with the warmest of welcomes. Pacts are signed and sealed in his presence. He officiates at the opening of political conferences and is Master

of Ceremonies at the rituals marking births, marriages and deaths. As night falls, the lanterns are lit and it is the hour for Kava!

“It makes you feel much better, and it's entirely natural!” The lantern outside the Kava bar in Vita lights up the sign: *time blong drink kava* - time to drink kava. The *nakamal* is to be found in a pretty seashore property, with benches set out on a jetty from which you can enjoy the view and watch people arriving. Our guide is a woman - this would be unthinkable in places where there is still strict observance of tradition, but in towns nowadays it is widely accepted.

Families are also welcome here - people come to socialise, to talk and to make friends. It poses no risk to health: “it's a lot better than smoking or drinking beer! What's more, it is clean, the service is good and you meet people of rank”. Indeed, some ministers have just walked in, taken their seats and are talking in hushed voices. There is no music or laughter: kava drinking must be done quietly to make the most of its beneficial effects.

A widely-observed custom

The ni-Vanuatu have begun cultivating the kava plant just about everywhere. Made from the roots of the *Piper methysticum* shrub, the drink is consumed on all the islands of the archipelago and throughout the Pacific. Here, though, is where it originates and, as if to prove it, there are no less than 40 different varieties to be found in Vanuatu. Huge domestic demand has made it one of the country's primary agricultural products - more than 500 tons of roots are consumed every year in Vila and Luganville alone. The export revenue it yields - up from 48 million vatu in 1995 to 102 million vatu in 1997 - has made it the produce of choice for small farmers. In Pentecost, Epi and Tanna, the majority of farmers are happy to stick to planting it and buy their food with the profits they reap.

No guest could refuse the honour of being invited to share in this evening ritual which is also the most frequent form of welcome to the country. Both the preparation and the sampling of kava are subject to an extremely strict code of etiquette. In the most traditional regions, such as Tanna, the roots are brought to the *nakamal* - the men's dwelling - by pre-pubescent boys. After washing them, they chew the roots to form a mush. This is then placed in a container, covered with water and worked for a while. The resulting mud-coloured liquid is filtered through coconut fibres. In Ambae and Maewo, the men prepare kava in wooden receptacles and crush the contents with a stick made of coral. Elsewhere, as in the kava bar we have come to, the drink is simply prepared in a plastic



bucket or from a powder you can buy in a shop.

When the kava is ready for drinking, you are handed a shell - half a coconut filled with the brownish liquid. You drink it down in one go, and it is not considered rude to spit out the aftertaste. The effects of the drink can be felt within 15 minutes: first, a numbing of the mouth and gums, followed by an exquisite feeling of peacefulness and wellbeing which floods through you. The ni-Vanuatu drink two to three shells per session. The chieftain has the honour of drinking first, followed by the other men in order of rank. In the most traditionalist areas, in fact, the kava ceremony is an exclusively male preserve: a strict taboo forbids women even from going near the *nakamal* where it is held, let alone from taking part.

Kava the unifier

Thanks to the role of kava in their society, the ni-Vanuatu have managed to preserve one of their most remarkable ancestral practices. The drink is said to have played a decisive part in maintaining the country's extraordinarily low crime rate. Unlike alcohol, a toxic stimulant likely to provoke irresponsible and violent behaviour, kava promotes feelings of tranquillity and acceptance of life. In towns and villages alike, *nakamals* are an oasis of calm. There are no noisy conversations, no music - simply a place for friends to meet up after a hard day's labour.

A promising future

Not all the varieties of kava are drunk: some are used in traditional medicine. Kava is a blend of 10 or so different analgesics and anaesthetics, not to mention its recognised painkilling and appetite-suppressant properties. It is also said to have anti-bacterial, tranquillising, diuretic and decongestant properties. Although no large-scale scientific study has yet been conducted, some Western laboratories are starting to look at the possibility of using kava in hospitals to replace painkillers and tranquillisers like Valium with its problematic addictive side-effects. As one of the purest galenic remedies of all the medicinal plants, kava could be of invaluable assistance in the treatment of children and the elderly. There are moves to start producing kava for the modern market, particularly in the form of lemonade. But enough of all this talking: other lanterns beckon, and there is nothing to stop us from going next door to see if their kava is better...

Exploring the islands

She is married with two children. She curiously and cheerfully asks me whether the prime minister of my country is the man she has seen on the screen who is called Mandela. She has never heard of Mobutu, still less of Kabila. Until only a few days ago, I was just as ignorant about matters relating to her country. This will help to put you in the picture: I am right on the other side of the globe. If I tried to go any further, I would be on my way home. But I don't want to do that: I am here to savour the delights of countryside tourism, with an obligatory stay at the accommodation on Lonnoc Beach.

Wendy has been working at the Lonnoc Beach Resort for a number of years. This part of Santo has always belonged to her family, the Voccor. They were the first on the island to venture into the tourism business. We landed at the capital, Luganville, early in the morning. The population of the island of Espiritu Santo (with an area of 4,000 m², the biggest island in the archipelago) lives mainly along its coast or on the islets surrounding it. Discovering the island is a delight, with its blue lagoons and the small islands with magical names that can be seen from beautiful beaches. Lonnoc is to be found at the edge of one of the best of them, Champagne Beach.

The rural accommodation is frequently built of wood and bamboo together with materials from local forests. At Lonnoc, as elsewhere, visitors are accommodated in huts covered with palms that are stitched together and sealed against the rain. The rough-hewn furniture is made of planks that have been cut to shape by hand or with a chain saw. It all fits in with the environment and the oil lamps that are available as soon as the sun goes down are an encouragement to go to bed early. As in the case of the Voccor, the accommoda-

tion very often belongs to a single family, but they can sometimes also be managed by a community.

Respect for the environment

For tourists who are willing to accept basic accommodation, eco-tourism is one of the best ways of reaching natural areas where social and cultural traditions are preserved. Mangroves, coconut palms, flowers and pandanu and burao trees stand guard at the edge of the sea, while kauri and banyan trees, creeping ferns and wild orchids are to be found in the virgin forest, which is home to large numbers of insects and birds. The fauna of the archipelago is not dangerous and most of the animals, that is to say pigs, chickens and cattle, have been imported by man. Seafood is also on the menu, of course, and in particular the coconut crab, whose meat is greatly valued. Tourists may, for example, visit the island of Tanna to admire its volcanoes and customs that have remained unchanged for centuries.

Development of tourism

The problems encountered by this emerging sector have been those of scale, due to lack of investment, of domestic and international air links, of transport, communication and accommodation facilities and of training for local businesspeople. In 1993, hotels and tourist facilities were listed as part of a tourism master plan. This revealed that there was a need for advice to be given to the 12 rural *gîtes* to be found on various islands in the archipelago. Since 1996, the European Commission has therefore financed technical assistance intended to develop countryside tourism. This is geared towards supporting the management and marketing activities of those working with tourists. This project has made it possible to open up new paths and therefore to kindle private-sector interest in the region. Jean-Louis Herman, Technical

Assistant, explains that an association of countryside and adventure holiday accommodation has been set up under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "Despite the handicaps, countryside tourism has adopted standards for the accommodation and services offered to visitors, a reservations office (Island Safaris) and a wide range of promotional leaflets for use on world markets. In two years, the number of visitors has increased seven-fold, generating useful revenue in areas that were previously dominated by resources obtained from subsistence crops". These results have led to EU assistance being given to a programme intended to reinforce the training of those working with tourists in the countryside and to improve the way in which countryside tourism is integrated in an effort to promote Vanuatu.

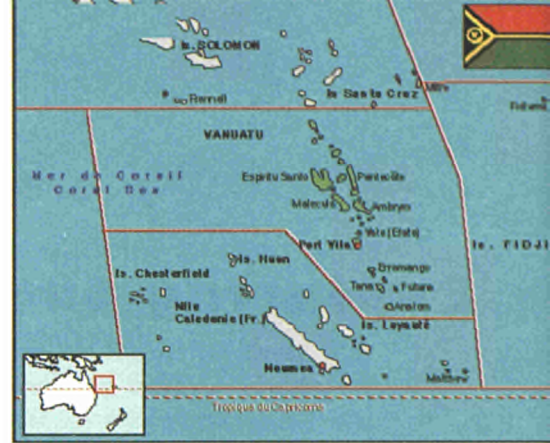
The development of countryside tourism is well under way. According to Jean-Louis Herman, the shelters are achieving occupancy rates in excess of 25% to 30% and look set to take off as rural enterprises. "The others will always be able to subsist on agriculture if they have no access to borrowing. What is needed is to maintain the quality of service and promotional activity in the adventure tourism sectors". The Ni-Vanuatu welcome the plan to develop sustainable activities for tourists in the countryside in order to breathe life into a very promising sector, and are spending without counting the cost, to attract visitors to whom they are proud to show off their heritage. Ecologically sustainable and based on nature and a taste for adventure, this programme will make it possible to educate people about the natural environment and generate income for the local people. "Who are not beggars at the feast. They have set up their own businesses. It's their business".



Bungalows are built using local material

Profile

Vanuatu



General facts

Area:
Capital:
Main islands:
Population:

12,190 km²
Port Vila
Efate, Espiritu Santo, Malekula, Tanna, Erromango
177,400 (1997 estimate)

Population

Rate of population growth:
Official language:

2.3% (1997 to 2015 forecasts)
Bislama (Melanesian creole, used by 70% of the population), English and French. Some 105 local languages are spoken
Melanesian, Polynesian, European, Asian

Main ethnic groups:

Economy

GDP per capita:
GNP per capita:
Rate of inflation:
Foreign debt:
Currency:
Main sectors:

\$1396 (1997)
\$1340 (1997)
2.9% (1996)
20.5% of GNP (1997)
since 1983 the Vatu. (1€ = VT 134)
Subsistence farming (25% GDP) and services (63% of GDP) (tourism, offshore financial centre)
Copra, beef, timber and cocoa
Consumer goods, preserved foods, electrical goods and vehicles, medicines, machines. (Australia, New Zealand, Japan, France and New Caledonia)
\$178.20 (1997)

Main exports:
Main imports:

Aid per capita:

Political structure

President:

Father John Bani, elected in March 1999 for four years by an electoral college composed of Members of Parliament and the presidents of the six regional councils.

Political system:

Westminster-model constitution. 52 members in a unicameral Parliament, elected for four years, meeting in Vila. The executive is made up of the Prime Minister Barak Tame Sope (since 25 November 1999) and eight or nine members of the cabinet. A National Council of Chiefs, the Malvatu Mauri advises Parliament on all constitutional issues relating to matters of national custom.

Government:

The Prime Minister (Melanesian Progressive Party (MPP)) heads a coalition of five parties: National United Party (UNP), Union of Moderate Parties (UMP), Vanuatu Republican Party (VRP), and the John Frum Movement.

Main political parties:

Melanesian Progressive Party (MPP), Union of Moderate Parties (UMP), Vanuatu Republican Party (VRP), John Frum Movement. Opposition: National United Party (NUP), Vanua'aku Pati (VP),

Social indicators

Life expectancy at birth:
Infant mortality:
Adult literacy:
School enrolment ratio:
Population with access to drinking water:
Population with access to healthcare:
Human development index:

65.8 (1998)
39/1000 (1997)
64 % (1997)
44% female; 49% male (1997, levels confused)
23%
20%
116 of 174 countries

Sources: Economic Intelligence Unit, UNDP report on human development (1999), UNDP report on human development in the Pacific (1999). EU-ACP cooperation in 1997 (EU, DGVIII).

The maps reproduced here do not imply recognition of any particular border, nor do they prejudice the status of any state or territory.



Fiji

by Aya Kasasa

Fiji

Gateway to the Pacific

Stepping off the plane in Fiji, you are greeted with a resounding "Bula!" and a garland of flowers or shells is placed around your neck. You land at Nadi international airport, to the west of Viti Levu. The capital is Suva, on the east coast, a lively town which is home to 100,000 people. Businessmen in a hurry hop straight on to a small plane which takes them there in less than 30 minutes, while holiday-makers generally prefer to make the journey by road, along the coast. Viti Levu is actually encircled by an asphalt road allowing a glimpse of what life might be like in the Fiji islands. This is the largest, most developed and densely populated of the islands. But it is further inland, and on the other islands of the archipelago, that you discover the real flavour of the country - on the 57 islands making up the Lau group, for instance, or the three islands of Moala, or Lomaiviti, which comprises 12 islands, or the Yasawa group, a chain of 20 islands. The second biggest island is Vanua Levu, the heart of Fiji's economic activity.

"The first paper printed in the world today" the Fiji Times leaves you in no doubt - every day its front page reminds you that the Fiji Islands are the first part of the world to receive the sun's rays each morning. The 844 islands, islets and atolls which make up Fiji - only 100 or so of which are inhabited - stretch out to the north of New Zealand. The archipelago has been inhabited by Melanesians for over three thousand years, but it was christened "Fiji" by the missionaries and European settlers. The inhabitants used to call it Viti, a word native to Tonga. Despite their reputation as fierce warriors and cannibals (well-founded, as the first missionaries discovered to their cost) they were nevertheless colonised. The islands were "discovered" in 1643 by

the Dutch navigator Abel Janszoon Tasman and explored by James Cook in 1774 before being legally annexed by Great Britain in 1874 and made a British crown colony. In the 19th century, Fiji was the trade capital of the South Pacific. The British brought in labourers from India to work on the sugar plantations. The Indians signed indentures specifying that they could go home after a few years but most chose to stay, preferring to settle in Fiji in the hope of future prosperity rather than go back to India and its oppressive social system. A large number of Indian immigrants streamed into Fiji between 1879 and 1916, and their descendants today constitute the fourth generation of Indo-Fijians.

