

WORLD GOODWILL

NEWSLETTER

A quarterly bulletin combining comment and information on world affairs with details of the work and programme of World Goodwill

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AFRICA: CRISIS AND NEW LIFE

As we prepare this issue of the Newsletter the world's media is, yet again, reporting the story of famine, drought and human misery in Africa. The 1980s saw the continent plunged into ever-increasing economic, political, social and environmental crises. For Africa the eighties was the decade of the AIDS epidemic, of wars, coups d'état and ethnic strife, of corrupt government, accelerating deforestation and desertification, and of crippling debt (in 1978 Africa's external debt stood at US\$48.3 million; by 1988 it had jumped to US\$230 billion, over 80% of the region's GDP).

A report of the World Summit for Children says that "the proportion of urban and rural Africans afflicted by poverty is close to 75 per cent. According to UNDP's Human Development Report 1990, 33 out of 44 countries with the lowest human development index — a rating that combines measures of life expectancy, adult literacy, and the purchasing power needed to satisfy basic needs — are in Africa. Average government expenditures for education and health have declined from an estimated 25 per cent in 1986 to around 18 per cent in 1989".

Against this background of crisis and suffering there is today a spirit of goodwill that is sweeping through the continent. It brings with it a determination to build a new Africa based on freedom and accountability, on the creativity and will of the people, and on the unity of the region. In her book on the Green Belt Movement, Wangari Maathai makes the point that this new consciousness is not peculiar to Africa, but is part of an emerging global awareness that "everything on the planet shares a common destiny".

Bearing in mind the planetary nature of this transformation it is not surprising that the forces of freedom and democracy, which have been so evident in Eastern Europe, are also very much at work in Africa. Namibia's recent independence, with a constitution that guarantees human rights and freedoms, is one obvious example. In South Africa the process of ending apartheid and introducing a constitution that makes all people equal before the law is an even more significant demonstration of the transforming effect of these forces. The widespread debate throughout the continent about the relative merits of multi-party democracy and alternative, indigenous forms that guarantee grass-roots participation in government is yet another sign.

In this issue of the Newsletter we feature some of the inspiring expressions of the new consciousness encountered by World Goodwill representatives in a recent visit to Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa. (A report of the tour is available on request from World Goodwill). We were deeply moved by the enthusiasm, spiritual dedication and hospitality met with throughout the tour, especially at the various meetings organised by World Goodwill/Lucis Trust. In the work of mobilising the spirit of goodwill in humanity it is clear that Africa has a special role to play. Alice Bailey has spoken of the "amazing contribution" of "spiritual assets, cultural and creative possibilities" which the continent has to make. There is evidence of this spiritual awakening in the vision and work of those featured in this focus on *Africa: Crisis and New Life*.

GENERAL OLUSEGUN OBASANJO TALKS TO WORLD GOODWILL ABOUT THE AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM

General Olusegun Obasanjo is one of Africa's leading statesmen. From 1976 to 1977 he was head of state in the federal military government of Nigeria, and in 1979 he supervised the transfer of leadership in the country to an elected civilian government. During his time as head of state the General helped to raise the level of agricultural production in Nigeria through 'Operation Feed the Nation'. His interest and involvement in agricultural development has continued and he now runs a large model farm.

Since leaving office in 1979 General Obasanjo has devoted his energies to continental and global issues. He has served on the Independent (Palme) Commission on Disarmament and Security, is an active member of the Inter-Action Council of Former Heads of Government and, in 1986, was appointed co-chair of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons which sought to initiate a dialogue with the South African government on the ending of apartheid. In 1990 he was the joint recipient of the Hunger Project's Africa Prize for Leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger. He has a passionate concern to stimulate the development of dynamic and effective leadership in Africa and, towards this end, he founded the Africa Leadership Forum in 1988.

Leaders in Africa

Late last year World Goodwill representatives visited General Obasanjo at his farm at Ota. We began our conversation by asking what inspired him to form the Africa Leadership Forum. "When I was in government," he told us, "I observed that leaders in all walks of life in Africa were making three serious mistakes. There were, firstly, mistakes of omission and, secondly, what you might call mistakes of commission. And, lastly, I observed that African leaders, by and large, spend excessive amounts of their time on political survival and personal security whereas in other societies leaders spend most of their time on economic and development issues. Now I just want to make this last observation, and then say no more about it."

