

A D D R E S S

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY ABDOU DIOUF,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL  
AND LEADER OF THE SOCIALIST  
DEMOCRATIC INTER-AFRICAN

Dear Countries,

After its first session, held in Dakar, on 11 and 12 July 1988, the General Council of the Socialist Democratic Inter-African is holding today its second annual meeting, in Cairo, as stipulated by the rules of procedure of our Organization.

This auspicious occasion which assembles us in Egypt, close to the Pyramids that bear eternal witness to a flourishing civilization thousands of years old which strongly influenced the development of our mother Africa, "IFRIQUIYA", and that the world at large, is for us tantamount to a pilgrimage to the cradle of humanity.

The various delegations to this General Council as well as ourselves have been greatly touched by the warm and fraternal hospitality afforded us. I wish, in this connection to convey my sincere thanks to my brother and friend President Hosni Mubarak, Leader of the National Democratic Party (NDP).

Dear Comrades,

Since the IV Congress of the Socialist Inter-African held in Tunis, on 31 January 1988, our Organization has soared qualitatively by reaffirming its ideology; Democratic Socialism, and above all, making an outward looking policy the main pivot of its political process.

In this respect, we deem Democratic Socialism to be the paramount instrument for the development of our countries and the liberation of our peoples from all forms of exploitation and alienation.

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But, what is the concept of Democratic Socialism ?

When we apply this concept of Democratic Socialism we wish to emphasize our concern to combine social justice with liberty, individuality with collectivity, indeed community, culture and science:

Democratic Socialism aims at building up the African man socially and spiritually, it also aims at establishing a balanced and planned development that allows for a rational exploitation of national resources in the interest of the local populations. That is to say, a movement which categorically rejects all forms of exploitation of one man or one people by another.

Viewed from such an angle, our socialism is a mode of action rather than a doctrine, which has as its object the development of man in all fields, on the basis of two major principles: rationality, and, accordingly, efficiency on the one hand, and social justice, which itself is founded on human solidarity, on the other.

Based on this ideological foundation, the Socialist Democratic Inter-African has rejected sectarianism by opening up to other African parties whether claiming socialism or democracy. However, whether they be socialist democratic, democratic socialist or merely democratic, the main point is that African parties have as their major objective, the promotion of the economic, social and cultural development of their respective states, and the safeguarding of liberties and human rights.

The Socialist and Democratic Inter-African is particularly open to and takes account of the African political realities, enriching itself from the diversity, differences and complementarily of all African parties which accept to set forth

with us on a great human adventure, that of the liberation of our peoples and the development of our countries through economic integration and solidarity.

Our message has been heard. To this day, several sister African parties have accepted to join the big African family of socialists and democrats thereby allowing our Organisation to become stronger, more unified and better prepared to fully assume its role for development, democratization, the defence and the promotion of African culture.

Thus the Social Democratic Inter-African, having re-adjusted its doctrinal orientation readies itself on the eve of the Third millenium to deal with the serious economic challenges that face our continent.

At economic level, the situation in Africa in particular, and at the level of the Third World in general, is obviously the major preoccupation of the world at the end of this century. How can we live in happiness and peace in the year 2000 in a world populated by six billion persons and composed of a minority of "rich and a majority of poor"? How can we continue to allow that eight out of ten men do not participate in the great movement of the material, technical, social and human progress of our constantly developing world?

These inequalities raise the acute problem of the development of the Third World and level a real challenge to intelligence and imagination.

Experts in the North and the South have, undoubtedly, made a wrong assessment in thinking that the systems applied by the industrialized North could serve as models for the development of the South.

There are so many psychological, sociological and natural differences, so many operational and political difficulties,

so many outdated ideologies that perturb the mind of decision-makers that it is evident that their naive hope of making up for lost time by initiating patterns of development is mere illusion.

After an experience of over a quarter century, the majority of African States are confronted by a soaring indebtedness detrimental to development policies adopted here and there on the continent.

In fact the 109 countries of the Third World covered by the study of the World Bank are settling, the debts in excess of what they receive. Such "net negative transfers" exceeded \$US 11 billion, in 1984, \$US 26 billion in 1985 and \$US 29 billion in 1986, which turn our countries into net exporters of capital.

In 1986, developing countries showed an increase in their GNP.

For once Africa, in 1986, was an exception in the right direction by achieving, for the first time, a growth rate of 4.9%, a rate higher than that of its demographic growth, during the past eight years.

Comrades,

The Socialist Democratic Inter-African should always reflect intelligence, creative imagination and active solidarity in devising an original course for the development of Africa.

In that context, I will attempt to outline the broadlines of a plan of action that I will call the Cairo Plan of Action which could revolve around three proposals.

I. The Establishment of Large  
Development Communities in Africa

Africa has understood that its development must take place through the establishment of large, viable economic communities, such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States, of East African States, of North African States, known as the Great Maghreb, and of Southern African States which will include South Africa when Apartheid will be eradicated from our continent.

One must, primarily, emphasize the extreme importance of periodic meetings of Heads of State called for by the structure of such communities. These meetings allow Heads of State to take increasing note of their true problems and real difficulties. Moreover, the presence of permanent administrative community organs as well as study and management bodies will make it possible to work out a coherent development plan for the continent, transcending the micro-frontiers, mostly bequeathed by the colonial era.

Such a policy should eliminate a great many development obstacles, namely, illiteracy, population health problems, food deficiency, energy shortages, under-production, ecological deterioration, industrialisation and problems of the political management of development.

This framework should also make it possible for us to negotiate a fair remuneration for our raw materials.

II. A New Concept  
of the World Order

This concept would be based on solidarity and cooperation within a context of mutual respect for ideologies and cultures. From this premise, the Non-Aligned Movement is a suitable framework for our countries, given its principles of political, economic, social and cultural independence.

III. Urgent Organisation  
of Tomorrow's Rural World  
to Provide a Decent Life and Well-Being  
for Two Billion Men, Women and Children

On this earth, one out of two men are peasants who, more often than not, are nationals of the Third World. In the year 2000 or 2005, according to World Bank estimates, one out of two men shall still be working in the fields of the Third World, in particular, which will then be inhabited by a population of three billion. That is to say that in this same world, one out of two men are born, live and die on the margin of the modern world. For them, quite often, there are no schools, hospitals, technical progress or hope for the improvement of his living conditions.

The temptation - quite often a mirage - consists of an exodus to the towns which engenders the hideous development of shanty town around the capitals of the Third World.

In order to resolve this complex and pre-occupying problem, the rural world should be differently organized by laying emphasis on the village community which underlies any development. Decisions pertaining to the rural world should be decentralised and made in village communities themselves. The villages must transform themselves into communities, master of their own destinies.

Comrades,

In conclusion, I wish, once again, to lay special emphasis on the economic situation in Africa which calls upon us all. It is through our unanimous strive of active solidarity, creativity and determination that we will be able to reverse the present trend.

"Tomorrow should not be awaited but invented", to quote the saying of Gaston Berger. Let us look into the future to build it better.

Long Live the Socialist Democratic  
Inter-African

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