



Annual session of the World Political Forum to be held at Stresa on 22-23 October

POVERTY IN THE WORLD: A CHALLENGE TO GLOBALISATION

Among the speakers will be the President of the WPF, *Mikhail Gorbachev*, the President of the Republic of Nigeria, *Olusegun Obasanjo*, the Executive Deputy President of South Africa, *Jacob Zuma*, the former Secretary General of the UN, *Boutros Ghali*, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, *Benazir Bhutto*, the Director General of the WTO, *Mike Moore*, American economist, *Jeffrey Sachs*, the Argentine Deputy Minister for Social Affairs, *Daniel Arroyo*, the UN Undersecretary for developing countries, *Anwarul Chowdhury*, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, *Mohamad Mahathir*

Globalisation brings advantages to poor and developing nations that open themselves to it. Supporting this thesis is a report produced by the World Bank (Globalisation, Growth and Poverty: Building an Inclusive World Economy) which examines the rate of growth of the world economy using countries in three major areas: that of the rich nations, that of the "most globalised" poor countries and that of the "least globalised" poor countries. The first area has grown at an annual rate of 2%, the second at growth of 5% and the last has slumped by 1% per annum. As shown empirically in this report, the group of poor nations now counts a cluster of developing nations (including China, India and Vietnam), with a total population of three billion, that has entered the circuit of the global market and has rates of growth far exceeding those of the rich nations and which has seen a consequent drastic and widespread reduction in poverty.

However, challenging these figures are other facts: the financial disorder that occurred in South-east Asia between 1997 and 1999 shows how the impact of economic crises within a global context is decidedly deeper. The financial crisis that arose in South-eastern Asia in 1997 spread in successive waves and in different ways to Russia, Brazil and many other developing countries, provoking a slump in growth forecast for 1998-1999 of the same extent as the gross domestic product of the seventh largest of the most advanced powers, and leaving over 13 million people without work.

Here we see two sides of the same medal – globalisation – presenting two completely different views. Both will be taken into consideration during the annual session of the World Political Forum, dedicated to **"Poverty in the world: a challenge for globalisation"**, being held at **Stresa on 22-23 October** thanks to the support of **Regione Piemonte, Fondazione della Cassa di risparmio di Alessandria and of the Fondazione della Cassa di Risparmio di Torino**. Over 70 major figures from the worlds of politics, culture, economics and religion from over 30 nations will be discussing the theme. These include Nobel peace prize-winner and President of the WPF, **Mikhail Gorbachev**, the Executive Deputy President of South Africa, *Jacob Zuma*, the President of the Republic of Nigeria, *Olusegun Obasanjo*, the former Secretary General of the UN, **Boutros Ghali**, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, **Benazir Bhutto**, the former French Prime Minister, **Lionel Jospin**, the Director General of the WTO, **Mike Moore**, American economist, **Jeffrey Sachs**, the Argentine Deputy Minister for Social Affairs, **Daniel Arroyo**, the Undersecretary for Social Economy in Brazil and advisor to Lula, **Paul Singer**, the UN Undersecretary for developing countries, **Anwarul Chowdhury**, the director of the UN programme, UN-HABITAT, **Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka**, and the former Secretary General of the African Union, **Amara Essy**.

The first day of work (**22 October**) will be divided into the following sessions:

- **"Poverty: an inheritance, a calamity or misfortune?"** Chaired by **Piero Bassetti**, President of Globus et Locus. The first session will include the participation of **Anwarul K. Chowdhury**, UN General Undersecretary and High Representative for developing countries, **Olusegun Obasanjo**, President of the Republic of Nigeria, **Benazir Bhutto**, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, **Mohamad Mahathir**, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, **Toshiki Kaifu**, former Prime Minister of Japan and **Hans-Dietrich Genscher**, former Minister for Foreign Affairs in Germany.

- **"The world's new ghettos"**. Chaired by Pascal Chaigneau, **Director of the CEDS** (Centre d'Etudes Diplomatiques et Stratégiques), the second session will see the participation of **Boutros-Boutros Ghali**, former Secretary General of the UN, **Mustapha Cherif**, former Minister for Education and Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Algiers, **Inder Kumar Gujral**, former Indian Prime Minister, **Keba Mbaye**, former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice and French senator, **Jack Ralite**.
- **"From frustration to violence: political failure, risks for security"**. Chaired by member of the European Parliament **Giulietto Chiesa**, the third session will see the participation of **Abdel Salam Majali**, former Prime Minister of Jordan and President of IAS; **Andrea Riccardi**, President of the Comunità di Sant'Egidio, **Milos Zeman** former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, and **Pierre Joxe** member of the French Constitutional Council.
- **"The problems of globalisation: short-term triumphs, long-term catastrophes?"**. Chaired by **Roberto Savio**, founder of TIPS, the fourth session will see the participation of **Riccardo Petrella**, Professor at the University of Louvain, **Lionel Jospin** former French Prime Minister, **Mike Moore**, former Director General of the WTO, **Jeffrey Sachs**, Director of the Earth Institute, **Victor Bulmer-Thomas**, Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, **Antje Vollmer**, Vice-President of the German Bundestag and **Father Clodoveo Piazza**, Minister for the Fight against Poverty and Social Inequalities State of Bahia Salvador.

The second day of work (**23 October**) will be divided into the following sessions:

- **"National solutions: experiences, hopes, limits"**. Chaired by **Tom Gehrels**, lecturer at the University of Tucson, the first session of the day will see the participation of **Paul Singer**, Undersecretary for Social Economy in Brazil and economics advisor to Lula, **Natalia Rimashevskaya**, Director of the Russian Academy of Sciences and of the Institute of Socio-Economic Population Studies, **Jacques Attali**, former President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, **Daniel Arroyo** Deputy Minister for Social Affairs in Argentina, **Jiang Ming Jun** the Co-President of the ONU UN-HABITAT programme, and **Sylvia Borren**, Director of NOVIB.
- **"International strategy: sustainable development or charity programmes?"**. Chaired by the President of the Scientific Committee of the WPF, **Andrei Grachev**, the second session of the day will see the participation of **Jacob Zuma**, the Executive Deputy President of South Africa, **Michel Rocard**, former Prime Minister of France, **Jean-Francois Rischard**, Vice-President for Europe at the World Bank, **Anthony Jones**, Professor of Sociology at the University of Boston and Director of the Gorbachev Foundation of North America, **Hans d'Orville**, Director of the Office for Strategic Planning at UNESCO, **Frei Betto**, personal advisor to the President Ignacio Lula da Silva and National Coordinator of the program "Fome Zero" and **Mercedes Bresso**, member of The European Parliament.

Following the seminars organised in Turin ("The State and Religions"), London ("Justified War, Iraq, and the Reform of the United Nations") and Munich ("United Europe facing the changing world"), the World Political Forum will be returning to themes which are once again dramatically urgent. The world has a population of about six billion people, five billion of whom live in poor or developing countries. At least three billion humans have only US\$2 a day to live on and 1.2 billion have to survive on just US\$1. About 150 million children do not go to school, and global epidemics such as Aids are advancing on all fronts. This is the scenario forming the backdrop to the Stresa meeting and which the Forum's speakers will discuss during the work, each contributing with his own specific competence with the aim of identifying concrete, politically possible solutions to suggest to those who hold the future peaceful co-existence between peoples in their hands.

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