"Mistakes of omission are the sort of mistakes that people genuinely make as a result of inadequate experience, inadequate exposure, because they don't know any better." The lack of experienced leaders was, for the General, a major problem during his years as head of state. Thus, for example, while he could find highly skilled pilots, or people with other skills, in Nigeria Airways it was extremely difficult to find a strong, visionary manager for the airline. And the problem in Nigeria Airways was repeated in most areas of society. "I needed people who were good, people of probity, people of intelligence and vision, but also people with experience and exposure. Most African leaders are inadequately prepared for their leadership positions in comparison to other societies. Since leaving public office I have found that this experience has been confirmed again

and again. These are the mistakes of omission that African leadership suffers from, and which I thought we could do something about."

"We can also do something about the mistakes of commission. These are the mistakes that leaders commit knowingly, either for personal advancement, for family benefit, for the benefit of their locality and so on. And this problem in leadership can be solved if you can achieve a reorientation, a change of attitude. That's what is needed.

My idea was to establish the Africa Leadership Forum mainly to enhance leadership performance and leadership achievement in Africa generally. But, of course, if Africa is improved, the world is improved."

Bringing people together

"How does the Forum seek to transform and develop the quality of leadership in Africa? The main idea is to work with incumbent leaders and with potential leaders, to expose them to a wide range of issues affecting Africa as a whole, to enable them to get to know each other and to broaden their understanding of the challenges and crises facing modern Africa. Leaders and policy makers are brought together in informal, international gatherings to reflect on African problems. Up and coming leaders from all walks of life (government, finance, industry, agriculture, education and so on) are given the opportunity to meet and interact with accomplished leaders and visionaries from Africa and other parts of the world".

Through these interactions it is hoped that "some of the qualities, some of the experiences, of accomplished leaders will rub off onto the future leaders". And, the General told us, there is another aim as well. Future leaders from across the continent "will interact among themselves and come to know themselves on a first-name basis".

It is difficult for non-Africans to acknowledge how important this is, both for the long-term education of future leaders and for the development of regional integration. At present there is little contact between African states, and there is often little personal interaction between different groups within each country. As the General said, "you have to get to know each other to break a number of barriers, prejudices, biases and inertia".

Since 1988 the Africa Leadership Forum has been extremely active in bringing leaders and potential leaders together to consider major African development issues and in following up deliberations with concrete projects. In the inaugural programme, at Ota, in Nigeria, a high-level gathering considered the Challenges of Leadership in African Development. Papers were presented by, amongst others, President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria; former German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt; Nobel prize-winning novelist,

Wole Soyinka; UN Under-Secretary, General Adebayo Adedeji; and former Bangladesh Finance and Planning Minister, A. M. A. Muhith. The papers were widely distributed in Africa. The inaugural meeting produced a number of recommendations for future action to stimulate leadership in Africa. These included a proposal to establish an African Centre for Policy and Strategic Studies — there is at present no continental think-tank for long range studies. The Leadership Forum is taking this proposal further and the General told us that he is giving one-half of the money he received with the Hunger Project Award to “actualise the creation of such a centre”. The inaugural meeting also proposed a journal on African leadership issues “to present positive role models on leadership”. In February this year, the Africa Leadership Forum launched its journal, *Africa Forum*, in London. The first issue includes articles by Salim Ahmed Salim (OAU Secretary-General), an interview with Julius Nyerere, an article on women writers in Africa and much more.

A number of high-level meetings have been held by the Forum since 1988. These have included a meeting in Brussels on ‘The Impact of Europe in 1992 on West Africa’. The very frank discussions between 40 leading European and African policy makers have now been published in a book. Later in 1989 a conference in Ota, addressed by former U.S President Jimmy Carter, among others, examined ‘The Challenge of Agricultural Production and Food Security in Africa’. After the conference African participants travelled to about a dozen African countries to raise awareness of the issues among government leaders and a wide variety of community groups, from chambers of commerce to womens’ and farmers’ organisations.

Eastern Europe

Last year the Forum organised a high-level conference on ‘The Impact of Changes in Eastern Europe on Africa’. Due to the diversion of resources from Africa to Eastern Europe this is an issue of major concern for Africa. However, as General Obasanjo told us, “when people talk of diversion of resources, they think only of diversion of funds. There’s much more to it than that. You see, we’ve had diversion of intellectual resources from Africa to Eastern Europe, diversion of attention. Banks and foreign ministers have diverted their good staff away from Africa to look after Eastern Europe”.

In addition to these high-level conferences, the Africa Leadership Forum has initiated for Nigerians a series of informal gatherings known as Farmhouse Dialogues. Subjects covered have included Education for Development, Health for Development and Women in Development. Participants discuss the subject freely and prepare a report. The reports are then widely distributed in Nigeria and throughout Africa and have influenced national debate on the issues they cover.