The racial issue

Though "racial segregation" is not a term much heard in Fiji, those not afraid to use such language will tell you that the situation here is actually akin to that of South Africa. This might seem something of an exaggeration, but it is true that, at first sight, the people do seem to live separately. On closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that they actually live quite peacefully side by side, and that the problem has been accentuated primarily on the political stage. Rivalry between the Indo-Fijians and the indigenous Melanesian Fijians has existed for decades, leading to race riots in this normally peaceful country in 1959. After the *coups d'état* to oust the Indian-dominated government in 1987, Fijians of Indian origin have begun to leave the country. This trend may be reversed, however, thanks to the election of Mahendra Chaudhry, the first Indian Prime Minister in the history of the country. The Chinese community in Fiji feels somewhat forgotten by the history of the islands. "We are never mentioned, despite the fact



that we, too, are an integral part of this country's history".

Diversifying

Fiji is without doubt the most developed ACP country in the Pacific. Despite significant aid flows to the country, economic growth is relatively slow (averaging 2.8% between 1990 and 1996) and is affected in the short term by fluctuations in sugar production and revenue from tourism. In the long term, the country's economic growth is hampered by its small, dispersed domestic market, its limited resources and production base, the remoteness of the latter from its export markets and the natural disasters with which it seems constantly to be plagued. The country's racial problems must also be taken into account, as well as a loss of confidence in its political stability on the part of investors. Fiji's economic performance is heavily dependent on sugar, tourism and the manufacturing sector. The sugar industry's contribution to GDP has generally hovered around the 12% mark since 1990, while the input from tourism has risen from 28% to 33%, currently making this the most important industry in terms of foreign exchange revenue. The manufacturing industry (clothing, wood, tuna) has grown over the last 10 years, supplying 12% of GDP and 26% of jobs (1995). Almost 40% of employment is in the public service.

The competitiveness of the main exports (sugar, garments, fishing products, wood) is always subject to preferential trade agreements such as the Lomé Convention Sugar Protocol. Fiji favours a bilateral approach when it comes to trading, as with Tonga and Papua New Guinea. Its balance of trade generally shows a deficit, for which the revenue from tourism and capital flow often compensate, but these depend on the political stability of the country, competitiveness on the world markets and preferential trade quotas. Revenue from tourism has increased over the last few years, and the country has reserves corresponding to five months' worth of imports. The industry saw record figures last year, both in the number of tourists arriving and in the total foreign exchange revenue accrued by the end of the year. The number of tourists rose for the 8th consecutive year, reaching a record figure of 371,342 visitors. As for the national debt, this is relatively low in comparison with other ACP countries, holding steady at around 40% of GDP since 1990.

Trends

Experts believe that Fiji's recent economic results fall well short of its potential. The economic growth recorded between 1988 and 1990 reflects the country's shift away from a strategy centred on the replacement of imports, self-sufficiency and state interventionism towards a more external, market-based strategy



anchored in the development of the private sector and the adoption of adequate economic measures (two devaluations, careful management of fiscal and monetary policies). In the early 1990s, however, there was a downturn in the average yearly rate of growth due to imbalance and inflexibility: adoption of inadequate economic measures, delays in the resolution of constitutional questions and uncertainties about the future of land leases. Investors' confidence was severely tested - gross rates of investment fell from 21.1% of GDP in 1983 to 12.1% in 1996. Considerable efforts were, however, made by the government to restore macro-economic stability: inflation was brought under control in the early 90s (from 8.2% in 1990 to 3% in 1996); attempts were made to manage public funds; there was generally a surplus in the trade balance. Adversely affected by the financial crisis in Asia, Fiji decided to undergo a devaluation of 20% in 1998 in an effort to enable its exporters to remain competitive and to moderate the downturn in the tourist industry, which had also been hit hard.

To hold on to these advantages, the government must try to keep prices and salaries as low as possible and to improve productivity in the manufacturing sector, while continuing to pay particular attention to the most vulnerable groups.

Fiji has already resolved the ethno-political problem by adopting a new constitution. It still needs to sort out the burning issue of land access and to have a clearer idea of the measures and political trends necessary to restore investors' confidence and bring about major adjustments. The Prime Minister's party seems to have got off to a good start with a budget which was generally well-received by the electorate.

Our land is our sugar

Fiji's sugar industry has for a century been the mainstay of its agricultural sector. It accounts for 40% of the country's export revenue and provides employment for 40,000 people. Its contribution to GDP is around 11%. The sugar industry is basically made up of 22,500 small sugar farmers each cultivating, on average, 4.6 hectares with an average yield of about 450,000 tons in 1998-9. The surface area of canes exported is approximately 73,000 hectares. About 90% of the unrefined sugar is exported: more than half is sold under preferential trade agreements, mainly under the terms of the Lomé Convention in Europe and SPARTECA (the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Treaty) in Australia and New Zealand. The Fiji Sugar Corporation (FSC) is State-owned with a monopoly on the purchase of cane and the manufacture of unrefined sugar. It therefore owns Fiji's four sugar refineries, which exclusively produce brown sugar for refining. Fiji's quota under the terms of the ACP-EU Sugar Protocol is 175,000 tons, ie the second largest quota after Mauritius. The government aims to increase production by 20% to 4.6 tons. Production in 1998 was estimated at around 215,000 tons, down by 132,000 tons on the previous year's figures owing to the unfortunate effects of the drought suffered by the country.

Only a third of Fiji's 332 islands are inhabited. Landowning (1,519,956 hectares) is made up of native title, communally owned by traditional clans (83%). They are immensely proud of their land, their single most precious asset, the administration of which has been handed over to a Native Land Trust Board (NLTB), responsible for signing land leases. 430,196 hectares are leased for agricultural use. 65% of the land is forest and woodland, as opposed to only 16% of arable land, which lies along the coastal plains and valleys. The number of tenants continues to rise, ranging from hotel chains to small farmers as well as ordinary residential tenants. There are five main types of lease: agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and special. The government controls 10% of the land, which it leases to industry for periods of up to 99 years. The remainder belongs to private owners who can administer it as they see fit. Fijian farmers, most of whom come from the Indo-Fijian community, today face an uncertain future. The leases granted them under the terms of the Agricultural Landlords and Tenants Act (ALTA) started to expire in 1997, and there is no guarantee that they will be automatically renewed.

Mahendra Chaudhry

Prime Minister of the Fiji Islands

« We are concentrating on reducing poverty »

Although he no longer has any time to read anything much, Prime Minister Mahendra Pal Chaudhry does not wish to do without literature. In his library, Shakespeare and Hemingway rub shoulders with Charles Dickens and Ghandi. Dickens for inspiration, since "books like Oliver Twist give you a certain view of poverty" and Ghandi for "the example of strength and perseverance". This is a character trait he has made his own during the 30 years or so that he has spent defending the cause of workers. He committed himself to the cause of trade unionism with the fervour with which some people take holy orders, and mixes with people in order to work with them to improve their lot. He also likes to travel; he regularly visits the interior in order to listen, and other countries to observe how others govern and deal with race relations and their development problems. His constant concern is to work with the people to build a just society in which everyone can live in harmony and in relative prosperity.

"With our potential, we could go far. My party and I have been presented with an opportunity to run this country after about 10 years of political struggle. I am pleased to see that we were capable of surmounting the barriers that were placed before us and of gaining acceptance among the people. It is now our duty not to disappoint them."

You have just presented the first budget of your government. Could you summarise its main points?

I can say that there is much



that is new in relation to previous administrations. We are concentrating on reducing poverty by means of economic growth and expansion. My team has taken various measures to increase social expenditure in the areas of health and education. We have also transferred resources from non-critical sectors in order to keep government expenditure within desirable limits. That is what has enabled us to concentrate on the social sectors. We have also taken care to increase expenditure on infrastructure, both in order to increase existing facilities and to build new ones. Capital spending has also been increased significantly in order to stimulate the economy and to promote job opportunities, without leaving out the private sector. And, of course, we have insisted on allocating greater resources to agriculture and the countryside. **The government has been in power for six months; what do you think you have learnt?**

The policies we are going to

implement are the same as those we advocated when we were in opposition. We haven't changed our colours. Now that the people of Fiji have given us a mandate to govern, we are able to apply the measures that we previously put forward.

Which promises will be most difficult to keep?

I don't think there will be any difficulties. We have a promising future and real potential, and if we manage the finances of the country carefully and if we call on the people to work harder, I am sure that we will be able to meet the challenges that are emerging. Our government advocates good governance. We are also keen to promote racial harmony between the various communities of the country. Of course, we will need outside assistance, and I hope that the European Union, which has already been very useful under the Lomé Convention, will continue to work with us in partnership.

You have been heavily criticised in the media and the message you wish to pass on is that there is a need for greater control over the press; have you been properly understood?

That's completely wrong. I expressed an opinion on the issue of a book of media ethics. My government has no intention of controlling the media. Nevertheless, the press, too, has responsibilities and duties to the people of Fiji. If the media violate their own ethical codes, they must be prepared to answer for this. The press is not above the law and is not free to do anything it likes. It must act fairly and

responsibly and record events without taking sides. The problem of land remains the principal challenge in Fiji. How do you intend to find a long-term solution, which will satisfy all parties?

The problem of land mainly affects Indian farmers, who cultivate sugar cane. We have decided to adopt an approach based on consensus with the owners of the land and the Native Land Trust Board, which administers this land. I am of the opinion that the new prospects that are emerging in our economy will be able to reduce the dependence of people on land. If we are able to capitalise on and use these new opportunities as we ought, I am sure that the pressure will be reduced. Nonetheless, there is a lot of land in Fiji. A significant proportion of it is not cultivated and our government considers that all arable land should be used to provide an income for its owners and to benefit the economy of the entire country. We are quite confident of reaching agreement, but as I have already said, we will encourage initiatives intended to reduce the pressure.

EDF funds will be earmarked for the development of human resources in future; is this a priority?

We have decided to invest massively in the development of human resources, that is why we have increased the budget earmarked for education and health. We are also investing in education programmes intended to prepare young people for the workplace. We have a good level of education in the country, but we have appointed an independent education commission to review our education system. It has been given the task of recommending improvements to bring the system into line with the economy as it is today, the globalisation of economies etc. We are also promoting programmes in sectors associated with the countryside, especially those concerning women. We have just approved an Integration of Human Resources Programme conceived by the International Labour Office. Apart from training courses, it will offer resources to people in the countryside and on the outskirts of towns to enable them to engage in business. We have much to do and we mean to do it. The Fiji Islands have shown that they are on the right path and our government intends to keep them there.

A new chapter



The election of Mahendra Chaudhry as Prime Minister can be considered an historic event in Fijian political development. The Prime Minister of the Indian community of Fiji has been elected to this post and his coalition government will now determine the destiny of the islands. A reference to his victory will elicit joy or bitterness, depending on who you are talking to. "It was time for us to stop being governed on the basis of a racist constitution", the Indian Fijians and many Melanesian Fijians will tell you. "We have been tricked as though we were kids", the more nationalistic indigenous Fijians will reply, as this election sounds the death-knell for their political hegemony. Fiji has been transformed by means of three documents, and the architect of this transformation was the man who swept from power a government that was much too representative of the Indian community in the eyes of the nationalists: Sitiveni Rabuka. This previously unknown army officer was in power for 12 years after having made a name for himself internationally as the leader of the first military coup in the Pacific, in 1987.

From one constitution to another

The first constitution of the Republic of the Fiji Islands was introduced in 1970. Copied from the British model, it provided for a Senate composed of Fijian chiefs and a House of Representatives whose seats were shared fairly between 22 Fijians, 22 Indians and eight general electors (Europeans, Chinese and Fijians of mixed race). The first government was headed by Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara and his Alliance Party. This would have been a good opportunity to attempt to resolve the problems that have worn away each successive government: ownership of the land, protection for everyone in a multiracial society, voting system etc. Segregation was continued in Fiji as a result of political divisions based on race.

The period following independence was one of relative economic prosperity, which generated high expectations among the population. Ethnic tensions became accentuated in 1975, when there was an upsurge of nationalism, and the leader of the new Fijian Nationalist Party, Sakeasi Butadroka, called for the Indians to be repatriated. This motion was rejected, but revealed dissension and bitterness.

The Alliance Party lost the elections of 1977, but the primarily Indian winner, the Federation Party, was unable to form a government and Ratu Mara was reinstalled as Prime Minister. In May 1987, Sitiveni Rabuka headed the putsch that removed the FLP/FP coalition from power. The nationalists considered that this coalition under the leadership of Prime Minister Timoci Bavadra, in which the Indians were very well represented, was a threat to Fijian sovereignty. Fiji was then declared a Sovereign Republic and ceased to recognise the Queen of England as Head of State. In November, a civilian government headed by the former Prime Minister Kamisese Mara returned to power in Fiji and set about drawing up a constitution

(which was promulgated in 1990) in order to legalise the new order: some clauses discriminated against non-indigenous communities, in particular by reserving the post of Prime Minister for Melanesian Fijians. In 1992, Sitiveni Rabuka became prime minister and the SVT reigned supreme.

International protests were not slow in coming and in 1993, the Fijian Parliament was forced by internal and external pressures to pass resolutions which formed the basic terms of reference for a Constitution Review Commission. This presented its recommendations in 1996, and the new Fijian constitution became effective on 27 July 1998.

The highly nationalistic Rabuka therefore changed sides, provoking the ire of his traditional sympathisers. Together with the National Federation Party, he supported the introduction of this constitution guaranteeing equal rights for all Fijian citizens, without distinction according to race. He restored Fiji's international image and Fiji rejoined the Commonwealth, whose secretariat gave this new sage the role of mediator in the Solomon Islands peace negotiations in 1999. And another positive note, if any were necessary, was added when he was appointed President of the Great Council of Chiefs. Despite the bitterness, he himself declared that he is proud of having brought about this transformation: "I think we have opened a new chapter for Fiji, but many people will not appreciate this. I wonder if we are ready to live together" he recently declared to the press.

In the general elections of May 1999, the mainly Indian Fiji Labour Party gained a landslide victory with an absolute majority of seats. Mahendra Chaudhry was appointed as Prime Minister of the Republic of the Fiji Islands. The Labour Party is now in power as the dominant party in a People's Coalition which includes other Fijian parties. A new chapter is being written.



