

International Newsletter

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Open World Conference Against War and Exploitation

Algiers, 27th to 29th November 2010

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Secret files expose US/NATO barbarous mission in Afghanistan

The leakage of massive secret files by Wikileaks, once again revealed criminal and illegal nature of US/NATO mission in Afghanistan as well as documented its illegal occupation and presence of their troops under the pretext of "fighting terrorism" and restoration of "peace and democracy" in Afghanistan.

The seep out of such documents will open the eyes and minds of all those who have been deceived by the Obama administration about their mission in Afghanistan and think the war will insure their strategic interests in Afghanistan or region.

We believe in that, yet there are more significant secret files of the criminal nature and bloody face of the Obama administration that have been not allowed to open their way into media.

Almost all the files that were classified as secret and aim to convince us as they would end the war tragedy, certainly due to the passage of 6 years the documents are no longer something new and military sensitive as US and its tail media and organizations claim. Meanwhile it is not just to ignore their crucial impacts on public opinions and as well as breakaway among the imperialist camp.

The leakage of more than ninety thousands files by media will challenge the public opinion about the US aggressive policies and practices especially in Afghanistan. The documents for example only pointed at only 150 intentionally incidents by US and allies that resulted to human disasters, massacre and civilian casualties in Afghanistan.

These secret documents from the criminal archive of Pentagon show the US government irresponsibility against its own people's will which received its "legitimacy" from them through "elections".

It is time for the people of America who voted for current regime to refuse to pay more money and offering more sons as troops for this brutal and fraudulent regime that has been attempting to hide truth from the people.

So, exposition of more than ninety thousands documents of crimes and illegal act of US are more than enough to drag Obama administration and involved bodies to the trial court and accountability to insure advocacy of justice for war victims in Afghanistan.

However, counter to the public expectations, the imperialist irrigated media, institutions and "human rights organizations" such as "Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission", "Amenity International", "Human Rights Watch" and lastly "Reporters Without Borders" instead of supporting Wikileaks dare and normal journalistic job to enlighten people about real information and violations, jointly aligned with Pentagon and condemned Wikileaks for disclosing the criminal essence of US war mission in Afghanistan. They threatened Wikileaks not to expose more crimes committed by US in Afghanistan to observe the "journalism principles"!!

The leaked documents which surely is not the full story must alert people in Europe, Canada, Australia and Japan to strongly ask their governments to stop their contribution and funding to such illegal and brutal mission led by US in Afghanistan that instead of improvement situation and development, caused boosting more instability, fighting and killing, poverty and corruption and narcotic smuggling than before 2001.

Left Radical of Afghanistan (LRA)

August 20, 2010

August, 27 2010

0,50 €

**“Unconditional Withdrawal of the Law of Retirement Age at 67”
Demands the DGB;
Trade unions must organise massive mobilisation**

resisting the orders of the EU and the IMF who, with their austerity programmes, mean to force an increase in the age of retirement by several years.

In Germany, in March 2007, the Grand Coalition (regrouping the bourgeois party CDU/CSU and the SPD) decided on “Retirement Age at 67”, i.e. to increase the present age of retirement from 65 to 67. Starting in 2012, the age of retirement will rise progressively to 67. In order to stifle the resistance within its own ranks, the leadership of the SPD has contrived to have the decision submitted for re-examination in 2010, in order to verify that there are enough workers of the 60-65 age group in activity to impose a lengthening of their working years till 67.

The law on “Retirement Age at 67” spearheads the counter-reform measures against the historical gains of the legal retirement system that had already been implemented in the Schröder (SPD) government's so-called Agenda policy: decreased retirement allowance and part-privatisation, which compels those workers who can afford it to make up for this diminished pension by purchasing private complementary retirement plans - when they can – funded at the expense of their standard of living.

So far, these measures have already entailed an ample extension of poverty among the elderly and “Retirement Age at 67” threatens to extend this poverty to several million workers. The hatred of the population against all the regressive retirement measures focuses on “Retirement Age at 67”, this brutal additional measure that slashes retirement allowances. For years, the DGB unions have been demanding its repeal. But the Merkel government is now to take a final decision on the subject, in order to avoid the failure of the whole of its programme of austerity and impoverishment.