Springs of Creativity

The Africa Leadership Forum is seeking to engender a new climate of leadership in Africa. Its work is aimed at awakening the goodwill and creativity in African societies and is helping to develop the management and organisational skills needed to build a new Africa.

In his opening address at the inaugural meeting of the Forum in 1988, General Obasanjo expressed his vision of the challenge facing the continent and, more directly, of the challenge for the continent’s leaders. He presented a grim view of the state of Africa in the modern world. “To think of perestroika in the Soviet Union; to think that Europe is working towards economic integration by 1992; to review the economic and technological miracle of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, and contrasting all this with what is taking place in Africa, it is difficult to believe that we inhabit the same historical time as these other countries. For the bold fact is that Africa is a continent in dereliction and decay. We are moving backwards as the rest of the world is forging ahead.”

In confronting the question of what is to be done, the General argued that the cause of the continent’s problems lies in “a failure to stimulate the spring of creativity in our people through the establishment of those social institutions that make for a humane society”. Governments and nationalist parties in many of the independent African countries, he suggested, have behaved as if they were “the sole embodiments of the social will and purpose of our countries. In time, power came to be concentrated not so much in one party as in one man, assisted by a phalanx of sycophants. Dissent, for which there had always been a secure and honoured place in traditional African society, came to be viewed with ill-concealed hostility, almost as if it were treason. The result of this political rigidity was to shut off the springs of creativity in our people. The men and women of spirit who are the leaven of every society either began to go into exile in foreign countries or withdrew into stultifying private life; to their own loss yes, but to the even greater loss of society at large. Our recovery must therefore begin with a recuperation of those values that are the foundation of every true humane society, which is in turn the foundation of social creativity”.

Optimism of the Heart

General Obasanjo’s mission is to transform the qualities and skills of leadership in the continent, and he challenged the leaders assembled at Ota in 1988 with these words: “Africa’s present is a very difficult one but not a bleak one. For despite the privations, despite the political upheavals and instability, and despite the communal conflicts, the African people have not despaired of overcoming their difficulties. Our people have a dogged optimism of the heart that has seen them through many an adversity in their long history. They most assuredly do not now accept the present state of affairs as a permanent one and they rightly have no belief in it. But if they are to continue in this spirit, then our leadership in all its principal branches must also in its turn rise to the height of our problems.”

Africa Leadership Forum, P.O. Box 2286, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Africa Leadership Forum, 821 UN Plaza, 7th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10017 U.S.A.

Africa Forum (quarterly journal of the Africa Leadership Forum) available from above addresses or: P.O. Box 1374, London, SW9 8ET, U.K.

Olusegun Obasanjo & Hans d’Orville (eds.), *Challenges of Leadership in African Development*. New York, Crane Russak, 1990.

Olusegun Obasanjo & Hans d’Orville (eds.), *The Impact of Europe in 1992 on West Africa*. New York, Crane Russak, 1990.

KENYA'S GREEN BELT MOVEMENT

Kenya's Green Belt Movement is a popular movement of more than fifty-thousand people who are planting trees through many of the country's most desolate regions. Since the movement began in 1977, well over 7 million trees have been grown as seedlings, planted out in thousands of green belts and, most importantly, tended and cared for until they become mature, adult trees.

At a deeper level, however, the Green Belt Movement is much more than just an exercise in tree planting, important though that would be in itself. It has attracted widespread international attention and received many awards for the way it has inspired people to get together to initiate their own sustainable development and because it is generating a genuine popular enthusiasm for trees. It is an outstanding example of an indigenous African movement mobilising the goodwill of ordinary people.

Hearts and Minds

The clear 'goodwill note' that inspires the movement is perhaps best expressed in its main objective: "to raise consciousness to the level which moves people to do the right thing for the environment because their hearts have become touched and their minds convinced." As visionary co-ordinator Prof. Wangari Maathai has written: "There is a new consciousness emerging in parts of Africa and other parts of the world. It is the awareness that every being on this planet shares a common destiny. All of Africa should be part of this awakening so that, unlike in her recent past, Africa can participate directly in the direction of her destiny".

In Nairobi, World Goodwill spoke with Prof. Baya, treasurer of the Green Belt Movement. She told us how, in 1977, the National Council of Women of Kenya decided to foster community tree-planting projects and she described how the idea captured the public imagination. The planting of trees was presented as a way to stop desertification and promote local development. The public responded with great enthusiasm. The National Council of Women was inundated with enquiries and requests to help start green belts from community groups all over the country. The movement has grown in response to the enthusiasm of these community groups.