Adi Finau
Tabackaucoro

Bitter opposition

Despite its lack of experience of power, the Chaudhry administration has a good image and can congratulate itself on having inspired confidence. It must be admitted that his government inherited a situation that some would describe as ideal: a generally satisfactory economic situation benefitting from favourable performance in key sectors. Income from tourism has continued to increase and further security is provided by the sugar protocol with the EU and reserves sufficient to cover over five months of imports. What is more, observers declared themselves satisfied with the first budget announced by his government.

The opposition can only wail and gnash their teeth. A gentle sea breeze is now blowing through the gardens of the very attractive parliament offices, but this offers no refreshment to the rebellious. The Honourable Adi Finau Tabackaucoro, Senator, receives us in the opposition offices. She speaks with restrained tension throughout our interview. She thinks that things really have gone too far: "We have a constitution that calls for a pluralist government. Unlike other governments, in which the main parties govern. The Labour Party has a crushing majority of 37 seats out of 71; the other parties share the rest. We think that they did well first of all to remain in power, despite the allegations of malpractice made against them, starting with the Prime Minister in person. When he was in opposition, he said that he wanted to fight nepotism. And yet his first decision was to appoint his own son, who occupies a number of different positions, as Private Secretary. Their majority means that the opposition is muzzled, in fact there are only 13 of us. It is a difficult atmosphere in which to work. They have a majority in the Chamber and also in the nominees appointed to the Senate. This legitimises a form of dictatorship!"

The opposition is depressed. There is no room for manoeuvre and a feeling of having been tricked. "We have always had a multiracial government. But this time, many indigenous Fijians feel dispossessed. We were made to swallow the Western idea of democracy by force. These people are not from Fiji, they never became integrated and they have retained their own customs and ways of life. They have manipulated the people by legal means: this constitution relegates the rights of Fijians to a question of social justice. Rabuka's party was used, with a small carrot: international recognition of Fiji. But we lost everything in this process: the right to govern, the powers of President and the chance to have a strong opposition. Rabuka was used, whatever he says".

Behind this speech, there is always the question of land. Adi Finau Tabackaucoro considers that people do not understand exactly what is at stake: "The land is all we have. This is all that matters to us. We do not want our rights reduced. As for those who think that Fijians do not know how to use their own land, I would tell them that owners are not obliged to do anything with their land. No one has the right to force them. Maybe Fijians want to grow something other than sugar cane?" The last sentence was spoken mischievously, but she hastened to dispel this impression when we touched upon the question of racism. "We are not racist; we are fighting for what rightfully belongs to us. Of course we get along, we have always got along: we live alongside one another, so to speak, and our children play together. But we've become prisoners in our own country. We only have a few Fijian puppets in the government, who have been appointed in order to make things look good". One ray of light is, however, a press that will never allow itself to be muzzled, "a very good press that is not afraid of saying what it thinks".

Adi Finau will continue to make herself heard. Even if the opposition has no room for manoeuvre, she will continue to fight. She has only one goal: "I want to have this constitution changed. And in particular the obligation to govern by coalition. When individuals from different parties come together, the dominant party imposes its wishes. The others are obliged to forget the requirements of the platforms on which they were elected" and she concludes on a slightly calmer note: "As Fijians, we are not happy. These are sad and humiliating times".

Regional cooperation in the Pacific

By David MacRae*

From east to west, the Pacific region, covering the 8 Pacific ACP States (PACP), stretches over some 7,000 km and 30 million kms² of ocean making it the largest geographical area of the ACP. With only seven million inhabitants it is clearly the smallest in terms of population size. It is composed, geographically and economically, of very different members. Culturally the people are mainly of Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian origin with minorities of European and Asian origin, and Fiji has some 380,000 people of Indian descent.

Cooperation between the EU and the Pacific ACP States started in 1975 with the signatory states of the first Lomé Convention (Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa). It was enlarged successively when other countries and territories became independent and joined the ACP group during the period of the First Lomé Convention, 1975 to 1980: Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu and Kiribati and at the beginning of the Second Convention: Vanuatu (1980). Pacific Overseas Countries and Territories (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia; Pitcairn) are covered by the Council Decision on association with the EC.

Agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining (PNG) and small scale manufacturing (Fiji) are the main activities of the region. Compared to much of Africa living standards are relatively high. However, their remoteness from main markets, geographical dispersal, vulnerability to natural disasters, and the small size and fragmented nature of domestic markets are constraints to development.

Pacific Regional Organisations

A Committee of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) provides a relatively well developed regional institutional framework. The eight organisations involved are:

- **Pacific Islands Forum** (economic and commercial policy). Referred to simply as "The Forum", it was founded in 1971 to enable the independent and self governing Pacific island countries to redress the limitation on regional cooperation imposed by the political mandate of the SPC (see below). The eight Pacific ACP states are members of the Forum together with six other Pacific island countries (Nauru, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Cook Islands and Niue), Australia and New Zealand. Forum heads of government hold annual

meetings. Since the Forum has no charter, judgments and objectives are determined by members at each Forum meeting. The Forum Secretary General, who acts as Regional Authorising Officer for the EU-ACP Pacific Regional Programme, chairs the regular meetings of the Heads of CROP agencies. The Forum Secretariat is located in Suva, Fiji.

● **Pacific Community** (natural and human resources). Formerly known as the South Pacific Commission, its acronym SPC having been retained for the Secretariat, this is the oldest inter-governmental organisation in the Pacific and the largest in membership with 27 countries and territories. These include the 14 Forum island countries, 4 EU Pacific territories (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia and Pitcairn), 4 other territories (American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and Tokelau) and five so-called metropolitan countries (Australia, New Zealand, USA, UK and France). Established in 1947 as a contribution to World War II reconstruction in the Pacific, SPC has emerged in the years since its creation as one of the major general development agencies in the region. SPC is headquartered in Noumea, New Caledonia, where the marine and social resources division are located and has facilities in Suva, Fiji, including the land resources division. Perhaps one of the most enduring aspects of SPC's legacy is its definition of the scope of the Pacific Region covering all Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian countries.

● **University of the South Pacific** (human resource development and agriculture). USP differs from other CROP agencies in that, being created by royal charter in 1970, it is not formally an inter-governmental organisation. Its primary task is to provide tertiary level education and to undertake both scholarly and practical research. Its training and research mandate and close involvement with regional governments and institutions in the area of educational policy have made the USP an important factor in South Pacific cooperation. USP has more than 8000 full-time students though about twice as many Pacific islanders benefit from continuing education activities, workshops and seminars organised by USP. The main campus is in Suva, Fiji with two more campuses for tropical agriculture, in Samoa, and for the Law Unit and the Language Unit, in Vanuatu. Satellite centres exist in most of its twelve island country members (The Forum island countries except Palau and PNG which has its own universities).

● **Forum Fisheries Agency** (fisheries policy). Established in 1979, the FFA owes its origin to the UN Law of the Sea Conference (UNCLOS III) for extended economic zones and the decision by

Forum countries to opt for coastal state jurisdiction over the resources in their extended zones. The FFA assists its members in negotiating access agreements with the distant water fishing nations. This entails projects ranging from boundary limitations, surveillance and enforcement and legal harmonisation through economic advice, data management and policy assessment. The FFA is headquartered in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

● **South Pacific Regional Environment Programme** (environment). Founded in 1975 as a joint initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme and the SPC, SPREP became fully autonomous from SPC in 1991. Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, PNG, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Samoa are members. The programme of SPREP is extensive, encompassing major regional and global issues such as the conservation of biological diversity; the monitoring of global climate change and its consequences in terms of sea level rise; and the management of the coastal zone. Nationally focused activities include legal advice and harmonisation, advice on pollution and pollution control, and assistance with national environmental planning. SPREP is headquartered in Apia, Samoa.

● **South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission** (non-living resources). Established in 1979 and focused on offshore hydro carbon exploration, SOPAC's institutional mandate has broadened to assist members in the assessment, exploration and development of their near-shore and offshore mineral wealth potential. Membership is that of the Forum with the inclusion of Guam and the absence of Nauru, Niue and Palau. The headquarters of SOPAC are in Suva, Fiji.

● **South Pacific Tourism Organisation** (tourism). Established in 1983 to provide a link between the national tourism organisations of the region and as a vehicle for regional cooperation in marketing, planning, research and training, EU support has been crucial in the establishment of the organisation (which was formerly known as the Tourism Council of the South Pacific) and in the development of its plans and activities. The tourism programme has been the largest programme of EU cooperation in the Pacific Region. The SPTO is located in Suva, Fiji.

● **Pacific Islands Development Programme** (research, education and training). Established in 1980, PIDP is based in Honolulu, Hawaii. It has evolved to meet the special development needs of the Pacific Region in cooperative research, education and training. The members of PIDP are the Forum island countries (except Vanuatu), New

Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Marianas Islands and Hawaii. The region's institutions are important. Not only do they provide normal regional services, but for the smaller countries of the region they also provide services typically provided by national institutions in larger countries.

Pacific Regional Cooperation

In round terms, EU assistance to the countries of the Pacific region under successive Lomé Conventions has amounted to some €1.6 billion. Of this some €150 million has been provided for the regional programmes.

On an overall basis, the bulk of regional cooperation has been concentrated fairly evenly in two broad sectors: first, the development and improved exploitation of natural resources, in particular agriculture, fisheries and energy; and secondly, the services sector - transport, (both sea and air), telecommunications and tourism.

A change occurred in the areas of cooperation under the Second Financial Protocol of Lomé IV towards human resource development and, secondly, the sustainable management of natural resources and environmental management and protection. Outside the focal areas, support to trade and private sector development receives particular attention.

Pacific Islands Forum members, which include the eight Pacific ACP States plus six other island countries - Nauru, Marshall Islands, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Cook Islands and Niue, - have agreed to develop a regional free-trade area between themselves. This could form the basis for a Regional Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU although this has still to be decided. Trade liberalisation has already started between countries

PACIFIC REGION

<u>ACP GROUP</u>	<u>POPULATION</u> <u>1998</u>	<u>LAND AREA</u> <u>(sq km)</u>	<u>EEZs</u> <u>(sq km)</u>
Fiji	785,700	18,333	1,290,000
Kiribati	85,100	811	3,550,000
PNG	4,412,400	462,243	3,120,000
Solomon Is	417,800	28,370	1,340,000
Tonga	98,000	747	700,000
Tuvalu	11,000	26	900,000
Vanuatu	182,500	12,190	680,000
Samoa	174,800	2,935	120,000
	6,167,30	525,655	11,700,000
<u>EU OCTs</u>			
Wallis & Futuna	14,200	255	300,000
New Caledonia	206,000	19,103	1,740,000
French Polynesia	225,500	3,521	5,000,000
	445,700	22,879	7,040,000
<u>Non-ACP Group</u>			
FSM	114,100	701	2,970,000
RMI	611,000	181	2,120,000
Palau	18,500	488	629,000
Nauru	11,500	21	320,000
Cook Islands	19,200	237	1,830,000
Niue	2,100	259	390,000
	226,500	1,887	8,259,000
<u>Others</u>			
American Samoa	61,600	200	390,000
Guam	132,100	549	218,000
Northern Mariana Is	68,700	471	-----
Pitcairn	50	39	-----
Tokelau	1,500	12	290,000
	263,950	1,271	
Total	7,103,45	551,692	

belonging to the Melanesian Spearhead Group - PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji - where more than 90% of the region's population is living and the bulk of economic activity occurs.

The six non ACP members of the Pacific Islands Forum are establishing diplomatic relations with the EU. All have been granted observers status for the negotiations and all have expressed

interest in signing the new convention to succeed Lomé.

* Head of the European Commission Delegation in Suva, Fiji

Materials making money

Colours everywhere. Machines buzz incessantly ; a transistor radio plays barely audible music. Bank after bank of women sewing; they stay leaning over their work. There are quotas to be met and no-one can afford to interrupt the rhythm.

Indians, Asians, Fijians, the workers in the Kalabu tax free zone are making the clothes you could be wearing tomorrow. With their skilled hands and weary eyes, they are part of the boom in Fiji's manufacturing sector.

Even Calvin Klein has his jeans made here!" Jeans, dresses and shirts, but also bags and trainers - anything sewn is made in Kalabu. A few kilometres from the capital Suva, the Kalabu tax free zone, administered by the Fiji Islands Trade and Investment Bureau (FTIB) has been in operation since 1997. It consists of five industrial buildings over an area of 137,000 km²: an administrative complex including the FTIB and the customs offices, seven warehouses for suppliers and a crèche. "We

are really proud of the crèche," says Villame Volavola, zone director. The crèche was opened in 1999 at the request of workers such as Usha Watl, 41, who has been working in this sector since 1991. For Usha, the opening of the factories has been a gift from God. Never letting her eyes move from her work, she explains that she lives nearby and enjoys working in Kalabu.

"I sew together 190 trouser pieces a day, I am well paid and I no longer have to worry about looking after my young children." In the crèche, the children pay no



attention to all the activity in the neighbouring buildings. Some are lying on small mattresses laid straight on the floor, little rascals pretending to be asleep who chuckle as we walk through.

The five buildings were leased out in 1997 to manufacturing companies from Australia, Singapore and China. The sector receives strong government support on account of the labour intensity. 80% of the production workforce are women. Villame Volavola explains the attraction of the zone to companies: "The complex is enclosed and a good distance from residential

areas. The buildings were very carefully designed: maximum use is made of natural light, which keeps down energy costs; internal air circulation is optimal; the surrounding landscape is pleasing to the eye, customs are based within the zone and there is still the option to extend the buildings."

Cutting your coat...

Besides the sectors of concentration which are the development of human resources and the environment, European cooperation

is providing support to Fiji in its campaign to promote investment. Clothes are the number one export of manufactured goods (30%), production having risen five-fold between 1986 and 1995. For the first time in the history of the Fiji Islands, income from this industry (\$217.8 million) was set to overtake income from sugar in 1999.

