

Joint Solidarity Statement by Asian and African CSO's to our Governments, Development Partners and the International Community, September 18th, 2007

We, representatives of African and Asian Civil Society Organisations (CSO's) having met in Nairobi, Kenya from the 17-18th September 2007 to discuss development cooperation and, in the spirit of international solidarity have issued this joint statement to reflect our common consensus, aspirations and goals.

We recognise that our societies and people continue to suffer from poverty and hunger, unemployment, social inequalities, skewed economic growth and bad governance. This is caused by a combination of local and international factors directed by local elites, governments of developed countries and multilateral financial and trade institutions.

To make matters worse, efforts of the international donor community to address the above situation have fallen short of stated goals while in effect, exacerbating the ills they were meant to rectify. We submit that the current framework for Official Development Assistance (ODA) is inadequate as it fails to focus on the historical wrongs committed under colonialism and the contemporary experience of economic dependency of developing countries on developed states. Consequently, it is necessary to establish new bases of collaboration to significantly increase ODA effectiveness in favour of African and Asian development.

To that end we want to reiterate the following:

- Include CSO's/NGO's in country development as partners; governance of NGO's and citizens' participation must be added values to government policy for the development of Asian and African countries. The involvement of non-state actors like CBO's, NGO's/CSO's, trade unions and associations must be included in the development, implementation and the follow up evaluation of projects and programs financed by the donors.
- Governments should carefully develop national policies and analyse all development policies, including trade, and should strengthen their capacity in these endeavours. NGO's/CSO's should re-position themselves through capacity development in meaningful engagement with stakeholders, policy formulation and analysis, monitoring, evaluation and staff development. Regional Economic Blocs should be strengthened to create more space for active engagement with NGO's and CSO's. The G8 must renew the community method using an approach that is generally based on the African and Asian countries' aspirations and not based on those of their summit.
- Bring down the loan component and align aid with Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and other international protocols
- Maximise international platforms (G8 Summit in Tokyo, and to promote African - Asia Networking Group's advocacy on ODA

- Obligate donor countries to meet the ODA-GNI ratio of at least 0.7 percent within a definite timeline.
- African and Asian CSO's should develop the capacity to be able to analyze general state and donors budgets and follow up the recommendations
- Secure broad-based ownership of development programmes through collectives determinations of priorities
- Democratise sub-regional economic blocs and strengthen engagement of and with NGO's/CSO's
- Give greater support for capability-building programmes for NGO's/CSO's to achieve higher degrees of professionalism, legitimacy, accountability, transparency and autonomy
- Establish African- Asia Network Platform and a global fund for the development priorities of Asian and African societies and peoples especially, indigenous people
- Work towards a strategic action plan for the integration of Asia and Africa into the global capital market based on principles of equal access, mutual benefit, and sustainable development.
- Reject environmentally damaging projects especially those dealing with deforestation, logging where poor peoples livelihoods are affected, dams and mining where whole populations are relocated adversely affecting their Environmental, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)
- Democratize the voting system and the appointments procedure within the World Bank Group
- Cancel all odious and illegitimate debt owed by Asia and Africa because the donor countries know that it was not used for the intended purpose; it's a known fact that most of the resources were used to suppress their own people
- The International Community to do their utmost best genuinely towards the stability of Asia and Africa
- Get International NGOs to work through genuine local CBO's, NGOs/CSO's coalitions in Asian and African countries
- Invest genuinely in pro-poor, private sector led activities that will bring genuine, sustainable and equitable economic growth including in the informal sector
- Better and quality aid must not be limited to service delivery but it must form the basis for subsidy especially to small scale farmers in Asia and Africa.
- Support environmental CBO's, NGOs/ CSO's, etc.
- Open Japanese institutions to Africans and Asians including but not limited to research institutes, universities, technical vocational institutes for the assimilation of knowledge that made Japan an industrial giant in merely 60 years: we want to replicate that knowledge in Africa
- Provide short internships, training programmes and cultural exchanges and joint projects

- Support the Civic Commission for Africa (C-CfA) by setting up an operational African head office within Africa as soon as possible in collaboration with TCSF members

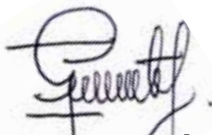
Conclusion

In light of the above, we, the representatives of civil society organisations from Asia and Africa pledge our total commitment and support to development initiatives that would:

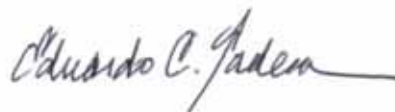
1. Recognise people as centre and owners of development
2. Recognise civil society organisations as complementary partners to development.
3. Recognise civil society organisations as credible partners.
4. Make flexible and adequate resources available to civil society organisations including the Civic Commission for Africa (C-CfA)

Further, we commit ourselves to:

1. Engage our various organisations in Asia and Africa in meaningful and fruitful networking activities
2. Promote good practice among and between our civil societies.
3. Reach out to Latin American civil society organisations



Gustave Assah
Chairman, C-CfA



Eduardo C. Tadem, Ph.D.
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Dated this 18th day of September 2007, Nairobi, Kenya