Groups, mainly women, are trained and helped to set up tree nurseries. Seeds are gathered locally (the movement encourages the gathering of seeds from indigenous trees) and tended in communal nurseries. The seedlings are then given free of charge to anyone willing to plant and look after a green belt. Often they are given to schools, churches or other organisations. Sometimes they are given to private farmers. "The women keep a record of where the seedlings have been planted, and they make sure that they are being properly looked after." About 3 months after planting out, the Movement inspects the trees to ensure they are healthy and, if so, the woman who grew the seedlings is paid a small fee. "It isn't very much, but some people can gain quite a bit from it because, if you work at it, you can cultivate thousands of seedlings."

Paying the women for the seedlings is a major expense for the Movement, so we asked Prof. Baya where the money

comes from. "The funding of the Green Belt Movement has so far come from what I call 'goodwill on the part of the international community'. There have been contributions from various governmental agencies, from groups and from individuals all over the globe. There is today a new consciousness of global cooperation and we have benefited a great deal from this because we would never have raised the needed funds from local sources."

Accountability

The Movement places emphasis on accountability in all that it does. As Wangari Maathai has written, "Kenyans assume that every boss administering public funds is involved in some form of embezzlement. They assume that nobody is accountable . . . another misleading assumption is that one's only loyalty is to one's tribe".

As Prof. Baya explained, "when we try to spread a movement like this throughout Africa and see the kind of support it has received, we need to impress upon people getting that kind of support and encouragement that they must be accountable to those individuals who give it. This means a degree of honesty that not all people believe in at the moment and which we try to impart". The fact that many of the senior officers in the movement are working as volunteers and leading simple life-styles is an important element in the 'new morality' that the movement seeks to encourage. In addition to the basic tree-planting programmes, the Movement offers training facilities so that participants can appreciate the significance of what they are doing and can be more active promoters of sustainable development. In recent years much work has been put into the stimulation of similar movements in other parts of Africa, and international courses are run in Nairobi for this purpose.

Prof. Baya told us that the Movement is concerned that it should be "helping to raise the consciousness of people. This includes an awareness of the spiritual side of tree planting and an appreciation that fellow human beings are part of the environment, like the trees and the air".

The time spent with Prof. Baya was a real meeting of hearts and we left feeling very uplifted. We were further touched when, while preparing this Newsletter, we received an update on the Movement by Wangari Maathai. It was a letter sent to the Movement's many friends and donor organisations around the world thanking them for "all the positive energy and goodwill which you send to us through letters, thoughts, prayers and meditations. We feel part of a much greater reality which we little understand".

The letter referred to a strong stand which the movement had taken to stop a major building project on an important park in Nairobi (a threat, which for the moment at least, seems to have been withdrawn) and it announced that "we are now about to enter a new phase and have launched the Green Belt Movement International so that we can reach out to all our friends and participants world-wide".

Green Belt Movement, P.O. Box 67545, Nairobi, Kenya.

THE UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

When the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) was established in 1972 it was decided that it should be based in Africa, at the UN centre, which is sited amidst gardens and park-like surroundings on the outskirts of the Kenyan capital, Nairobi.

Last year, when World Goodwill representatives were planning a trip to Africa, a visit to UNEP headquarters was high on the agenda for we often use the excellent publications of UNEP in researching topics addressed in the Newsletter. So it was a joy to be able to meet Deputy Director William Mansfield III and a number of key workers in the Agency.

Problems facing Africa

When World Goodwill met William Mansfield he spoke of the changes that have occurred in the international community's perception of environmental problems. In the 70s many of the problems considered by UNEP were local, "whereas in recent years we have become more concerned with global environmental problems, particularly the problem of climate change, the one that looms largest over our heads".

We were especially keen to discuss the environmental problems facing Africa. Here, he said, the major concerns are still local ones. "As in most developing countries, the primary issues that are faced in Africa are local in the sense that they concern the natural resource base, namely the depletion of forests, soils being washed away, water and desertification issues. The resource base is being undermined either through overuse or misuse. Compounding this problem is the population issue which is driving many of the problems in Africa and Latin America and in some parts of Asia. So while UNEP addresses global issues, it also bears in mind that, on the African continent and throughout the developing world, it is the depletion of the resource base that is perhaps the most serious issue."