The FTIB is the sole agency in Fiji for the promotion, regulation and control of foreign investment. In 1989 the commercial conditions were liberalised and simplified. Customs duties are now the main tool of commercial

Usha Watl has worked for nearly 10 years in the manufacturing industry



policy. Duties are refunded under certain conditions if imports are to be used in the manufacture of goods destined for export. All exports are subject to zero rate VAT and companies are not taxed on income from exports. The tax free factory/tax free zone system (TFF/TFZ) offers

financial benefits to encourage companies to set up in Fiji, and new companies are exempt from income tax for periods of up to eight years.

... to suit your cloth

The selection criteria are clearly set out in the handbooks issued to potential investors: export at least 70% of annual production, re-export at least 70% of activities and be located in one of the TFZs. Highly labour intensive manufacturing companies have therefore been the first to take up the opportunity. Since 1995, 462 projects have been approved and 121 launched. Companies have employed more than 13,000 people and generated more than \$200 million in exports. Contributing over 12% of GDP, this sector will surely play its part in putting the spark into the Fijian economy.

"Many doubted the success of the zone, especially in view of access to the ports and airports. But the government widened the main access road, and airport capacity was expanded to accommodate 767s. We are only 30 minutes from the airport and about 20 minutes from the port at King's Wharf. All the factors required for success are in place."

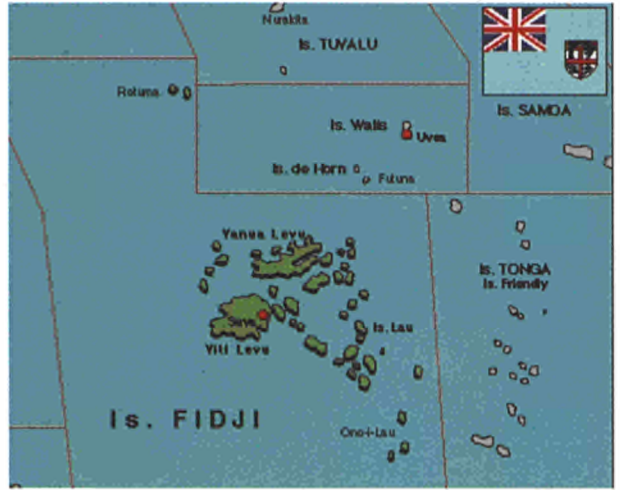


Fiji - EU cooperation 1990-2000

Lomé Convention	EDF 7	Focal sectors (€m)	EDF 8 (€m)	Focal sectors
Lomé National Indicative Programme	22.0	Rural Agricultural Dev. 65% Non-focal 35%	21,7	HRD 45% Environment 35% Non focal 20%
Stabex	/			
Structural adjustment support	/			
Risk capital Inv.	0,3 3,0			
EIB Funds	5,0 8,0	Air Pacific Maintenance Centre Telecom. II		
Other Lomé funds	1,0	Cyclone Kina-Emergency Aid		
Total Lomé funding				
Other EC budget lines	0,7	NGO		
Total	40,0		21,7	

Profile

Fiji



General information

Area:	18,333 km ²
Capital:	Suva
Main islands:	Viti Levu (10 429 km ²) and Vanua Levu (5556 km ²)
Population:	797,800 (1998 estimate)
Rate of population increase:	1.3%
Official language:	English. Fijian (mainly Bauan) and Hindi widely spoken
Principal ethnic groups:	Melano-Fijian, Indo-Fijian, Chinese and European

Economy

GDP per inhabitant:	\$1986
GNP per inhabitant:	\$2460
GNP growth rate:	2.4%
Rate of inflation:	5.3%
External debt:	\$213.4 million (10.5% of GNP)
Currency:	Fijian dollar F\$. (\$1 = F\$ 0.4826)
Main economic sectors:	Subsistence farming (25% GNP) and services (2/3 GNP) (tourism, off shore financial centres)
Main exports:	Sugar, textiles, fish, timber; to Australia, the United Kingdom, USA and Japan
Main imports:	Manufactured goods, machines, food and drink; from Australia, New Zealand and Japan
Aid per capita (DAC):	\$59

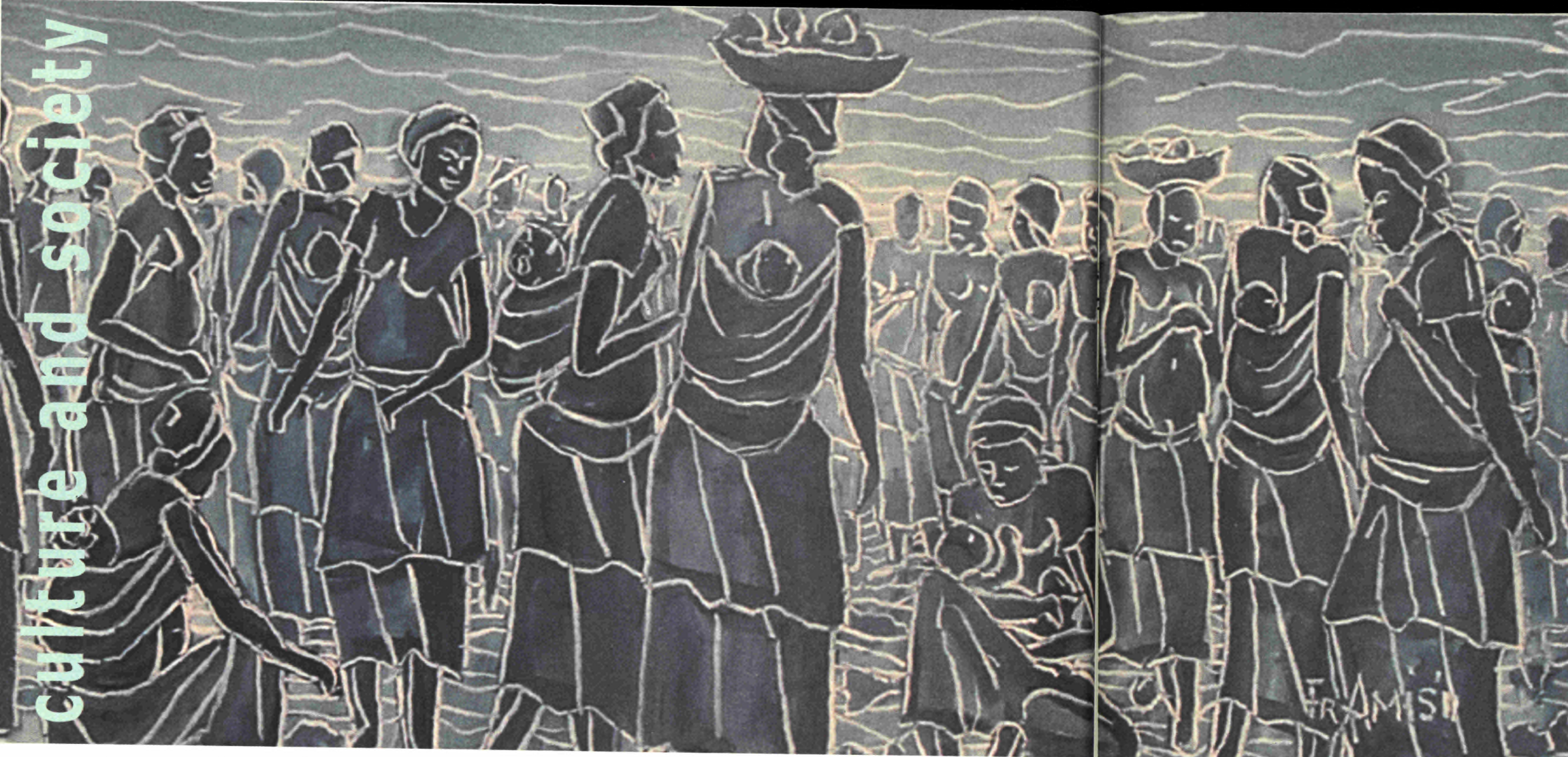
Political structure

President:	Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara
Political system:	Multiparty republic. The President, chosen by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga (Great Council of Chiefs), appoints the Prime Minister who selects his Cabinet. Westminster-model parliamentary democracy: a Senate of 34 members; 24 appointed on the advice of the BLV, 9 by other communities and 1 on the advice of the Council of Rotuma and a House of 71 elected Representatives.
Main political parties:	Fijian Labour Party (FLP) ; Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei (SVT, Fijian Political Party) ; VLPV, National Federation Party (NPF) ; General Voters' Party (GVP),

Social indicators

Life expectancy at birth:	70.6 women; 74.9 men (1997)
Infant mortality:	20/1000
Adult literacy rate:	89.4% women; 94.1% men
School attendance rate:	79% women; 81% men
Population with access to drinking water:	77%
Population with access to health care:	99%
Human development index:	61 out of 174 countries

Sources: Economic Intelligence Unit, UNDP report on Human Development (1999), UNDP report on Human Development in the Pacific (1999).
EU-ACP cooperation in 1997 (EU, DGVIII).



François Amisi

Art is memory

by Chantal Giourgas-Tombu

Lubumbashi, 1999. Dry season. Four painters and a ceramist are exhibiting. *Memories of Time Past*: the idea is that time has no meaning unless marked by great works. Art

They had to awaken the masses and come up with something big to put Art back on course. Picture a catalogue, the arrival of the media and the jet set of Lubumbashi, capital of the Katanga province in DR Congo. We had to get it right first time so we played safe and opted for experienced artists, believing this would be beneficial for aspiring artists-in-waiting. Different criteria were used, including number of years in the field, professionalism and quantity of recent work.

Enthusiastically supported by key figures in Lubumbashi life, the entire organization of the exhibition was financed through sponsorship: invitations, publicity, preview, catalogue, etc. In under a week the walls of the Lubumbashi riding centre had been stripped of their decoration and marked out for hanging pictures, the ceilings equipped with spotlights and the supports for the sculptures repainted. With the décor in

is memory. With deft brushstrokes from all angles artists capture their history, the lives of their people, human tradition and the changing cycles of nature.

place the artists' confidence began to grow. They finally threw off the disquiet brought about by the lack of support and patronage and were ready to face their public...

The opening day of the exhibition was a great success; it was reported on national television and in the press. This represented more than just commercial success for the artists, who received all the profits. It was public recognition. Their status had been acknowledged.

This was the last exhibition for Mwenze Kibwanga, who sadly died on 5 September 1999 at the age of 74. A great painter, he was, with PiliPili, the oldest artist of the school founded in 1946 by Pierre Romain-Desfossés. Mwenze created large murals, most notably for the Congolese pavilion in the 1958 Universal Exhibition in Brussels. An internationally-renowned artist, he had fallen into obscurity through

lack of patrons and champions. The success achieved by his works at the preview brought him great happi-

ness in his final days. He was a one-off, conscious of his talents yet reserved and dignified. We have his paintings to remember him by. His work does not lend itself to instant interpretation. It needs to be tamed before its power and originality can be understood. It relates with religious simplicity the natural cycle and life of a community through a handful of basic shades, the red brick hue of the Katanga earth. Small, systematic and orderly brushstrokes, laid down in the form of a mosaic, allow the artist to cast off the confines of perspective and create a unity of place and space. There is much expressionist abstraction in his work. To depict the masterly force of the mighty mythical buffalo he scaled down their fore limbs, placing them under the belly of the animal and thus balanced the composition.

As with the majority of African artists, the painter has no interest in representational accuracy. The surroundings and characters remain anonymous; the work has a latent symbolism. Typically Bantou, the gesture of the hands of the baby Jesus in *Flight into Egypt* brings warmth to anyone walking in the white path of the ancestors ...

François Amisi took part in the 1956 *Young Congolese Painters* exhibition at the Cursaal Oostende, winning the prize awarded by the Ministry of the Colonies. By this time he had already developed a technique known as "whirlwind". Dancers, hunters,



Chenge Baruti



Mwenze Kibwanga



Kahiku Manika

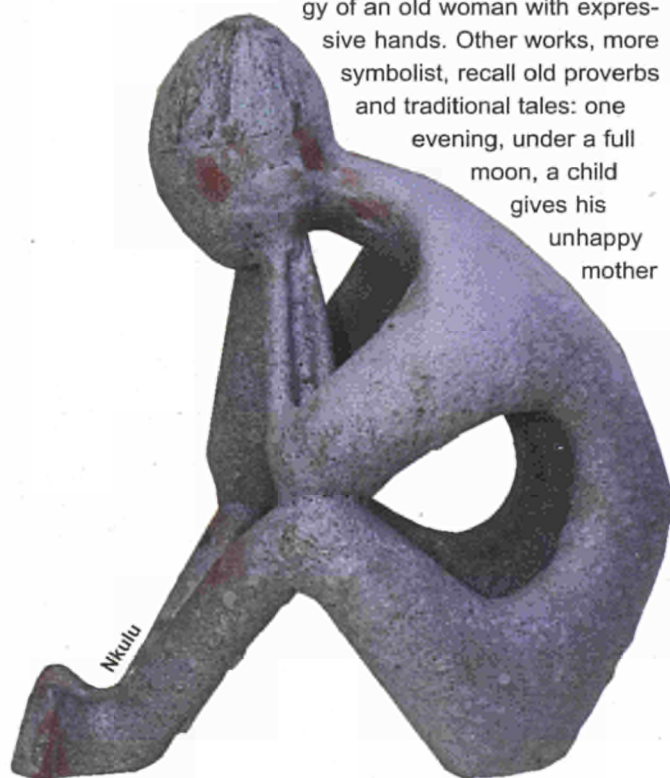
antelopes and birds all seem to quiver, run through with lightning zigzags.

Amisi also produces monochrome engravings, using just one colour but exploiting the whole range of luminosity.

Amisi's pragmatic approach leads him to make concrete the daily difficulties faced by women, and through them the difficulties faced by a whole people. There may be crowds at the market, but no-one is buying. Faces are hardened with cold blues, silhouettes are angular. Hunger is ever-present.