Given the situation, the SPD leadership is now proving its “national responsibility”, by seeking a “com-

promise” against the demand to “Withdraw Retirement Age at 67”, to keep the Merkel government from defeat and also to make sure that all the measures taken up to now against retirement may stand. (1).

After the SPD leadership decision, Michael Sommer, the President of the DGB clearly explained the position of the trade union and of its affiliated unions: “Retirement Age at 67 Must Go”, explaining that the slogan is to be at the heart of the “protest actions” called by the DGB during the autumn.

Trade unions are increasingly vocal in the demand for mass mobilisation, called for by the trade unions, of all the workers in all work-places, on the clear slogan “*Unconditional Withdrawal of Retirement Age at 67*”. It is not the place of trade unions to only call for scattered “*protest actions*” this autumn, demanding “socially palatable” corrections to the policies dictated to the government by the European Union and the IMF.

The social-democrats and trade unionists are fighting for the united mobilisation of the working population and youth, organised by the DGB unions and the SPD for the withdrawal of the austerity plan and of retirement age at 67, for centralised mobilisation and actions and a demonstration in Berlin, in front of the government's headquarters. This is the only way to push all the united forces of workers - the only force capable of thwarting the government's measures, the EU's and IMF's policies - into action.

Carla Boulboullé.

Notes

(1) The SPD leadership proposes to halt the postponement of official retirement age till 50% of the 60 to 64 age group have a job covered by the public insurance system. At the time, there are only 21.5%.

A real mobilisation of all wage earners organised by the trade unions can put an end to the Merkel government's plan of austerity and destitution .

By Rainer Döring and Gotthard Krupp, members of VER.DI.'s Berlin regional executive

The preparation of the DGB's and its affiliated unions' autumn actions in the framework of the ETUC's call to action, has raised many questions and led to important discussions within the different trade unions.

“With its 80 billion Euro austerity programme”, the bourgeois coalition government headed by Merkel “has decided, to push through the most horrendous plan of cut backs in public spendings and the social budget that Germany has ever witnessed in peace time (.). This is a brutal attack against the gains of the German labour movement.” That is how Matthias Cornely and other DGB comrades expressed it in a letter to Michael Sommer, President of the DGB and to Bertold Huber, President of IG Metall.

With this ruthless austerity programme of impoverishment, Merkel aims at squeezing every cent out of the working population and youth to fund the State's gaping debt, run up to rescue speculators, capitalists and the Euro, following EU and IMF orders.

Over 80% of the population reject this whole set of measures. That is why it is decisive to co-opt the SPD and the DGB as well as the organisations that speak in the name of workers, into implementing this *“severe austerity policy”* in the name of *“national responsibility”*. The DGB – with the exception of criticism of some anti-social measures – declared it was fundamentally ready to cooperate with the government in a *“rational pact”* to *“overcome the crisis”*.

At the DGB congress, Merkel clearly explained to the DGB trade unions that she quite recognises they have the right to protest and refuse some anti-social measures but that she nevertheless expects trade unions to continue to play their full role as *“social partners”* in the management of the crisis, side by side with the bosses and government.

The trade unions affiliated to the DGB have condemned the austerity programme as socially unfair. Faced with drastic budget cuts in social budgets, with a healthcare reform project that threatens the very principle of healthcare insurance based on solidarity and parity funding and an unbearable deterioration of the sad state of municipal affairs, VER.DI trade union declares : *“The government has got the knife into the welfare state”*.

For the time being, the government's measures are still in the pipe-line. They are to be submitted to Parliament only in early September. Doesn't the elementary trade union mandate of defending workers consist in organising union mobilisation of employees to throw it out ? This explains why numerous trade

union members have voiced their incomprehension and angry protests when they learnt, a few days after the 80 billion austerity programme was published, that the DGB leadership had taken part in the crisis summit to which Merkel had invited *“social partners”* and that Merkel wished to co-opt trade unions into co responsibility for the budget economies due to the debt run up by the State (a debt due to the bank bail out). On that point, comrade Cornely and his co-endorsers state: *“It was a secret meeting held behind the backs of trade union members”*. They demand: *“No discussing with government on 'major orientations' since discussing already means accepting”*.