International debt is another serious factor affecting the African environment. "Poverty is a poor country's major environmental problem, and debt is a major factor in poverty. But I think debt relief has to be part of the whole package of things that must be done to protect the environment and to ensure the global future. It isn't the entire solution, because people can easily fall back into the same kinds of debt mistakes that they made in the past unless they change their ways. Debt reduction, therefore, isn't the entire solution. Yet it is essential, because it would enable developing countries to use more of their resources to protect the environment and the natural resource base. In many cases now they are 'mining' their resource base, whether it be trees or over-intensive agriculture, to pay their debts.

"In dealing with global problems such as climate change or pollution it is also very important to realise that nowadays everybody has to gain some benefit from involvement in protecting the environment. This has not been the traditional pattern in international relations. In the past you have been able to operate effectively with certain blocks of nations. But if developing countries such as India, or Indonesia, Brazil or China don't participate in programmes on climatic change and depletion of the ozone layer then, even if

industrialised countries cut back enormously in their production of harmful gases, increasing production of these gases in the developing world will soon wipe out any progress made. For these problems everybody has to be involved. Everybody has to benefit in some way.

"It is absolutely vital that we recognise, now, that we have to find funding sources to help the Third World participate or we all lose. We have to make sure they get the technology that is needed to protect the environment. It isn't as easy as it sounds because the technology is controlled by private firms and, within a free enterprise system, the private firm doesn't have to do it unless it gets a profit out of it. So there is now a new incentive to find creative ways of ensuring that technology is transferred. Maybe a profit can be achieved but it won't be quite as much profit as they traditionally might like to make. There is a whole new dynamic involved in finding out how do we manage a planet".

We ended our discussion by asking what gave him the greatest hope for the future. He answered without hesitation "this will have to be world recognition of the major problems, which has increased in the past three to four years to a very substantial degree. Political leaders have had to respond. Again, looking specifically at Africa, in the last three or four years there has been greater recognition that environmental factors need to be considered at the very beginning of the development process and all the way through".

What does UNEP do?

Anyone who knows of the wide range of UNEP activities — from high-level inter-government negotiations on environmental treaties, to programmes to gather scientific data on the state of the world's environment and excellent public awareness programmes — will be amazed to know that it is actually a very small organisation that is run on a remarkably low budget. It has a smaller professional staff than the planning departments of many great cities and, as Executive Director Mostafa Tolba has said, its annual budget "could buy a single wing of a stealth bomber, or build a few kilometres of motorway".

UNEP is also extremely active in educating the public and a wide range of excellent publications are available on numerous topics. We would recommend many of the publications of UNEP to people who are teaching in schools or working with local groups on environmental issues for they will find them of great benefit. A catalogue is available from UNEP in Nairobi.

Mostafa Tolba has said in his introduction to *UNEP Profile* that "never has humanity faced so critical a decade as the 1990s. The decisions — and, even more important, the actions — taken over these ten short years will determine the shape of the world for centuries. The very fate of life hangs upon them". Through its programmes, activities, and its publications UNEP is helping to lift the level of response to this crisis so that humanity *will* respond in an adequate manner to the environmental crises of the 1990s.

Information and Public Affairs Branch, UNEP, P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya.

A STORY OF CREATIVITY, ENERGY AND HOPE

Listening to Africa by Pierre Pradervand

Pierre Pradervand's recent book, *Listening to Africa*, provides a remarkable account of the way in which the Aquarian consciousness of goodwill is growing in peasant farming communities across the continent. It is a moving, optimistic book. Drawing often on the words of individual farmers in remote villages, it records something of the profound changes that are occurring first in peoples' minds and hearts and then in their ability to greatly improve the quality of their lives, the productivity of their crops, their level of health care, education and so on. This very human-centred book tells of the way in which forces of self-reliance and freedom are sweeping through the farming communities of Africa.

Hunger has taught us to think

Pierre Pradervand and the many peasant leaders whose words are featured in the book recognise that it is a revolution in consciousness that has enabled these farmers to take control of their lives and to reverse the processes of desertification, erosion and hunger. Dondo Peliaba, a chief from Dogon in Mali makes the comment: "The drought has turned into a tool for us. Before, each one took care of his own affairs. The drought has led us to practice water and soil conservation together, to discover new plants that grow more rapidly. . . . Hunger has become a teacher that has taught us to think". Time and again the author is told that the most important discovery is, in the words of illiterate Kenyan farmer, Esther Mwendwa, "to learn to use your intelligence properly. When you do that, difficulties disappear". As another Kenyan farmer, Joseph Ngungu, puts it, "all wealth comes from people's thinking. I realised with my mind I can help the whole world. By that I mean that when we are successful and find a good idea in one area, other people imitate us, and little by little the good ideas spread".