A student of the Kinshasa Fine Arts Academy, Chenge Baruti, born in 1937 to a Belgian father and a Congolese mother, has lived in Lubumbashi since 1955. His talent, mastery of different techniques and enthusiasm have enabled him to make a name for himself and make a living from his art. His sensitivity as an artist, born of two cultures, helps him combine Bantou spirit with western techniques and styles. A realist, one pastel uncovers the psychology of an old woman with expressive hands. Other works, more symbolist, recall old proverbs and traditional tales: one

evening, under a full moon, a child gives his unhappy mother



a water lily and consoles her: "You are the source of life just as the water of this lake and a creature of the moon".

In the moon appears the outline of the feminine guardian spirit, carrying a burden on her head. Chenge Baruti captures in his pictures haze at dawn, the first burst of sun on the red leaves of the mango trees, the smell of wood fires, the velvety sky at full moon.

From 1961 to 1973, Kahilu Manika worked as an illustrator for the Methodist Church. He then began to work for himself and developed his oil-painting technique. The artist draws his inspiration from the colours of everyday life. His works are an ode to colour and light. He applies the colours generously with a knife, uses a canvas as a palette and covers it completely with different shades, produced randomly and with no pretence to realism. His improvised palette serves as the background to a theme which comes to the artist as he surveys the abstract canvas. Kahilu is fascinated by the force and rhythm of rain, the colour changes it brings about and the reflections in the water. A rainmaker, he scores the still wet surface with parallel strokes: suddenly it is pouring.

In 1986, after eight years of apprenticeship, Nkulu the ceramist opened his own studio *Art of Fire*. His skilled hands create various feminine poses while musicians with eyes closed capture the energy of the world. The artist chooses to deliberately ignore proportion. The free form of the subjects he selects, his method of sculpting clay and the proven techniques of firing and glazing confirm the artist's modernity compared with traditional wood sculpting. Lack of resources often means no glaze, but this is an inventive artist. For the exhibition Nkulu created new forms: a pipe smoker made up entirely of curves and boldly stylised has a skin rubbed with soil

and plants, contrasting with the shiny glaze of his water pipe.

Such was the level of public interest that the exhibition was extended for an extra 10 days and we are still being asked to supply catalogues. There was also an educational point to the exhibition. Visitors have to train their eyes to distinguish artistic creations from the mass images sold in airports. We organised free dynamic guided tours of the exhibition for school children and meetings with the artists. Most took part and showed a great deal of interest. A number of them have asked their parents to join them in a return visit. One Congolese manager confided to the journalist Luboya N'Samba that the Congolese middle class had little interest in works of art. He went on to say "If good intentions are not put into practice we risk seeing a whole history disappear. Our children do not know all the masters exhibiting here. But they do know all the latest Congolese pop stars and have no trouble reeling off their latest hits." But it was the young Congolese who showed the most enthusiasm.

People began to recognise the artists and organisers in the street thanks to the televised broadcast of the preview.

Memories of Time Past has given the artists involved confidence in their talents. With material and psychological support they will be able to regain their strength and create new art forms. The public has demonstrated that it can be counted on. The door is now wide open. More efforts to support artists and teach our children, the adults of tomorrow, to go and see and to appreciate art are under way.

Chantal Giourgas-Tombu is a graduate and high school teacher qualified in art and archaeology.

Youssou N'Dour

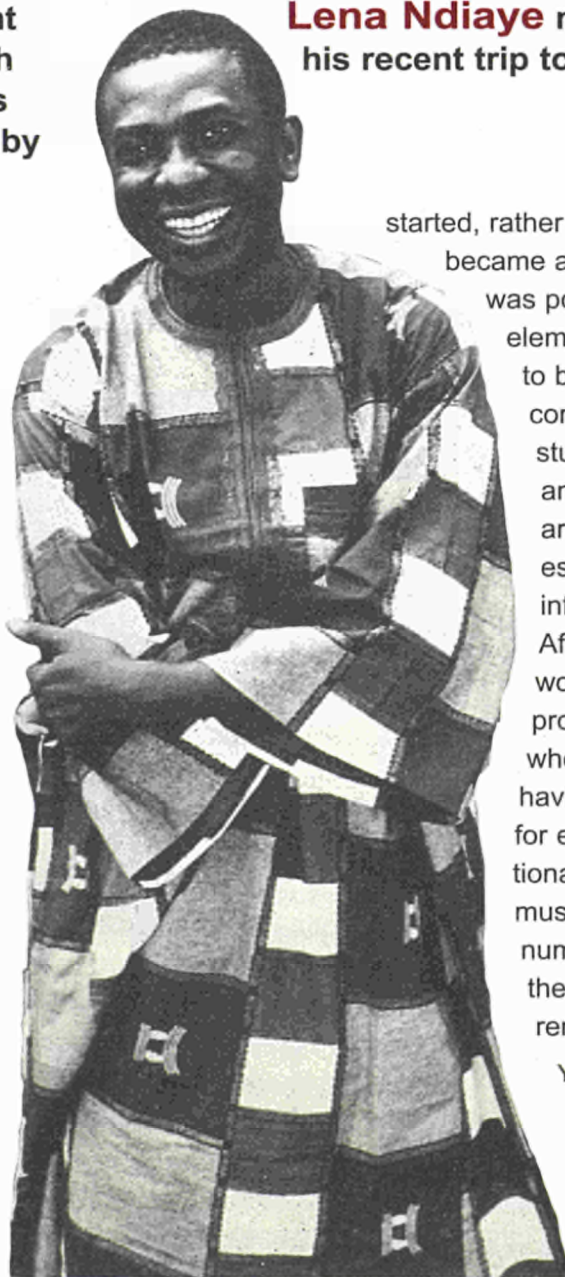
a musician who cares

Youssou N'Dour, one of the most respected and best-known African artists, is reaching a widening public with his music; geographic, socio-economic and linguistic boundaries pose no problem. His work is located in the world and in his own time and tells us about the Africa of the present and its relationship with the rest of the world, as shaped and structured by

its history and heritage. His new album, *Joko* (January 2000) faithfully reflects this state of mind. Youssou N'Dour has been a UNICEF ambassador since 1993 and is very much in touch with the concerns of the continent, whose spokesman he has become over the years. **Katy Lena Ndiaye** met him during his recent trip to Brussels.

Although many African musicians and artists have built up their careers from Europe, you never left Senegal. Why is this? Is this the main reason for your success?

I stayed in Senegal first of all because my family, those closest to me, my cultural environment and the source of my inspiration are all there. When I launched my international career, I found it natural to use my home as a base, not because I had closed my mind and decided that all music is African but with passion, as I am passionate about what I do: there were choices to make, including the choice of the place in which I was to work. I felt at home in Senegal. That is where I was motivated to compose my music. And so that is where I



"I'm working on a link between the South and the North"

started, rather naïvely. And also, I became aware over time that it was possible to set up other elements that would help to base my work in my continent: a recording studio, a concert staff and a label for the artists. It was also necessary to provide an infrastructure for African artists that would enable them to produce their music where they lived, without having to turn to Europe, for example. The international success of my music has encouraged a number of artists to take the same decision to remain in Africa.

You have always wished to use your music to build bridges between Africa and the rest of the world. Now, after a career of about 20 years, do

you think that you have succeeded?

I wouldn't claim to have been completely successful. However, I am working constantly to establish this link between the South and the North. We recently welcomed another German festival: the *Afro-Fest* of Würzburg as part of a music festival in Africa. This was the second time that this exchange had occurred, a genuine exchange, enabling people from the North and South to exchange experiences. I think this is very important. There ought to be more projects of this kind and we could then talk about genuine encounters. I would like those involved in music in Africa and the West to acknowledge these facts.

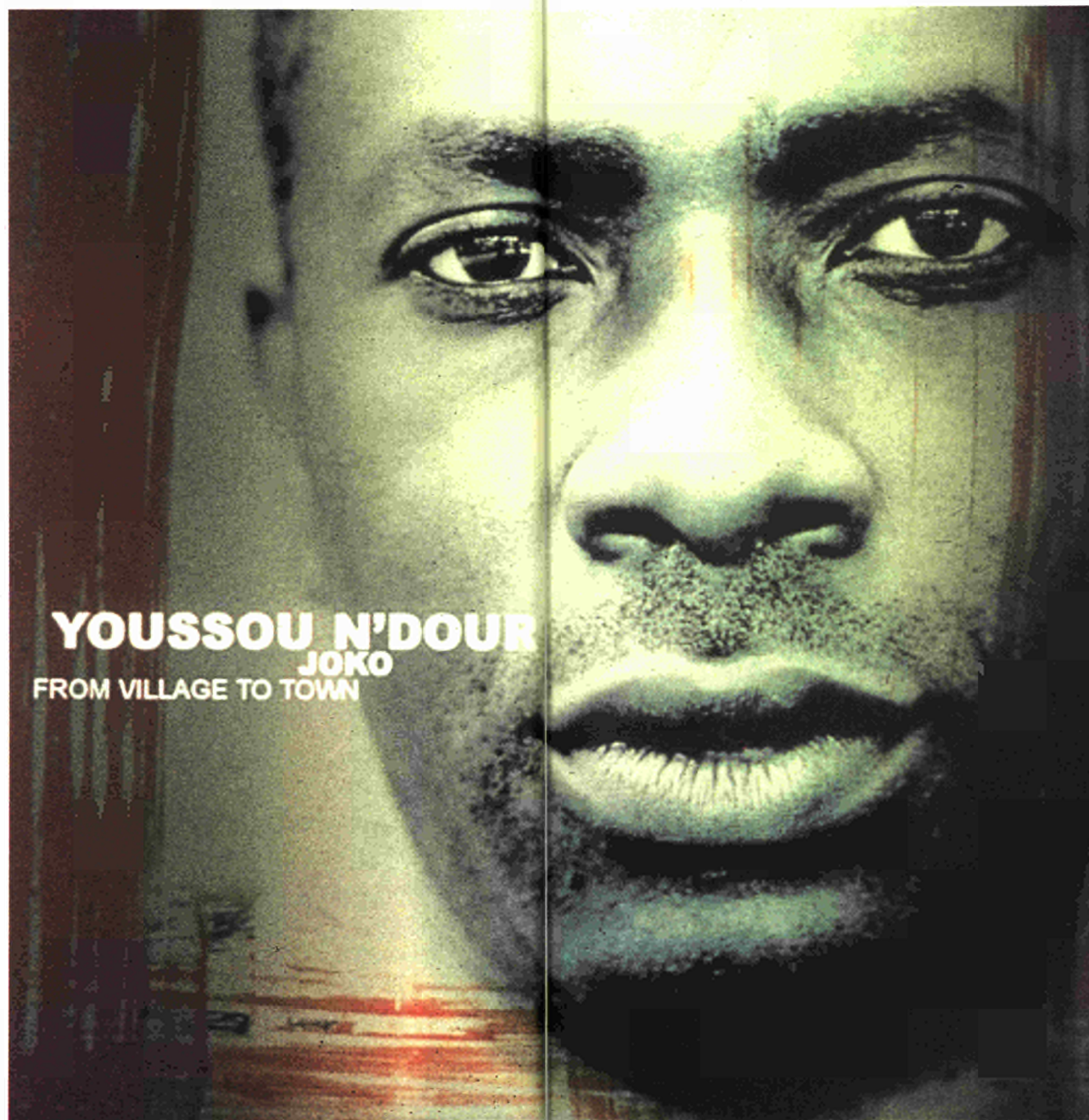
Joko is the title of your new album. What does this word mean?

Joko means a link, that is to say a link between the town and the village, between modern African cities such as Dakar and Abidjan and major metropolises such as New York or Paris. Joko is also a meeting between artists with different interests who join me on this album. Joko has taken on a rather Pan-African aspect, with rhythms that are to be found in Senegal and in Casamance in particular, but also on the Ivory Coast, in Ghana and in South Africa. The percussion instruments used there are mainly played

directly by hand unlike those I was used to using, which are played with sticks, like the Sabar. The words speak of African society. I want to sing about it directly, without diversions or concessions. I would say that the rhythm is from Africa, the words are intended for Africans and the sounds are intended to establish a dialogue with the whole world.

Describe today's Africa to me in a few words?

Today's Africa wishes to move towards greater modernity and rejects the negative images sticking to it such as war, famine, aids etc. It is true that these things are part of the reality of Africa. But what is being made of the other Africas in the town and countryside that are developing? I also think that today's Africa includes woman, the depository of cultural and religious values and who is in the course of emancipating herself.



You say travelling has influenced your music and that your aim is to bring new sounds from Dakar to westerners. Do you think that people listening to your music will also be influenced and will discover a face of Africa different from

the misery that they are used to hearing about?

Of course, this is also Africa. But I refuse to show only this face of Africa. I want, through my music, to answer the question: "What is Africa?" to show the continent in another light and to tell people that it is the agent of its own development and a source of

new ideas, an Africa that aspires to the freedom to take decisions and freedom of thought. I want to tell people about something new, different from the destitution they hear about.

You are an African who is also very aware of the general situation of Africa. What would you like to say to Western political decision-makers, NGOs and international institutions wanting to help and work with Africans?

That is rather a difficult question. There are

always laws and regulations that determine the conditions under which development aid is given. But they very frequently fail to achieve the desired result. Why? Because the aid organisations don't listen to the people for whom the aid is intended. What do they really need? The concerns of these groups are

wholly or partially ignored by decision-makers within international organisations or leaders of those countries striving for a better life. This situation urgently needs to be reversed. The recipients of development aid must be able to decide on the contents of this aid.

One of the subjects that you return to very frequently in your songs is African unity. What sort of unity do you mean? Do you mean that it exists or do you mean that the children of Sheikh Anta Diop, Kwame Nkruma, Steve Biko and others have lost the way that was traced for them by their fathers?