The call of the ETUC, in the framework of which the DBG sets its actions, is based on the view that no alternative exists to the billion Euro bail out of banks and capitalists and it demands a more social version of the drastic austerity programmes that the EU and IMF want every European government to submit to. And nobody is taken in by all the fine phrases about a modest participation of financial capital in the name of sharing out the burden more fairly.

Trade unions cannot make it their task to help the government by proposing a few corrections to make its programme of impoverishment more *“socially correct”* and *“socially acceptable”*.

In their letter to Sommer, the DGB comrades have written: *“You have said that the DGB was going to call for protest in companies ; we can only but agree to that (.). But our trade union's responsibility is to organise union mobilisation of workers (not to protest and bring some corrections in order to go along with it) with these clear slogans:*

- *Withdraw the 80 billion Euro austerity programme!*
- *Restore the billions, ear-marked for rescuing financial markets, to the State budget!”*

We are convinced that a genuine, organised trade union mobilisation of all workers on the basis of these demands would halt the government's plans. But that also means that trade unions should refuse to dissolve in actions organised by ATTAC, by social pacts or by civil society, as they did on June 12th when DGB banners could be seen waving in the demonstrations.

Thus, we are landed with a problem of burning relevance: DGB unions must reconquer the fundamental right to organise trade union fight and strike against the government's decisions on worker's economic and social interests.

For trade unionists, it is nonsense to comply with the unconstitutional ban on strikes and union fights, based on a fraudulent judgement dating back to the '50s aimed at arbitrarily curtailing the place and mandate of trade unions for the defence of labour interests through organised union fight. If we workers and trade unions were deprived of this right to organise union fight and to strike (ref. Art 9 of the Constitution), we would be reduced to “collective beggary” and empty protests. What's more, despite all the bans, our trade unions have already organised very efficient strike actions (in some sectors of activity and some firms)

France

Unity in action or sham trade union unity? The September 7th clash is nearing.

By Pascal SAMOUTH Trade unionist (August 2010)

All trade union organisations are calling for “a day of strike and demonstrations” on September 7th, the first day of discussion in Parliament on the bill against retirement pensions.

The aspiration of wage-earners to see their united organisations win on withdrawal of the project gathers momentum every day, but the top circles of the CGT and CFDT apparatuses are trying to impose sham trade union unity that turns its back on wage earners' demands.

In mid-June a new bill that restricts brutally the rights to retirement pensions was announced by the government. It purports to fulfil the requests of the European Union and the IMF.

It aims mainly :

To get the duration of contribution up to 41.5 years

To raise retirement age from 60 to 62

To end the civil servants' specific retirement system.

This offensive against wage-earners' rights to retirement is the first phase of a general austerity programme that the government wants to force on the French working class.

As early as June 15th 2010, the CGT-FO, one of the three major federations, gathered 70,000 people demonstrating in the streets of Paris. On that day, Jean-Claude Mailly, its General Secretary, made a proposal for united action for the withdrawal of the bill in a common call for an all out strike – private and public sectors united.

During its congress, the FSU, the main teachers' union also took a stand in favour of the withdrawal of the bill. So did several CGT affiliated trade unions as well as the “Solidaires” trade union organisation.

But there are widespread manoeuvres. In an internal letter, the “standing committee” of the CGT, the biggest trade union even explained that winning on the withdrawal would mean playing into the hands of the government since it would prevent taking advantage of modifications to the bill that have been secured.

combined with a central demonstration organised by trade unions. In the review “*Soziale Politik und Demokratie*”, social-democrat activists call on all SPD members asking them to wage the fight alongside union members, workers and youth against the horrendous austerity programme of the Merkel government. We are convinced that organising a united mobilisation of workers and their organisations would create a force capable of throwing out Merkel's policies, aimed at making the population shoulder the burden of the crisis.

This position is explained by the CGT's will to promote pseudo trade union unity around the positions of the CFDT, a trade union with Christian roots, which openly defends an increase of years of contributions, the end of the so-called “privileges” of public sector workers and goes as far as approving the extension of the retirement age.

This determination to make all organisations fall in step even went to the extent of a proposal to write together a united call to the ETUC September 29th day of action, an offer that the CGT-FO turned down.

