

## **SUMMER UNIVERSITY**

*Cotonou Social 2010*

### **DECLARATION**

1. From Monday 02<sup>nd</sup> to Friday 06<sup>th</sup> August 2010, the 8th edition of the Summer University organized by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung was held in Bohicon (BENIN).
2. It gathered about thirty young union leaders drawn from Mali, Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Benin, Burkina-Faso, Senegal, Niger, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire.
3. The main theme was "Trade Unions Participation in the Implementation of the Global Jobs Pact".
4. The importance and the relevance of the theme were acknowledged by the participants given the situation our various countries are going through in the sub-region as a result of the economic and financial crisis which has caused very serious harm to African countries in terms of decrease in exports, decrease in governments incomes, decrease in all macroeconomic indicators, worsening of inflation, job losses and the increase of poverty particularly among youth and women.
5. They expressed their satisfaction for the opportunity given them to work out alternatives through sharing and group work which took place after lectures and trainings provided by various informed experts mainly from ILO and ITUC Africa.
6. The young leaders have noticed that the Global Jobs pact, adopted by the International Labor Organization since June 2009 is timely as it is designed to guide the national and international policies which aim at supporting the economic recovery, creating jobs and providing protection for workers and their families.

7. They affirmed that this pact should be at the core of all macroeconomic policies in the sub region so as to mitigate the impacts of the economic and financial crisis for youth and women within the sub region, and to meet the fundamental needs of the populations; therefore, it should be appropriately disseminated particularly by trade unions.
8. They also acknowledged that the African sub region is first of all confronted with the issue of political and economic misgovernance which is evidenced by the fact that for several years, the economies in the sub region are not industrialized, that the monoculture both in the areas of agriculture and mining remains the key feature of our exports and that Africa in general and the sub region in particular does not experience robust and sustainable development as in the Southeast Asia countries.
9. The youth of the sub region believe that there is a clear linkage between good governance of public affairs and the development of a country. Thus they called on the political leaders, trade unions leaders and civil society organizations to take up their responsibilities and ensure that good governance becomes enthroned in the sub region.
10. The participants agreed that in order to create more jobs there is a need to promote wealth creation and redistribution through well thought-out socio-economic policies and legislations on taxation, public procurement and support to micro, small and medium scale enterprises.
11. Social protection is one objective of decent work, for that, it is important to strengthen and extend it to the entire population in the sub region.
12. The consolidation of intra regional trade is a key prerequisite to the development of the sub region and to the creation of decent jobs. It must be strengthened and made to contribute to the development of the countries within the sub region.
13. The integration of the sub region is the way to its development. Despite the efforts made for the establishment of ECOWAS, it is still striving to get underway. The participants delighted in the major headways achieved but deemed it important that we work today for the integration of peoples rather than the integration of States.

14. Social dialogue should be at the core of every strategy of development in the sub region like shown in the experience of Indonesia since this necessarily leads to a full participation of social partners in the economic and social life.
15. The participants considered the splitting of trade unions, especially in francophone countries, to be a major hindrance which needs to be tackled now, since this weakens their power of negotiation.
16. They suggested that the trade unions within the sub region take ownership of the Global Jobs Pact as well the content of this declaration and make them tools for the fight in every country.
17. Having observed the need to reinvigorate, strengthen and sustain trade unionism, young trade union leaders, proposed that greater participation and responsibility be given to the youth especially through the adoption and the implementation of young workers policies in trade unions in the sub region.
18. Finally, we young trade union leaders, commit ourselves to doing everything within our powers to ensure that the present declaration as well as the Global Jobs Pact becomes integral part of our organization's policies, to ensure that the question of employment is truly taken into account.

Done in Bohicon on August 06, 2010

**The participants**