The words of Biko, Sheikh Anta and Nkruma are powerful and deal with fundamental things: broadly speaking, the cultural heritage of Africa. The song *New Africa* is a dream of an Africa that is united not by means of agreements between countries but by understanding and greater respect between nations and ethnic groups. I consider that the main point of the message of these honourable men was that people should come together. African unity can only be achieved by means of cross-fertilisation between cultures.

Photos: Sony Music

Healthier sex in the Caribbean

by Lucella Campbell¹ and Michele Burger²

In 1997, some 48,000 children throughout the Caribbean became AIDS orphans. In 1996 cervical cancer accounted for 12.5% of all deaths in the Anglophone Caribbean. Thousands of young women across the region have been forced out

In 1995, funding from the European Community gave the International Planned Parenthood Federation's Western Hemisphere Region (WHR) the opportunity to evaluate how best to address these ongoing needs, and to work with three of their national family planning associations (FPAs) in Guyana, Belize and St Lucia on community focused service delivery.

Prior to this project the three FPAs were limited to the provision of contraceptive methods, but were compromised by time and resources in the provision of holistic sexual and reproductive health services - and therefore often unable to provide information and support for clients over and above basic information about contraceptive choices.

The FPAs in Guyana, Belize and St Lucia now strive to:

- Provide comprehensive services, including protection from sexually transmitted disease including HIV, and also the social and health consequences of gender discrimination and gender-related crime
- Actively involve local communities in the sexual health education process
- Provide services for young people, and services that young people want
- Recognise the individual and particular needs of individual clients and respond to those needs

of the education system because an unwritten rule demands their exclusion. And yet many Caribbean societies and health structures ignore the real and specific needs of individuals.

Involving local communities

Involving the community was the most significant challenge of the project. The respective FPAs had to promote this new approach to service delivery to clients who in the past had not relied on the FPA clinic staff and volunteers for such services. Yet it was these very people who were needed to take part in the design and implementation of these new systems of health care and support.

So community volunteers were encouraged to hold bi-monthly meetings in their communities and provide feedback from these meetings to the FPAs. Volunteers included housewives, teachers, local government workers, and were vital in this process of community involvement. These people gave the community a sense of ownership of this process of re-tooling the FPAs. They also extended the FPA volunteer base, often providing much-needed support in clinics and FPA offices.

These volunteers all participated in a five-day workshop designed to break down misconceptions about sex and sexuality, and to encourage objective rather than pejorative opinion about clients and client needs. Further training was provided in sexual and reproductive health matters. This comprehensive training helped the volunteers to feel at ease running small discussion groups of eight to 20 men and women at community centres, in people's homes, at FPA clinics and occasionally in bars.

The aim - and indeed the result - of this engagement of local communities was to create a sense of ownership and responsibility. Ownership of new FPA services, and responsibility concerning individual sexual and reproductive health. As one facilitator in St Lucia put it: "you are really asking us to think for ourselves and to help people to do the same thing...not from a text book but from everyday feelings and experiences."

Changes in service provision

In the three participating countries, FPA staff have been receptive to the new challenges of working to

help clients to identify their sexual and reproductive health needs and concerns and together seeking possible support and solutions.

Volunteer facilitators in Guyana now lead discussion groups on sexuality and reproduction with adolescents - a direct outcome of community meetings with parents who requested this service. The FPA plans to extend this service in a more structured way in schools.

Community meetings also had the unanticipated result of opening doors to previously hard to reach communities, such as

the Indian community in Guyana. "Something about this approach must have appealed to the women in particular in the Indian community," says the FPA Executive Director. "I'm happy that we finally made a breakthrough with this important sector of Guyanese society."

Many of the community facilitators have expressed their surprise at the extent to which their respective communities welcomed this initiative, the

wisdom some people brought to the discussions and the enthusiasm that often led discussions on possible solutions to local needs. According to one facilitator in Belize "it is as if we had opened a dam that had been about to burst".

Given the opportunity to influence decision making as a community, some of the communities took full advantage of this unusual opportunity. In all three countries this has far reaching implications for FPA programmes, and for the dynamics within these communities. An example of direct response to local needs was the opening of the clinic on Saturdays in Belize, and the availability of a psychiatric nurse for family counselling - both requests made

by community groups.

In all three countries, community facilitators participated in radio programmes with FPA staff. Radio interviews and discussion, which had been formerly monopolized by the views of experts now gave voice to the concerns of the people. The human interest appeal was reflected in an increase in calls to these programmes. (These radio programmes also created a decided shift and improvement in each FPA's public image.)

FPA AIDS prevention programmes now integrate the role the community can play in reducing the spread of the disease. AIDS is no longer someone's fault, but a challenge that we must all face practically, realistically and with awareness.

This project has laid the groundwork for a model that has the potential for establishing new and dynamic relationships between providers and services on the one hand, and the community on the other - a relationship that values and nurtures the vital contribution that local communities can bring to design, implementation and running of health projects throughout the Caribbean region and in other regions of the world.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation/Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR) was founded in 1954, and is one of six regions that comprise the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

IPPF/WHR is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual organisation that provides technical assistance and financial support to reproductive health organisations, helps facilitate information sharing among its affiliates and advocates sexual and reproductive rights on a regional and international level.

IPPF/WHR's member organisations include 45 family planning associations in North and Latin America and the Caribbean that



together provide services to eight million people each year through more than 40,000 service points. Each affiliate is a private autonomous organisation, established to supply family planning and other related health services according to local needs, customs and laws.

¹Senior Programme Manager at IPPF/WHR and ²Consultant in Reproductive Health

Sometimes youth develop their own materials for their sessions, above

A proud community facilitator in Belize displays her T-shirt, below

Children often accompany their mothers to sessions, centre

A typical community in which the Facilitator works in Guyana. Meetings are sometimes held in the house bottoms i.e. empty space below a house on stilts, below



For the New Millennium: 2000 International Year for the Culture of Peace

by Sue Wheat

The millennium celebrations came and went and when the euphoria had died down the TV news still brought the same vivid and disturbing pictures into our livingrooms - pictures of war, pictures of people crying out for dead or missing loved ones, pictures of children confused and alone. Chechnya, Sudan, Rwanda, Indonesia, Sierra Leone. For them, there was nothing to celebrate. The millennium must have seemed like a cruel joke.

"Many of the children are traumatised here," explained the head teacher of Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone Primary School to a foreign aid visitor just before Christmas.

"In fact we're all traumatised."

Designating the Year 2000 as the UN International Year for the Culture of Peace is indeed timely. It puts the focus firmly on individual commitment and action and takes a long-term stance, leading into the Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Child. At the launch last September, Nobel Peace prize laureates formulated a *Manifesto 2000* with six action points: respect all life, reject violence, share with others, listen to understand, preserve the planet, rediscover solidarity, and these were backed by world leaders.

The goal is to get 100 million signatures as pledges to the Manifesto - and to present them to the UN General Assembly at the turn of the millennium in September 2000 to show public commitment to change.

But is it a nice idea, thought up by well-meaning individuals in their ivory towers? Is peace really going to be brought about through design-

ating a year and a decade of peace?

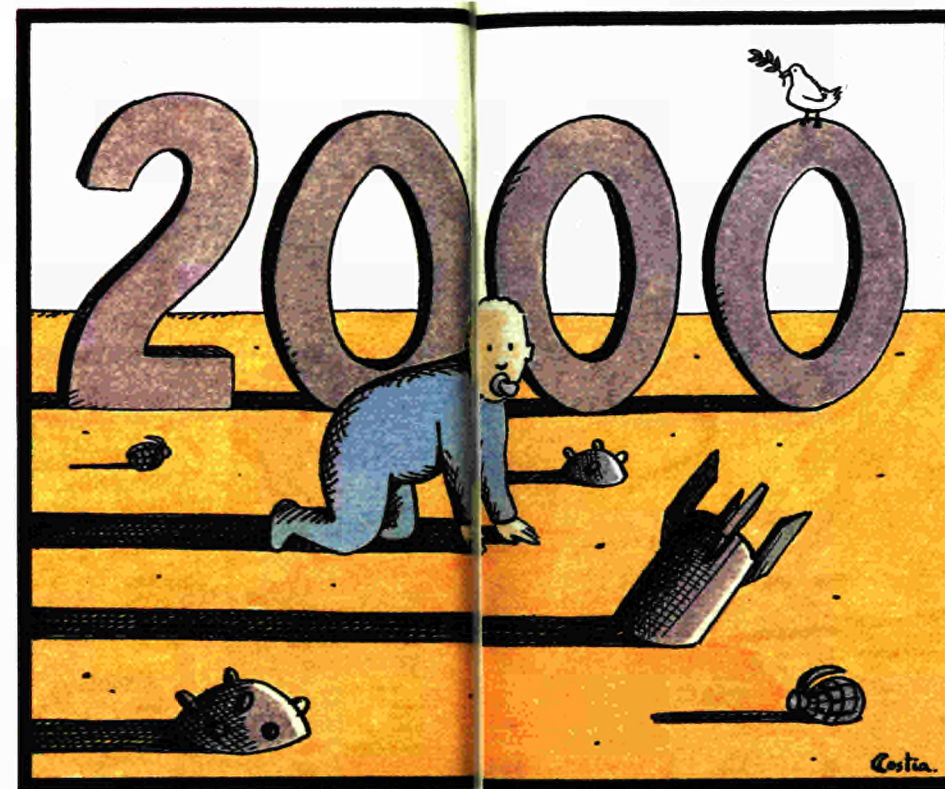
"Obviously being at the millennium provides us with the impetus to look back on the last 100 years," says Peter Dyson, Deputy Director at the United Nations Association.

"And when we do, we see the most appalling carnage - World War I, World War II, the Hiroshima bomb - and even now in the 1990s we see civil wars happening all over the world. But we are hoping that the year and decade of culture and peace will provide people with a means of focusing on what sort of world they want for their children and grandchildren."

In countries where war is more of a harsh reality, work is more hard-hitting.

"It's incredible to think that there are 48 million women and children around the world at risk because of conflict and violence," says Sally Bernheim, an Advocacy Worker with UNICEF who has worked in Sudan, Kosovo and Macedonia with children who've lost their homes or parents.

One big area of UNICEF's work is with child soldiers - which are estimated to number 300,000 world-wide. "In Sudan we have set up a programme working with the rebel movements to get them to understand and commit to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child," says Bernheim. "We organised various workshops with civilians and military authorities to raise awareness of what their governments have already signed up to. The military leaders realise they will be held accountable and consequently some have unofficially signed up to the declaration them-



selves. For a long time Sudan didn't admit that children were being recruited as soldiers. As a result of our campaign, one of the factions agreed to demobilise children from the army which was a big step."

UNICEF are also supporting projects helping child soldiers to reintegrate into their communities in Sierra Leone.

"We work with families to try and get them to accept their children back. This can be difficult because the children have often done terrible things to their family as part of their army training," says Bernheim.

Guided therapies, often based on traditional practices such as cleansing rituals, help the communities to accept them and the child to deal with their guilt. Reintroducing kids to play is also important and creat-

ing a structured environment in refugee camps which is familiar and safe.

Fashioning a culture of peace in such a highly-charged, emotional

environment, must be the ultimate millennium challenge. But progress is being made. A Trauma Counselling programme run by the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone and supported by British aid agency Christian Aid, trains victims of war through roleplays on conciliation and training sessions on the Lome Peace Accord.

"The impact of our work is good" says coordinator Martha James. "I can definitely see a change in attitude where peace is beginning to prevail. People are now starting to be ready to forgive. So many people who have undergone the training have said that before the training they could not possibly forgive the rebels for what they had done but now they could and they realised how important this was in order to achieve peace in Sierra

Leone."

In "peaceful" countries, there is also a role for people in pursuing peace, although terminology may be different. In Western Europe, peace in the sense of preventing war is not that high on many people's agendas, particularly young people, and that's partly because of the success of the UN at keeping a Third World War from happening," says UNA's Peter Dyson. "But a lot of people are concerned about other issues like the environment or Third World debt. If you have environmental degradation it doesn't lead to a peaceful world, and if you have trade and debt which is manifestly unjust then that doesn't promote peace either. So the Year for the Culture of Peace is not simply trying to stop conflict, there are deeper issues that need to be addressed for us to move from a culture of war to a culture of peace."

Sandra Gift, sub-regional coordinator for UNESCO's Associated Schools Caribbean Sea Project Network, agrees.

"I do see environmental issues as closely tied with peace and/or conflict," she says, and uses the sea as an example. "It gives us back whatever we put into it: pollution comes back to our shores, and chemical and poisonous substances come back into our bodies through fish. All of this is also linked to issues of poverty. When fishermen can no longer make their living off the sea this strengthens the cycle of poverty and poverty has within it the basis for conflict, crime and violence. The use and abuse of the environment is a development issue and can be a source of peace or conflict."

Efforts for peace must begin at the individual level as well as at the societal level, says Gift, and the success of their environmental education workshop in 1998, which tied into the "Culture of Peace" theme,

has encouraged her to be positive about the potential of educational programmes in influencing the actions of young Caribbeans. Long-term, practical initiatives are essential, however, she says. The workshop produced not only a resolution for the young participants to sign up to, but resource material which will be distributed by UNESCO's Science Sector in 2000, an electronic newsletter and website, and a *Sand Watch* student beach monitoring project. UNESCO's Associated Schools Transatlantic Slave Trade Project will also tie into this year.

"It's important that we educate young people around the world about the causes, consequences and legacies of the slave trade to ensure that such a human tragedy never recurs," says Gift.

Remembering the mistakes of the past, must surely be one of the crucial elements in fostering peace in the future.

Useful contacts:

European Centre for Conflict Prevention.

www.euconflict.org . tel: +31 (30)253 7528.

New publication:

People Building Peace: 35 Inspiring Stories from around the World.

Also available online, *People Building Peace* tells the stories of the valuable initiatives taken by citizens of any countries to help resolve conflict, to prevent violence, and to reconcile parties that have been at war.