Meanwhile, a parliamentary committee has been meeting during the summer months to study the bill. The major opposition parties, Socialist Party, CP and the Party of the left have proposed a string of amendments in order to show clearly to the working class that they, too, are determined to counter the demand to get the bill withdrawn.

The government, undermined by scandals that unveil its close links with big business; could not have imagined more stalwart support to help them implement Brussels' and Washington's orders.

It is to loosen this lethal grip that many joint calls to strike for September 7th in the regions and at work sites explicitly stipulate that the bill should be withdrawn and call for a general strike. Here are quotes from some of those appeals:

Pyrénées Orientales region : “*This project is damaging for wage-earners, that is why it is rejected by the joint trade union committee composed of CFDT, CFTC, CGT, FO, FSU (.) The trade unions demand that the bill be purely and simply withdrawn.*”

Haute Loire region, Statement of the CGT, FSU, CFTC, CFDT, FO, UNSA and Solidaires regional councils. “*No extension of the age of retirement, no extension of the contribution period, no reduction of pensions (.) We demand the withdrawal of the government's programme (.) The time has come for joint strike action.*”

Loire Atlantique region (44) : *“To defeat this counter-reform and win on minimum demands, the FSU 44, Solidaires 44 and regional council of the CGT consider it necessary to prepare the conditions for a strike till we win on the withdrawal of the government's project.”*

What is at stake with September the 7th is the struggle of the working class trying to express in this framework the workers' demand for unity for the withdrawal of the bill on retirement. It is a condition for defeating the austerity programme imposed by the E U and the IMF.

Greece

Helen Zografaki-Teleme member of the Greek Teachers Union – OLME's executive

Extracts from her intervention at the Berlin European Workers Conference – June 19th & 20th.

Dear friends,

My name is Helen Zografaki and I am member of the Executive Bureau of the OLME – the Greek Federation of Public School Secondary Education - which has 60,000 members.

In Europe “competition” has turned into the main objective and in order to promote this competition, emphasis is placed upon “structural” policies (liberalization of markets, privatizations, policies of flexible working conditions). The Lisbon strategy constitutes a contemporary tool for anti-labour reforms, in order to deconstruct both the social model (...) as well as the regulatory framework for the protection of employment, so as to ensure cheap labour for capital. (...)

Labour rights and social gains conquered through the ages-old struggles have been challenged and finally abolished.(...) Taking into account that our country has never been “famous” for the plenitude of its social policy, it is easily perceptible that, concerning labour legislation, we are now on the way back to the Middle Ages. (...)

The hard measures taken against Greek workers, within the framework of "The Stability and Development Pact" and the Memorandum between Greek government and IMF – E.U. and ECB, have been made known around the world and even to the most remote regions of the planet.

The financial measures consist of reducing the wages of civil servants (...), freezing the wages and allocations for a three-year period, and freezing the appointment of civil servants for three years, decreasing their number (...).

We have also taxation measures, that are overloading

all workers, measures increasing direct taxes and hence decreasing the workers purchasing power (...) and measures to allow an increase in redundancies and to encourage flexibility.

And the worst of all is to come, with a new actuarial - pensions law (...) This foresees an increase of the general age retirement to the age of 65 based on a minimum of 40 years of work (...).

From the very beginning, the movement of teachers (OLME and DOE) organized the struggle to resist the measures and named those who were responsible for the crisis, despite the efforts by George Papandreou 's government, supported by the “parrots” of Mass Media, to present the measures as “a one way road”, and as “*nationally necessary for the country to be saved from bankruptcy*”.

We organized the fight, the Pan-Hellenic demonstrations in Athens and in the other big cities of Greece, in co-ordination with the trade unions of the public sector (...)

Since January, we have made 8 strikes, 4 of them general (public and private sector), with important participation and prepared combativeness in the demonstrations.

We follow with interest the initiatives and the mobilizations of trade unions in the rest of Europe (...).

We believe that the attack the workers are facing today is of such intensity and extent that no trade union, no country and no population can be effective against it by itself. (...)

I hope that our meeting today will be the first step towards this purpose!