Inspired leadership

Many of the peasant movements described in the book are vast networks linking remote communities across national boundaries. The individuals who have inspired and begun these movements are, in many cases, dedicated servers who have been willing to make considerable personal sacrifices to awaken the creativity and will of their people. The book tells the story of a number of these young pioneers. Abdoulaye Diop, for example, is the founder and leader of Amicale, an energetic network of 42,000 farmers. As a young man he resigned a lucrative teaching job, despite intense opposition from his family, to run a youth centre, called the "Foyer des Jeunes", in his village. "When my family vigorously resisted my leaving the civil service I told them: 'You are not my only family. The whole village is my family.' But with my monthly teacher's salary of 40,000 CFA, I could not satisfy the needs of the whole village. The prophet Mohammed once said that you can't help everyone with your hand by offering charity, but with your mind you

can help them all. I am a fervent Moslem. My basic motive in starting the Foyer was to serve."

Naam and the Six S Association

One of the most influential servers described in the book is Bernard Lédéa Ouedraogo, leader of the Naam Movement and co-founder of the "Six S" Association. Last year he was honoured with a Right Livelihood Award.

As a prominent civil servant in Burkina Faso, Bernard Lédéa Ouedraogo was responsible, in the 1960s, for government efforts to promote training and development initiatives amongst the peasant farmers. No matter how much aid was given or training provided, he could see that very little real development was taking place. There was nothing behind the aid, he said — "no vision, no global conception of development or of the rural world, no doctrine or philosophy". He left the civil service and began to look for those elements in society that had, since traditional times, been the source of innovation, idealism and co-operation in village life. In Mossi society he found that there was a traditional group for young people known as the Naam group. This group helped to develop moral qualities amongst the youth, and traditionally it organised co-operative activities of service to the villagers. In modern times the Naam groups concentrated their energies on raising money for an annual festival.

Bernard Ouedraogo worked with villagers to apply the traditional wisdom, idealism and altruism of the Naam groups to the contemporary need for social and agricultural development. Gradually the groups were transformed. As Pierre Pradervand writes, "a traditional organisation that had as its aim the strengthening and enhancement of the clan and faithfulness to tradition, which invested all its yearly savings in one great village festival, was transformed into a dynamic institution for village development".

The movement is growing. There are today over 4,000 Naam and affiliated groups in the Yatenga area of Burkina Faso, with more than 200,000 members involved in a wide variety of activities, including the construction of warehouses, cereal banks and dams.

In 1976 Bernard Ouedraogo joined forces with a French development expert, Bernard Lecomte, to form a new organisation that would support groups of peasant farmers like the Naam in Burkina Faso. The International Six S Association (Se Servir de la Saison Sèche en Savane et au Sahel) aims to help farmers meet three needs: the need for technical know-how to cope with the challenges of drought and desertification; the need for skilled negotiators to enter into dialogue with officials from governments or aid agencies; and the need for funds to set up small projects.

Six S is a federation of peasant movements from nine African countries: Burkina Faso, Senegal, Benin, Mali, Togo, Niger, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissao and the Gambia. In 1988 approximately 3,560 village groups were part of the organisation.

One of the things that makes Six S so unusual is that it is, as Pierre Pradervand writes, "an aid organisation run by farmers themselves". The General Assembly meets once a year to decide policy and debate the past year's activities. The Assembly consists almost entirely of peasant farmers representing their local zone, each zone consisting of activities from 10 to 30 village groups.

Ending Hunger

Listening to Africa does not gloss over the problems facing

the continent — indeed it describes these problems in a very graphic way, showing how individual families and communities are affected by national debt, monoculture, desertification and the like. But the book shows how farmers movements are turning these problems into opportunities and how, inspired by the idea that hunger can be ended by the year 2000, they are working to build a new Africa.

Six S Association, B.P. 100, Ouahigouya, Burkina Faso.
Pierre Pradervand, *Listening to Africa: Developing Africa from the Grassroots*. New York, Praeger, 1989.

DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

"Putting the people first" was the theme of a significant international conference sponsored by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and leading citizens' organisations. Intense debates are taking place throughout Africa in response to the wave of democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe. The nearly 500 people from all over Africa as well as from the North who met in Arusha, Tanzania, in February 1990 were part of this debate. They met to pursue a UN Africa Recovery Programme mandate.

Delegates were unanimous in the view that lack of popular participation was the primary cause of Africa's unyielding decade-long economic crisis. The Conference called on African people and governments to implement far-reaching change in methods of decision-making at all levels of society.