UNESCO Culture of Peace site including Manifesto 2000:

www.unesco.org/cpp

Appeal of the Nobel Prize Laureates: www60.rapidshare.net/nobelweng/index.htm

United Nations Association: .

www.oneworld.org/UNA_UK

Associated Schools Project Network:

<http://www.unesco.org/education/asp>

UNICEF: www.unicef.org

A cure for malaria - pie in the sky or a solution in the pipeline?

Malaria has long been a major problem facing mostly African countries, and it is getting worse. A new drug is needed, which people can afford. A simple request but, as **Ruth Evans reports, not easy to fulfill.**

The biggest problem of all is that chloroquine, up to now the most widely-available and used drug in many parts of Africa, has been rendered virtually useless as malaria parasites have mutated to develop drug resistance.

In the past drugs were available and affordable. New drugs are neither of these, and this has had a significant impact on the fight against malaria. What is needed is a new drug which people can afford and can remain effective for a reasonable period of time.

"Everything was tasteless, and then I started vomiting," says Phoebe, describing a recent bout of malaria. "After four days I couldn't even stand."

Still weak after her illness, Phoebe, who lives in Kenya, had to walk some distance to a clinic, where she was given a blood test costing 120 shillings - "which is very expensive to me." On top of that she had to pay for the treatment. She and her children regularly get malaria, but she says they don't sleep under treated nets because she simply cannot afford to buy them.

Chilling statistics

The statistics speak for themselves: Every 20 minutes a Kenyan child below the age of five dies from malaria. Seventy per cent of the population are at risk and 30% of all hospital admissions are due to the disease, says Mrs. Anne Gichohi, who manages AMREF's (African Medical Research Foundation) Malaria Control Project. "20% of deaths in hospital are due to malaria, and young children are especially vulnerable, so malaria is a very big problem here in Kenya," she says with gentle understatement.

"The major problem is that we are rapidly running out of effective drugs. All other anti-malarial drugs available are extremely expensive. Malarone, for instance, hailed as the "wonder drug", is an effective new combination of an older compound called Proguanil and a new anti-viral called Atovoquone, but costs about £24 for a course of treatment, almost 24 times as expensive as the simple blood test people like Phoebe are already struggling to pay for.

What is urgently needed is an effective treatment that is affordable in poorer economies. Diseases like malaria are already a huge drag on development, debilitate national economies and undermine all other aid efforts.

Is there a vaccine?

The treatment of non-severe malaria is a crucial issue for public health and malaria control in Africa, says Dr Bill



WHO/TDR/LSTM

Watkins who is currently working with the Kenya Medical Research Institute funded by the Wellcome Trust.

"Certainly the long-term solution lies in a vaccine."

The problem is there is no effective vaccine on the horizon.

"We are talking about possibilities at least 10 years away. In the interim we must use drugs. Unless we can find affordable and effective ones we shall not be able to bridge that gap in controlling malaria until a vaccine appears."

One of the aims of the Kenyan research is to find out why drugs lose their efficacy so quickly. The key seems to be the rate at which drugs are eliminated from the body. Researchers are looking for a drug that will be eliminated very quickly once it has done its job because they think this will be crucial in preventing drug-resistance developing.

Dr Watkins and his Kenyan colleagues have been working on a new drug which combines two old drugs with a traditional Chinese artimisinin derivative which they think will produce an effective new treatment.

The interesting thing about this research is that the researchers are now working with a local Kenyan pharmaceutical company to try and produce the drug within 18 months. They have chosen to do this, says Dr Watson, for several reasons:

"Essentially this is a risk analysis. In Europe, drugs are tested over a very long time because most of them only increase quality of life by a relatively small margin. In Africa, and with malaria, we are talking about the difference between life and death. So the risks are different. The ethics remain the same, but the risk factor must dictate a difference in the testing process - at least that's what we think."

He argues that the risk assessment is understood more clearly in Africa, where the ravages of malaria are encountered every day, than it is in the comfortable high-tech labs of Europe or America.

That may be the case amongst educated Africans, but there's still a huge amount of ignorance about this disease and how it is spread. In many rural communities malaria is believed to be associated with eating certain fruits or drinking certain things, and there's also a strong belief that it is due to evil spirits.

"When this happens," says Anne Gichohi, "malaria becomes fear, a madness caused by evil spirits, and this makes it harder to have effective preventative campaigns."

At the community level AMREF and other organizations are looking at environmental management of breeding sites for mosquitoes. They also advocate applying repellents and sleeping under nets. Use of insecticide treated nets has proved very effective, but in themselves will not be enough to address the problem which becomes more and more complicated with time. "Although we have these tools I still believe malaria will be a major challenge in the new century," says Mrs. Gichohi.

Traditional herbal and plant remedies might hold the secret to future malaria prevention and cure, she believes. "They may not *per se* be a solution but can supplement other efforts. I think we should do research into what already exists and see whether they can provide a solution."

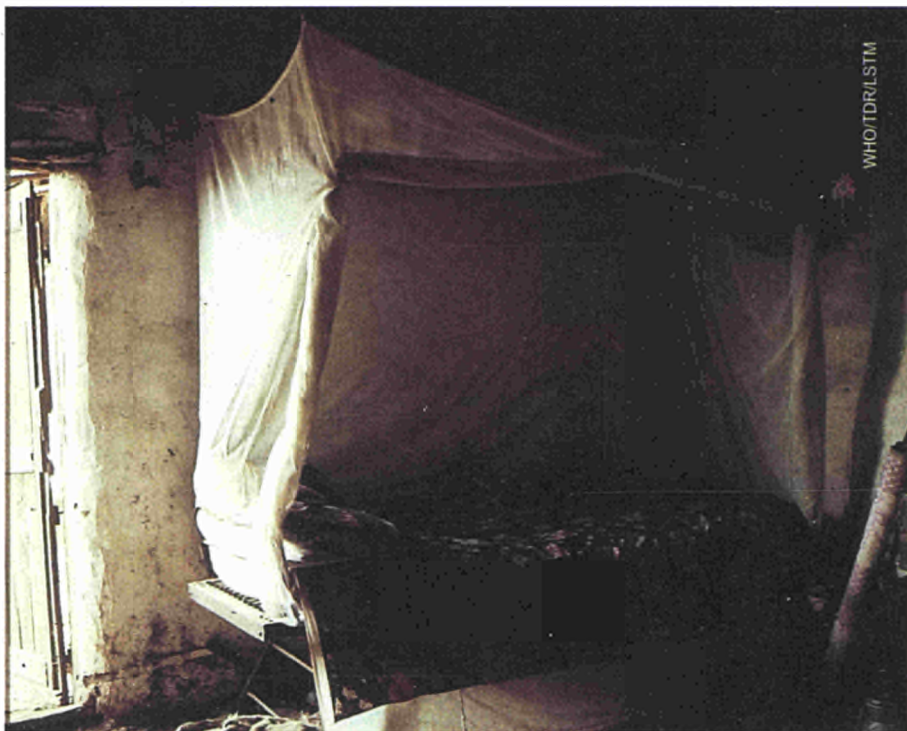
Research in Mali

Across the other side of the continent, in Mali, that's precisely what Professor Ogobara Doumbo and his team are trying to do at the Malaria Research and Training Centre in Bamako. In a high-tech lab on the edge of the city's dusty red sprawl, African scientists are trying to find an African solution to what is still largely an African disease. Specifically, they are looking at traditional herbal medicines in combination with modern medical research and in the process hope to come up with a new solution to an ancient problem. This is a golden chance for developing an African solution to an African problem and there are many scientists in Africa who are very keen to do this.

AIDS is more profitable

Despite the work being done in isolated labs in Mali, Kenya and other parts of Africa, much of the scientific effort that once went into malaria has now been deflected into the more glamorous - and ultimately more profitable - search for an AIDS vaccine. Nevertheless, Dr Omu

An anopheles mosquito, a vector of the parasite that causes malaria, taking a blood meal through human skin



Bednet in The Gambia, (with entry flaps open). Sleeping inside one of these is so far one of the best ways to avoid being bitten by a malaria-carrying mosquito

Artemisia annua, the plant from which artemisinin, the active component of a new class of antimalarials, has been identified. The plant, which grows in various parts of the world, has been used for centuries by traditional healers in China to combat fever. *A. annua* is now being grown experimentally in several countries. These plants are under cultivation at the Swiss Federal Agriculture Station, Nyon, Switzerland. From the left: plants from Turkey, Argentina, USA, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania and China, right

Anzala, a lecturer in the department of medical microbiology at the University of Nairobi, believes there have been some mutual benefits. He is involved with a joint project with Oxford University which plans this year to undertake phase one trials of a new HIV vaccine developed from the work done to explore the DNA of Kenyan prostitutes who have been found to be HIV resistant despite their high-risk profession.

A few years ago immunology was the Cinderella of medical research, says Dr Anzala. "In the last 10 to 12 years we have found out so much about how the immune system responds to infectious diseases. We have reached the point now where we are talking of DNA vaccine against HIV. But the spin-off to other things is tremendous. We are now also talking of possible vaccines against malaria and cervical cancer."

Dr Anzala is optimistic that these possibilities will become reality sooner rather than later. "What I predict for this new millennium and beyond is there will be many new vaccines on the horizon capable of preventing infectious diseases and various malignan-

cies. That's the future as I see it. DNA vaccines may seem mysterious now, but in the new millennium they will become commonplace. We are at the cutting edge because we are talking about a designer vaccine to suit the condition."

The cutting edge cannot come soon enough for the Kenyan babies who are currently dying from malaria every 20

minutes. The ugly truth is that multinational pharmaceutical companies are no longer interested in expensive research on tropical diseases like malaria, not because they lack the scientific skills, but because they think there would not be sufficient commercial return to warrant it. Whilst thousands of new drugs have been developed in recent years, a

mere one per cent have been for tropical diseases.

The question is do the multinational drug companies have a moral duty to people like Phoebe - whose pockets are empty but needs are great - as well as a commercial and monetary duty to their shareholders - and who will try to ensure that this duty is responsibly met?



EU working with NGOs

The European Commission approved new General Conditions for cofinancing operations in developing countries and operations to raise awareness in Europe on development issues on 7 January 2000.

This suspends all new requests for co-financing while procedures are being worked out for going from the old to the new conditions.

Both documents and much other useful information, including a helpline, may be downloaded from the Sectoral Policies part of DG Development's new home page devoted to development NGOs and decentralised cooperation:

English:

http://europe.eu.int/comm/development/sector/ong_en.htm

French:

http://europe.eu.int/comm/development/sector/ong_fr.htm

Helpline for individual applications:

+32.2.299.6911

NGO interest in Pacific Region

The European Commission is deep in discussion about a new dialogue initiative, the Meso Policy, which is aimed at stimulating NGOs to become more active in the Pacific Region either the regional ones, or the European ones who think the Caribbean is too far away to concern them.

Human Rights in Africa - something to shout about?

The situation regarding human rights in Africa continues to arouse a great deal of concern in several countries, according to the *Africa Research Bulletin*. NGOs are increasingly anxious that firm action should be taken. Last November, in Kigali, Rwanda, the 26th ACHPR (African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights) working session ended with a 26-point statement that denounced the abuses in countries under armed conflict — such as summary justice, inhuman prison conditions, mass movement of people, forced disappearances, and violations of individual human rights, particularly for women, children, the elderly and the disabled.

Fact-finding missions will be sent to Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya and Sierra Leone. A draft ACHPR protocol on women's rights in Africa is to be sent to the secretariat of the OAU with a request for further action.

The 27th Session of the ACHPR will be held in Algeria on 27 April - 11 May 2000. A surprise bid to host the planned African court on human rights has been made by the Prime Minister of Rwanda - where the highest order of violations was witnessed in 1994.

Drug control Mission in South Africa

The darker side of South Africa's economic growth is that drug trafficking is on the increase. Not just in locally-grown cannabis, but also in expensive imports of crack, cocaine and heroin. There are strong links to corruption and illegal immigration. Worse still is the link between drug abuse and the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS.

With the help of some EU funding, a five-year project is about to start in South Africa in Spring 2000, to provide legal and technical education on drug control, research, capacity-building and law-enforcement training.

The project is co-funded by the EDF and the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development (EPRD). It will be an integral part of the Regional Drug Control Programme already in place for the Southern African Developing Countries (SADC).

Activities will include workshops on the UN Drug Control Conventions, and on the legal effects of illicit drugs on corruption and money-laundering. Law officers and rehabilitation professionals will receive training. Forensic laboratories will be strengthened and serious research carried out into the links between illicit drugs and HIV/AIDS.

Information from Brian Kelly, DG Development

Environment Prize to CODEFF Chile project

The 1999 UNEP Environment Prize *Saving the Drylands*, worth €33,000, has been awarded to an EU-subsidised project in Chile. It is being managed by CODEFF, the *Comité Nacional pro Defensa de la Fauna y Flora* which has been going since 1968, and has 4,000 members. It has programmes on biodiversity, forestry, environment and social affairs.

The project was one of 25 selected from more than 100 candidates as a model to initiate the management of drylands.

Tel: +56 2 251 0262

Young people without borders

A youth association in Burkina Faso looks for sponsorship from Europe. The *Association des Jeunes Sans Frontières* (AJSF) unites young people of all races and religions in the fight for social justice.

AJSF campaigns to reduce the misery of street children by finding them jobs in agriculture. It draws attention to the need to improve living conditions for the sick, especially those in great poverty. Its

members help local associations to eradicate epidemics. It mobilises young people, particularly those in rural areas, to fight against desertification by reafforestation and measures to halt soil erosion. In agricultural off-seasons, AJSF finds local work to keep people on their lands rather than drifting off to townships.

Further information:

David@hotmail.com

Fight the fog! Write clearly!



International legal texts are often full of long rambling sentences, repetition, jargon words and the excessive use of the passive tense. This fogs up their meaning.

Therefore it is not surprising that such texts are hard to understand and even harder to translate.

"Nine out of 10 people at international level are writing in a foreign language," explains Wolfgang Ohm of the European Commission's Translation Service. "For us, every extra word in the text is multiplied by 11 as we

translate it into the other EU languages. If the meaning is not clear to start with, you can imagine how easy it is to end up with 12 different versions."