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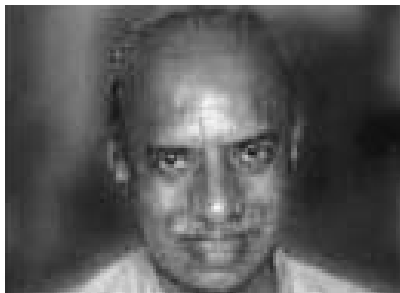
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“India, Afghanistan , Pakistan, a new war zone”

Subash Naik Jorge



Subash Naik Jorge has been an activist in the union of bank employees since 1977.

He is President of Goa Bank Employees Association and Central Committee Member of the All India Bank Employees Association (AIBEA).

He is also associated with other trade unions like Hotel Employees Federation of India (HEFOI), of which he is General Secretary and New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI) of which he is Vice President.

There are more and more conflicts over land in India. What is the cause of this ?

The majority of the population in India depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Even though over 60 years have passed since our country was liberated, farmers are there where they were over 60 years before, living a hand to mouth existence. Large numbers of farmers have committed suicide as they could not repay the loans they obtained to cultivate farms, as crops failed to yield produce due to failure of monsoons or other vagaries of nature. It is against this background that the Government brought in, with unanimous approval by Parliament, the Special Economic Zone 2005 law.

The Special Economic Zone neither helps the country nor the people of the country. Industries in the SEZ pay no taxes. Farmers have their land taken away from them for a song: it is handed over to the industrialist who makes a bumper profit on the price of the land alone. He need not even set up industries. He diverts a portion of the land for profit making construction and commercial projects.

What is the position of trade unions on this issue ?

Trade unions are totally opposed to the SEZ as no labour laws apply there and the exploitation of workers in SEZ is total. Wherever SEZs have come up in India there has been strong resistance from farmers. There have been violent reactions against the State Government of West Bengal, headed by the Communist Party, trying to take over farm land in Singur and hand it over to the Tata automobile company. The Government and the Company had to retreat. Similar agitation against the SEZs policies of the Government are taking place all over the country. In Goa, a small State of India, SEZ has been banned and existing permits given have been withdrawn due to the people's opposition.

What are your reasons in particular for attending the Algiers Conference ?

The theme chosen for the Algiers Conference is the most appropriate at the present time. India, like the world would be better off, if an end was put to exploitation and war.

India is a country with a large number of poor people. Our country cannot afford armaments and bombs

which cost a lot of money. However, in the name of threat of war from Pakistan or China, a huge amount of our budget is diverted every year for military purposes. All this is wasteful expenditure. Every country is indulging in similar massive wasteful expenditure in the name of a threat of war. All this money could be used for the benefit of the people. There is a strong need for promoting an anti war movement in the world and for opposing those who promote war so as to derive benefits for their armament industries.

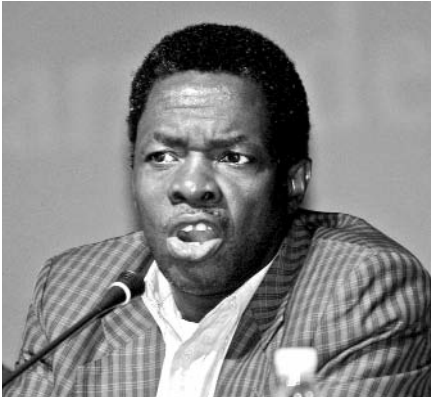
Exploitation of man by man should also be eliminated from this planet. There is talk all over the world that there is good growth in India and China. But of what good is this growth, if the growth benefits only a few and is based on a few industrialists exploiting millions of people and amassing huge wealth at their expense. Of what use is this growth, if 77% of the population in India have to live on less than 20 Roupies a day while 5 billionaires at the top amass wealth equal to that of 300 million people at the bottom in India. The problems of the poorest people and tribal populations, who are threatened with extinction due to large scale exploitation and displacement from their traditional source of livelihood, have not been addressed by the bourgeois political formations that have been ruling the country.

We were opposed to the Nuclear Deal done by India with the USA as it was not in our national interest. Now there is a move by the Government of India to introduce in Parliament a Nuclear Liability Bill which absolves US multinationals, supplying nuclear reactors, from payment of any compensation in the event of a nuclear accident. We are totally opposed to the passing of this Bill in Parliament.

