



PRESS RELEASE

AFRICAN LEADERS CLAIM FOR A STRONGER ROLE OF COUNTRIES AND TO FIGHT THE UNFAIR RULES OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE SO AS TO MAKE THE 21ST CENTURY THAT OF AFRICA

The African leaders, who attended the international African Progress Conference, insisted on the need for a stronger role of states and institutions, as well as the importance of the fight against unfair rules of international trade so as to make the 21st century the century of Africa. This is what they said during the leaders' which saw the participation, among others, of the presidents of Tanzania and Cape Verde³, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, the former interim President of Liberia and the leaders of the progressive political parties from Ivory Coast, Ghana and Senegal.

Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, the President of Tanzania denounced that Africa is still “the poor continent of the Planet, since 38 out of the 49 least developed countries of the world, in terms of socioeconomic indicators as well as in terms of access to water, health and education”. In his opinion, the reasons why Africa is still poor are due to “a hostile socioeconomic environment derived from colonialism, the international economic order and economic policies adopted after the independences”. In any case, Kikwete pointed out that “nowadays, the situation, in terms of political stability, with the exception of Somalia, is much better than a decade ago”.

As for the President of Cape Verde, Pedro Pires, he urged for an effort to “strengthen the states, making them more strategic, efficient and inclusive”. For this, he demanded “less impartiality and an effort to develop a culture of institutions in the countries.”



With similar words Meles Zenawi, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, reminded that “since 1980, state has been a problem in Africa; it did not exist and it has lost its role in the fight against poverty. The non-existent role of the states was taken over by neo liberal market and a political and economic system which did not work for the people for the last 30 years, was implemented. Nevertheless, fortunately, market is not the only actor now.”

Amos Sawyer, the former interim President of Liberia, insisted on the symbiosis between democracy and development for which he claimed for “permanent support from the international community in order to keep peace and political stability in the countries.”

Ebrahim Ebrahim, South African Deputy Minister for International Affairs urged for a committed moral leadership from African countries in favor of democracy, good governance and against corruption.”

In the opinion of Pascal Affi Nguessan, the President of the Ivorian Popular Front, “Africa needs to change the agenda in order to achieve the millennium Objectives”. He also urged Africa to “stop feeling complex and to show its ambition for development.” Likewise, he urged the countries to be generous in order to relinquish some area of sovereignty in order to build African integration”.

Kwabena Adjei, President of the National Democratic Congress of Ghana, noted the importance of “investing in education as the key factor for progress, for promoting participative democracies”.

Finally, Ousmane Tanor Dieng, the General Secretary for the Socialist Party of Senegal and the President of the African Committee of the Socialist International, he noted the importance of developing “a partnership between European and African and European progressive parties” but “on the condition that it based on solidarity and not on charity.”