



Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network
Réseau Afrique Europe Foi et Justice

ECHOES from AEFJN

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REFLECTION

After years of service I still have a dream!

After 8 years at the service of AEFJN, it is time for me to say goodbye and to review some of the changes these years have seen: the world crisis impoverishing many Europeans; the rise of Africa as it becomes a continent coveted for its many resources; AEFJN becoming more African, raising awareness about economic issues and lobbying for more just policies; AEFJN's vision and conviction leading us, like a star, towards an alternative economic system based on solidarity and sustainability. I have a dream! One day all men and women on Earth, including decision makers and politicians, will have at heart the well-being of *all* the peoples of the Earth. And when country and global leaders 'discuss business' they will ask one another: *Mr/Mrs President, what do you need to develop your country?* And together they will find the best policies to foster the development and life of the global community. [Read more](#)

FROM THE AEFJN DESK

Tax Avoidance: not a Legal but an Attitude Problem

Tax avoidance is one of the main structural causes of poverty in the world as it involves a massive transfer of wealth from poor to rich countries and facilitates criminal and corrupt practices. In Africa, this practice has dramatic consequences for people living in poverty and for their societies whose governments have problems providing basic services such as health care and education for all the citizens. The most unfair method of tax avoidance occurs when big companies and donors push governments of developing countries to give tax incentives to foreign companies operating in their territory through the so-called tax incentives. Most tax incentives in Africa relate to the exploitation of natural resources and to agribusiness companies. These are negotiated behind closed doors and there are no public control mechanisms. [Read more](#)

ALSO IN THE NEWS

Food and Farmers: When Public-Private Partnerships Become Corporate Takeovers

According to a report by World Development Movement, the G8's Initiative for Food Security and Nutrition will advance the interests of extractive agribusiness in Africa at the expense of family farmers. African countries that sign up to the initiative are urged to change policies in order to receive aid money. The required policy changes favour the expansion of activities in Africa of the companies involved in the G8's Initiative. These companies are interested in securing their supply of agricultural raw materials in order to ensure the manufacture of their food products. Other companies involved are interested in accessing or taking over new markets for their products, especially the hybrid seed, fertilizer and pesticide producers. The land and seed sovereignty of family

farmers is endangered by the G8's Initiative, because it could amplify the phenomenon of land grabbing. [Read more](#)

AFRICA

Morality and Africa's Development

Rev. Dr. Mvume Dandala reflects on the morality needed to spur Africa's development. The African continent has fought mighty battles championing the cause of freedom, refusing to accept a position of submission to those in power. Yet Africans continue to suffer even at the hands of their own kith and kin. The problem of Africa is Africa's moral capacity to do right by Africa. The decline of moral consciousness renders accountability moribund. Has Christianity anything to resolve this moral impasse? We haven't addressed the question of Christ incarnation in Africa effectively. Can Africa echo Christ's words "I have not come to destroy, but to fulfil". Yet the gift of UBUNTU that Africa can offer to the world demands that we embrace and assert the fact of the unity of the human race. [Read more](#)

ADVOCACY

Visit to Senegal: Meeting with Farmers and Civil Society

In May, Gino Brunswijck of AEFJN's International Secretariat visited Senegal to meet civil society associations. Once there, he spoke about AEFJN's work and publicised the campaign for a moratorium that AEFJN is launching about large-scale land acquisition. The Senegalese organisations shared with him their experiences of this problem. Gino also went to rural zones affected by either agricultural investments or the leasing/sale of land. He was able to hear from small farmers who have lost their land and discussed with local people the consequences of this land loss for their food security. He also went to a village where the farmers had lost their land to mining companies. You will be able to read more about it In June's 'Echoes'. [Read more](#)

Meeting with Minister Adviser of the Madagascar Embassy

On May 7th AEFJN met Mr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard, Minister Adviser of the Madagascar Embassy in Brussels. AEFJN was represented by Jose Luis Gutierrez Aranda and was accompanied by Dr. Ramahatafandry Voahangy a member of the Belgium platform for international health, Because-Health. During the meeting the AEFJN delegation expressed its concern about the current situation of land grabbing in Madagascar, the risk of the people losing access to medicines of quality and the consequences of the interim EPA implementation ratified by Madagascar in 2012. [Read More](#)

ACT

Action for Alternative Trade

Due to the unfair trade policy on International trade, AEFJN invites to everybody, religious institutes, Christian organizations and any other group to address a petition letter to your Governments, World Trade Organization, World Bank, and European Commission, to adopt an alternative Trade policy to eliminate some of the structural causes of poverty and strength the economy of developing countries. The new Trade policies must respect human rights, be approved by Parliaments, and include society participation. AEFJN proposes you to address the petition letter that you can find at the end of this document and send it at least to three of the actors with competences on Trade policies. You can adapt the petition letter to your country and reality. We include as well in this document the address of the international institutions. [Read More](#)

VIDEOS

[Our Land Our Business](#)

Video on the campaign “Our Land Our Business”. (1m44)