Working for trade unions in different fields for the last 30 years, I am looking forward to attending the Algiers Conference as both the themes of the Conference against exploitation and against war are very dear to my heart and to the hearts of the entire working class. I expect the Conference to help in taking the cause further and bringing all those who are for peace and for equitable distribution of wealth in society closer. To those who are engaged in the preparation of the Conference, I wish to tell them that we are with them although we are thousands of miles away from them. I wish the Conference all success and look forward to being there in November.

“Sixteen years after the official end of Apartheid”

Lybon Mabasa



Lybon Mabasa, who was one of the young activists of the Black Conscience Movement, set up by Steve Biko, during the 1976 Soweto uprising and who was then one of the leaders of the Azanian People Organisation (AZAPO) founded in 1978 to pursue Steve Biko's combat, is to-day one of the leaders of the Socialist Party of Azania (SOPA). The SOPA has had an active part at international level, in many of the campaigns and activities of the International Liaison Committee of Workers and Peoples. Lybon Mabasa will be present in Algiers for the World Conference. For *International Newsletter* he went back over the present situation in his country (5th August 2010).

As all the clamour round the World Cup dies down and in contradiction with official announcements, the situation in South Africa remains just as critical, is even worsened by the consequences of the World Cup.

More than 8 billion Euros have been spent, notably for building enormous stadiums in nine regions over the country, for introducing to certain destinations, high speed trains at a prohibitive tariff and for improving the airports. They pretended that these infra structures would be of durable benefit to South Africa. But this is not the case at all for most of these high cost installations are inaccessible for the great majority. Most of the stadiums that have been built will remain largely unused.

And at the same time, to give just one example, 22 million South Africans (more than 40% of the population and mostly Blacks) continue to live in shanty towns, without even access to drinking water. The tragic situation from the housing point of view is only one expression among others of the living conditions in which the majority of South Africans are plunged.

Nearly 50% of the population survives on less than 1 Dollar a day, below the official poverty level. 40% of the active population is unemployed. These homeless, unemployed are in their vast majority (about 90%) Black.

How is this possible sixteen years after the overthrow of the Apartheid regime institutions ?

The situation from the land point of view supplies the first answer: the Apartheid regime was first established on the basis of evicting Blacks from their land.

To-day, sixteen years after the fall of Apartheid, more than 80% of cultivatable land still belongs to 62 000 White families. In other terms, the economic basis on which Apartheid was built has not been touched. That does not only concern land but also the main wealth of the country (its mineral wealth) which remains the private property of the big Apartheid families linked to multinational corporations.

The compromise which was negotiated between the Apartheid Government and the leadership of the national movement (the ANC) made explicit provision for protecting private property, i.e. for protecting first of all the big fortunes of Apartheid capitalism.

How does the Black people of South Africa react to this negation of what was at the heart of its combat against Apartheid ?

To-day, through a series of movements and strikes in particular, the Black people of South Africa, the working class are rising up against this state of things. This does not mean that workers are denouncing the ANC leadership, but they want change. That is why the SOPA, which fights for democracy and so for to-day's exploited and oppressed majority, to exercise power, has put the proposal to all organisations with roots in the national movement, claiming to belong to the labour and democratic movement, to unite together on the basis of the most immediate demands of the people:

- a stop to lay offs:
- nationalisation of mines, of big industry, of the financial system so that the country's immense resources, be used to eradicate poverty:
- a true agrarian reform which gives the land back to the Black farmers who are the legitimate owners:
- an end be put immediately to the debt inherited from the Apartheid regime.

It is unbelievable and scandalous that at a moment when millions of South Africans are plunged in the direst misery, the country continues to be bled white to pay off the debt of the slave regime it overthrew.

Will the SOPA be sending a delegation to the World Conference in Algiers ?

Yes, we shall be sending a delegation to the Conference. It is convened to fight against "war and exploitation". How could we not be there ? War and exploitation designate precisely what Africa is to-day, as a result of pillaging, of undermining the sovereignty of our countries, of the manipulation of our peoples by Imperialism. Fighting the lethal plans of the IMF and World Bank, more ferocious than ever because of the world crisis, is a necessity if we want to ensure the safeguard and survival of our peoples. This combat demands organisations independent of predatory States and their institutions. It implies that these organisations are capable of combining their efforts, because action for saving the peoples of Africa can only be undertaken at international level.

That is why I shall be present in Algiers.

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