The Conference adopted what has become a key document in new thinking on the future of political change in Africa — The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development.

"Africa needs fundamental change and transformation, not just adjustment. The change and transformation required are not just narrow, economic and mechanical ones. They are the broader and fundamental changes that will bring about, over time, the new Africa of our vision where there is development and economic justice, not just growth; where there is democracy and accountability, not despotism, authoritarianism and kleptocracy; and where the governed and their governments are moving hand-in-hand in the promotion of the common good, and where it is the will of the people rather than the wishes of one person or a group of persons, however powerful, that prevails."

(Adebayo Adedeji)

THE CRISIS OF AIDS

The World Health Organisation estimates that one in every forty adults in sub-Saharan Africa is now infected with the HIV virus. Countries of Central and Eastern Africa are particularly hard hit. In a study quoted in the 1990 UNDP Development Report it is estimated that, in the 10 highest-incidence

African countries, more than ten per cent of the children will have lost at least one parent by the end of the decade. The economic crisis in Africa has led to disastrously inadequate financial, medical and scientific support to cope with the crisis of AIDS and to limit the spread of the HIV virus. While the problem is still played down in many countries in Africa, others are now speaking openly to reveal the extent of the crisis. For example, in the national press in Zimbabwe in October 1990, the Minister of Health, Dr. Timothy Stamps, spoke of the 388,286 people who have tested HIV positive since 1985 as an indication of the way the virus is spreading in the population.

In the same paper the Chairman of the National AIDS Council warned of the social and economic catastrophe these figures represented. In Uganda WHO estimates suggest that between 10-25 per cent of the adult population may be HIV positive. Uganda now has one of black Africa's first AIDS counselling clinics. Started by Noerine Kaleeba after her husband died from AIDS, more than 6000 Ugandans and their families have received counselling from Mrs. Kaleeba's AIDS Support Group (TASO). Four Taso clinics have been established.

From *The Herald* (Zimbabwe), October 17 and 18, 1990.

THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA

I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunity.

Nelson Mandela

At the opening of Parliament in Cape Town on February 1, 1991, President F. W. De Klerk launched a manifesto for the new South Africa. The Manifesto sets out the government's ideas on a "just and fair new South Africa, free from apartheid". The horrors and injustices fostered by the apartheid system of government still take their toll but all people of goodwill will rejoice that official apartheid appears to be coming to an end. The Manifesto which

addresses the subjects of participation, progress, prosperity and peace includes these words:

"We commit ourselves to the creation of a free and democratic political system in South Africa, in which:

All people shall be free in this, their country of birth; all the people of our land shall participate fully at all levels of government on the basis of universal adult franchise; the government of the country shall at all times be based upon the consent of the governed; all people shall be equal before the law, and shall enjoy equal rights regardless of race, colour, sex or creed; the rights of all individuals and minorities defined on a non-racial basis shall be adequately protected in the constitution and in a constitutionally guaranteed and justiciable Bill of Rights; freedom of expression within the generally recognised bounds of responsibility shall be the right of all people; freedom of movement and of association shall be guaranteed to all."

WHOLE AFRICA NETWORK

A World Goodwill supporter in South Africa is launching the Whole Africa Network Initiative (WANI) "to facilitate right relations between the people and environment in Africa". It aims to identify "with the Organisation of African Unity and all other Pan Africanist Movements at a popular level". If there is sufficient response to the initiative, a newsletter may be produced. WANI is at the very beginning stages as yet. If you are interested contact Neil Heard, Box 23803, Claremont 7735, Cape, South Africa.

APRI

African Peace Research Institute (APRI) is a non-governmental and independent institute for research into problems of peace and conflict in Africa and in the world as a whole. Its aim is "to motivate research; to promote activities for peace and to inspire future-oriented thinking". APRI publishes a regular journal.

For information write to: APRI, P.O. Box 51757, Falomo, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria.

THE AFRICAN FARMER

African Farmer is a quarterly publication of The Hunger Project. In 1988 the Hunger Project launched the *African Farmer* magazine as "a major initiative designed to elevate the status of African small-scale farmers and to alter the policy environment in which they work so that their creativity, courage, intelligence and initiative can be unleashed for the end of hunger". The magazine supports growing dialogue between Africa's farmers and her leaders. It creates a forum in which the women and men who labour on the land can speak to and be better known by those who formulate and implement the policies that directly affect the future of African agriculture. Thirty top journalists from more than 20 countries throughout Africa contribute to the magazine. 155,000 copies of each issue are printed, with 20,000 in French and 5,000 in Portuguese. It is distributed to some 90,000 individuals in Africa. *African Farmer* is available, free of charge, to people outside the USA. In the USA the cost is \$5 per issue.