Fight the Fog is a lighthearted campaign started by the Translation Service to train authors to express themselves more clearly. Here are a few of their tips:

- think logically and put the reader first,
- use verbs instead of nouns,
- use the active tense instead of the passive, wherever possible,
- use everyday language, preferring short words to longer ones.

See Noticeboard on Page 89

Medecins sans Frontières into action against killer diseases



Nobel Peace Prize money in hand, MSF is rapidly developing its campaign for Access to Essential Medicines from a new office in Geneva, run by Bernard Pécoul. He confirms that the much-publicised new

Neglected Diseases Fund will be part of the campaign, and insists that the campaign, officially launched in 1999, is wider in scope.

It was essential to focus world attention on the major killer tropical diseases that had taken hold in countries that had suffered from years of armed conflict. Sleeping sickness, for instance, is one major worry. The tsetse fly is back. By the 1980s it was eradicated, but post conflict conditions in Africa have resulted in more than 300,000 victims. There is no vaccine, only injections of Pentamidine at \$1,200 a treatment, effective in the early stages. For the later stages, when the trypanosome parasite reaches the brain, 25 days of extremely painful intravenous injections of Melarsprol cost \$100 per patient. This was first used in 1947, contains arsenic and kills 5% of all who receive it. But there is no research into less dangerous and less painful treatments that would be easier and cheaper to administer. This was denounced by James Orbinski, President of MSF's International Council.

"Life-saving essential medicines are either too expensive or are not available because they are not seen as financially viable. This market failure is our next challenge."

New Website for ACP Horticulture

COLEACP is the Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee, a private association set up in 1973 under the aegis of the European Commission. It promotes horticultural exports such as tropical fruits, off-season vegetables, flowers, ornamental plants and spices.

Professional exporters and importers want to make COLEACP

better-known, to extend its network of members, and to build up confidence amongst trading partners. Current members come from Dominica, Madagascar, Gambia, Jamaica and Zambia, and also Germany, the Netherlands and the UK.

The new website (in English and French) can be found at:

<http://www.coleacp.org>

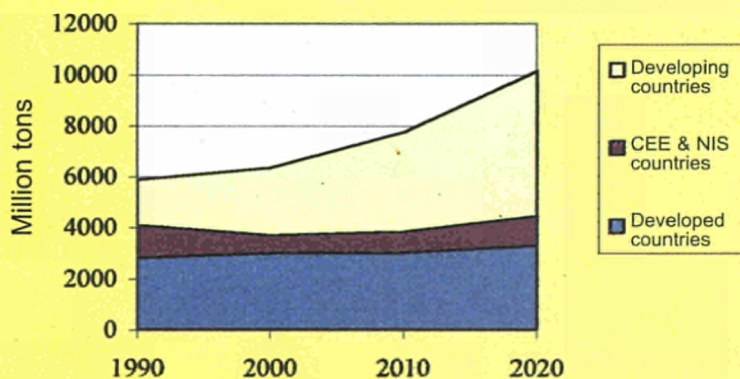
e-mail: coleacp@coleacp.org

Kyoto Protocol

Now that over 80 countries have ratified the Kyoto Protocol, the EU is pressing for it to enter into force in 2002, the 10th anniversary of the Rio Summit. A great deal remains to be cleared up at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties, COP6 in The Hague on 13-14 November 2000.

The previous session, COP5 in Buenos Aires, concentrated on finalising all the technical procedures and guidelines destined for adoption in The Hague. This covers a range of capacity-building measures for non-Annex 1 countries, including project-based mechanisms and the training of new professionals. But progress on more concrete assistance already pledged by the Annex 1 countries will have to await the outcome of the Katmandu discussions next March on the new IPCC special report on technology transfer. OPEC has blocked all discussions of additional funding for adaptation and compensation for damage, but alternative routes might be found through linkages with other development aid schemes.

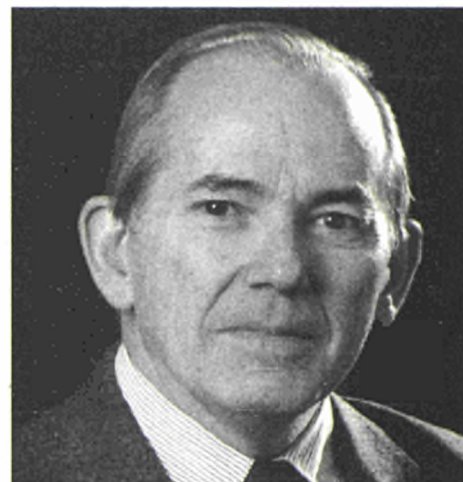
Figure 1: The development of world carbon emissions by region, 1990-2020 *



* It is assumed that Annex B meets the Kyoto target collectively while other Parties evolve according to reference case.

Source: European Commission, DG XII using the POLES model, 1999.

IMF - who wins?



Michel Camdessus (above) steps down in February during his third term as Managing Director of the IMF. Of the four front runners to take over (one German, one French, one British and one Israeli) there is no clear favourite. Nor is it clear when, where or how governments will decide between them. Every effort is being made to avoid the same long struggle as happened at the WTO.

A strong person is needed at the top. The US Treasury Department has challenged the social and ethical role the IMF has assumed under Camdessus. The Americans believe that the IMF should no longer impose conditions of good governance before handing money over as loans, which the Europeans want to continue. Instead, they want the IMF to go back to its original role of economic advisor to governments, who would themselves take the decisions on loans and debt relief.

The IMF Managing Director comes by tradition from Europe. But US backing is needed. Since all candidates follow the Camdessus line, there could be a long wait. Meanwhile it is likely that Stanley Fischer, the first Deputy Managing Director, will be acting Head of IMF for some time.

Natural Resource Management - People's Perspectives

Increasing emphasis is being given to the integration of differing types of knowledge for the successful management of natural resources. In combining social and technical approaches, this intensive four week course is intended to give practitioners and policy-makers a variety of frameworks and social development methods that can be applied within the context of Natural Resource Management.

Themes include:

- social and environmental impact analysis
- common property resource management
- sustainable livelihoods framework
- gender analysis
- critical evaluation of participation concepts
- participatory monitoring and evaluation

It takes place at the Centre for Development Studies (CDS), University of Wales, Swansea, UK, from 8 May until 2 June 2000. The fee (including accommodation, tuition and trips) is £3,890. (=€6,304.70)

CDS is also running four and 10-week courses from March - June 2000 on subjects including:
Monitoring and Evaluation with Impact Assessment
Critical Approaches to Participation
Working with Civil Society Organisations
Gender
Children's Rights and Participation

Information from the Admissions Secretary

CDS
University of Wales,
Swansea SA2 8PP, UK
Tel: 00 44 1792 295332;
Fax: 00 44 1792 295682
e-mail: development.
short.courses@swansea.ac.uk

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

10th quadrennial session

UNCTAD X has as its main objective the equitable sharing of the benefits of globalisation across the world. It will offer governments an opportunity to debate, in a non-confrontational climate, solutions to the problems created by globalisation. It is intended that the Conference pave the way for international action, based on a common understanding of the problems and prospects. It will benefit from ideas and proposals put forward by NGOs and other segments of civil society, as well as the business community, and heads of specialised international agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF and WTO. 1990 countries are members of UNCTAD. Most will be represented at ministerial level.

Pan African Symposium on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

The Second Panafrican Symposium on the use of natural resources in Africa will be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on 24 -29 July 2000. This is a joint event run by IUCN and the African Resources Trust (ART), a southern African NGO headquartered in Zimbabwe and South Africa. The symposium will be opened by the Environment Minister, and is intended for people who work in wildlife, natural conservation and biodiversity such as government agencies, NGOs, donor community and local development organisations.

The EU-Africa

Summit will take place

on 3 - 4 April in Cairo to

adopt a Declaration and Plan of Action.

Further information

is available on the Web

Site:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/whatsnew.htm>

Please use these pages...

The Courier welcomes input on all aspects of development for the News and Noticeboard Pages.

Any information to be considered for inclusion should be sent to The Editor:

sylvia.howe@cec.eu.int.
The next issue of the Courier will come out in April, so copy should be received by the end of February.

Noticeboard

publicises courses, seminars, meetings, workshops and so on. The News pages are for short articles about development activities within the EU and outside.

Fight the Fog Campaign

Useful advice on how to write clearly and effectively and a booklet are available on:
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/translation/en/fffog/index.html>

Towards a new agriculture?

The crisis facing agriculture at the dawn of the twenty-first century is all the more acute in that it concerns an economic sector which produces most of our food and supports 70% of the populations of countries in the southern hemisphere.

In this issue, *Défis Sud* [Southern Challenges] airs the views of those working at grass-roots level and specialists in the field. Particular emphasis is also given to the reactions of Latin-America, African and Indian farming organisations suggesting viable alternatives to an excess of free enterprise.

One section focuses on the question of geographical diversity in agriculture, looking at the problem of land in Latin America, African rent crops, the disappearance of small farms in the United States, day-to-day life for the Chinese agricultural workforce and the counter-reformation in Egypt.

Finally, two stockbreeders give their reactions to the recent scandals of mad cow disease and dioxin.

Défis Sud, a special issue on the challenges facing agriculture in the twenty-first century

Published by the NGO SOS Faim, this special issue of *Défis Sud* is available on request, free of charge, from SOS Faim:

Fax: + 32 2 514 47 77

Email: info@sosfaim.be

For information, the other issues of *Défis Sud* are shown on SOS Faim's website at www.sosfaim.be under the heading *Défis Sud*.

Cotton: white gold in the service of economic growth

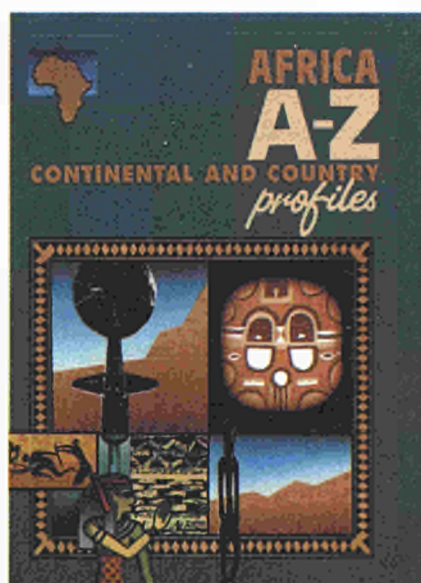
1949-99: This special edition is a celebration of 50 years of the CFDT (French Company for the Development of Textile Fibres). For half a century, the CFDT has been working to develop savannah areas and cotton plantations, starting in sub-Saharan Africa and then expanding into other parts of the world. Various questions are addressed regarding, for example, the role of technology in the increasing yields of cotton crops and the effects of worldwide cotton consumption on the textile industry. This special issue also

pays homage to the partners of the CFDT, particularly the African cotton companies. There is also mention of Europe's contribution to the development of cotton-growing areas in Africa.

Coton et développement, Cotton and Development. Cinquante ans d'action cotonnière au service du développement

Coton et Développement, 13 rue de Monceau, 75008 Paris, published by the company

150 FF + 20 FF postage, ISSN 0396-5740, 135 pages



In search of a 'third way'

This work looks at the conflict of interests which is at the root of the problem of democracy and development. There is nothing innocent or accidental about the introduction of democracy by means of batons, threats and sanctions. On the contrary, it is the result of a clever orchestration which, according to the author, is part of a politics of self-interest by virtue of which the West has exploited and subjugated the African continent. He cites, in particular, slavery, colonisation and the cold war, not forgetting rivalry between Francophones and Anglophones, tribalism and also the new emergent diseases.

The author points out that it is because it has not been based on economic growth, which is the absolute precondition for its success, that democratisation has often

degenerated into ethnic conflict, *coups d'état* and bloody wars, thanks to which the continent has gone backwards rather than forwards over the last eight years. David Junior mounts a crusade against Afro-pessimism, advocating an African way towards development - the only way he considers capable of curbing the universal conflict of interests. He thus suggests that Africans pursue a third way, aided by their assumption of responsibility for their own destiny, the establishment of a democracy halfway between the single party and multiparty systems and, finally, economic growth centred on a return to the basics, namely agriculture, literacy, the village and so on.

Quand l'Afrique s'éveillera (When Africa wakes up) by the journalist David F. Junior. Editions Nouvelles du Sud, 46 rue Barbès, 94200 Ivry-sur-Seine - Silex/Nouvelles du Sud BP6250 Yaounde, Cameroon; 224 pages; ISBN: 2-87931-109-8

The Facts about Africa

The third in a trilogy making up the Africa Institute Educational Service, which provides teaching material in schools and other educational institutions. The first section deals with the continent as a whole, illustrated by maps and graphs. These chapters highlight its physical and human diversity, its fascinating history and economic activities, but also deal with the features, interests and problems of a huge and rapidly-increasing population that is fragmented into a multitude of political entities. The second section presents profiles from the continent's 53 countries in alphabetical order. These are supplemented by maps. Extremely useful for anyone who needs to know facts about all the countries. Data panels contain more than 100 facts on each one.

Africa A-Z, Continental and country profiles

Researched and published by the Africa Institute of South Africa, PO Box 630, Pretoria 0001, South Africa, Tel: +27 12 328 6970, Fax: +2712 323 8153, Email: africain@iafrica.com

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When all trace of humanity has been swept from the beaches of Vanuatu by the tide, only a few leaves and some shells remain, and strange red and brown husks dotted about in the white sand. Navel wood (*navel wud* in Bislama) falls from a tree the Polynesians simply call Tamanu. It conceals a nut whose oil is exported to Tahiti, but the locals also use it in an inventive fishing technique. They make a hollow in the sand and delicately place it there. Fish are swept in at high tide and get caught in the trap. Prolonged exposure to salt water causes the nut to give off a substance which sends its captives to sleep and so the villagers help themselves to the fish they need for their meal and leave it to the sea to wake up any which are, for the moment, reprieved.



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