For information and to receive the magazine write to Carol Coonrod, The Hunger Project Global Office, One Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010, USA.

OUTREACH

Outreach is an outstanding publication working to disseminate information on environmental and health issues. It is specifically directed for use in the developing world and is available, free of charge, for non-commercial educational purposes in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia

and the Pacific. *Outreach* is a joint publication of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), New York University (NYU), Television for the Environment (TVE) and World Conservation International (WCI). The publication is ideal for teachers or for study groups.

Outreach packs are prepared bi-weekly and the material in the packs (both for children and adults) can be used in magazines, newspapers, radio scripts, etc. Material can be changed for local use provided *Outreach* and quoted sources are credited.

Outreach Network, UNEP, P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya.

Dr. James V. Connor, Outreach, 200 E. Bldg., New York University, N.Y. 10003 USA.

AAWORD

The Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) is a pan-African, non-governmental association. It was founded in 1977 to provide a forum for African women scholars. It undertakes research on alternative development strategies and, through its various activities and its networking, AAWORD has evolved as a major advocate of the recognition of the important role of women in African societies. Publications include the newsletter ECHO (in English and French).

For information write to: AAWORD/AFARD c/- CODESRIA, P.O. Box 3304, Dakar, Senegal.

FEMNET

The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) was formed in 1988 to increase the effectiveness of African NGO focus on women's development. FEMNET aims to strengthen channels through which NGOs can reach one another and share information, knowledge and experiences. FEMNET News is published quarterly in English and French.

For information write to: African Women Development and Communication Network, P.O. Box 54562, Nairobi, Kenya.

HUMAN COMMUNITY AND THE EARTH

The Environment Liaison Centre International is a coalition of more than 300 citizens' groups working for sustainable development in over 70 countries around the world. ELICI has contacts with more than 10,000 community groups in industrialised and Third World countries. "At the centre of ELICI's concern is the human community and the earth from which it draws its sustenance." Since its establishment in 1974, the ELICI has been working to strengthen links between environment and development NGOs, between NGOs in the North and South and between NGOs and UN agencies — especially UNEP. The ELICI publishes the magazine *Ecoforum* as well as other publications.

ELICI, P.O. Box 72461, Nairobi, Kenya.

There is no doubt that Africa has encountered and continues to face harsh and formidable political, social and economic difficulties. These are development problems. But development in Africa cannot be measured by statistical indicators alone. For, behind these statistics are people whose initiatives, resourcefulness, dignity and hope cannot be quantified. The overwhelming majority of African people are hardworking people who have a desire to take care of their lives and to improve their lot. They want and hope to make better their state of living. With this spirit, the African development problems are not unsurmountable. They can be overcome. With the creation of an enabling political environment, proper planning and foresight, African people can bring about economic development in the 1990s and face the challenges of the next century with confidence.

Salim A. Salim
Secretary-General, OAU

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WORLD SERVERS FESTIVAL WEEK

The Festival will be observed during the week of December 21 - 28, 1991. During this week we celebrate the work of all true servers who are meeting the real needs of humanity and the planet. The Festival Week of the New Group of World Servers, which occurs every seven years, is a special opportunity to strengthen the energy of goodwill in human consciousness. The annual World Goodwill seminar will be held on December 21st to help celebrate the Festival Week.

Events are planned in London for the following dates:

Friday evening	December 20	6.30 pm - 7.30 pm
Saturday	December 21	10.30 am - 5.00 pm
Tuesday	December 24	2.00 pm - 3.00 pm
Friday evening	December 27	6.30 pm - 8.00 pm

Details will be available by September 1991.

World Goodwill
Suite 54, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EF, England.
Tel: (071) 839 4512. Fax: (071) 839 5575

WORLD INVOCATION DAY



TUESDAY 28th MAY 1991

In building a more just, interdependent and caring global society what humanity needs above all, is more light, love and spiritual will.

On World Invocation Day people of goodwill from all parts of the world, and from different religious and spiritual backgrounds unite in invoking these higher energies by using the Great Invocation.

Will you join in this healing work by including
the Great Invocation in your thoughts, your
prayers or your meditations on

TUESDAY 28th MAY 1991

THE GREAT INVOCATION

*From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.*

*From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ* return to Earth.*

*From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.*

*From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.*

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

* In some translations of the Great Invocation the name by which the Coming One is known in different religions is used, eg. the Lord Maitreya, Krishna, the Imam Mahdi and the Messiah.