



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

THE ECHOES FROM AEFJN

No. 4 – July & August 2013

www.aefjn.org

aefjn@aefjn.org

JUST THINKING

Common Goods, an Alternative to Neoliberalism

The concept of collective common goods, managed by the community and accessible to all its members, is found in the Bible. Alongside the vision of common goods at a global level, they present a possible alternative to today's dominant neoliberalism. On the global scale, their management and accessibility would have to be regulated by a democratic global body that would guarantee the sustainability of the resource and the collective right to make use of it. [Read more](#)

FROM THE AEFJN DESK

The EU Arms Industry and the EU Crisis

The reduction of the military budget necessitated by the EU financial crisis has had little impact on the sales of weapons. The cuts have come mainly from reducing expenditure on personnel, although in many EU countries the purchase of too many and too sophisticated military equipment contributed to the debt burden. The destination of weapons and part of its production has shifted from Europe and the USA to the developing countries, mainly in the Middle East and Asia. [Read more](#)

Farmers Must be Involved in Climate Negotiations!

For generations, African family farmers have been tuning in to the knowledge of their ancestors to help them adapt to changing weather conditions and so provide enough food. This article gives examples of how this can continue to be done. [Read more](#)

Differences and the Difficulties on EPA Negotiations

Currently, there are five Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) negotiations between the EU and African regions. The EU tries to negotiate with African countries as if both parties had the same living conditions and their economies had the same level of development. But the reality is quite different. The expectations envisage economic growth for European companies while African States may need additional resources because of declining revenues caused by EPAs. [Read more](#)

ALSO IN THE NEWS

New EU Good Distribution Practices of Medicinal Products

The European Commission has published the revised 'Guidelines on Good Distribution Practice of Medicinal Products for Human Use' worked out by the European Medicines Agency. The last guidelines were issued in 1994. The new ones cover the whole distribution chain and all the firms involved (regardless of their location, even in free zones, and including brokers). It also applies to products for export only. It strengthens the requirements on Quality Assurance systems and traceability to limit the entry of falsified products. [Read more](#)

The Role of European Development Finance Institutions in Land Grabs

Large-scale land transactions have increased dramatically recently in developing countries, in particular in Africa: about 80 million hectares of farmland has already been transferred to foreign investors. Aprove found that European Development Finance Institutions (DFI's) are involved in land grabs and that there is a significant risk for their contribution to such deals in the future. [Read more](#)

Transparency in the Extractive Sector

The EU has started the process for a new Directive relating to the transparency of European companies working in the extractive mining sector. This initiative is inspired by the Dodd-Frank Act and affects European companies working abroad in the oil, gas and forestry sectors. Through this directive, all payments over 100,000 Euro made to foreign governments to obtain mining contracts have to be published to guarantee transparency. [Read more](#)

VOICES FROM THE NETWORK

AEFJN's 25th anniversary - Antenna of the Netherlands

The celebration of the Dutch Antenna featured a presentation by René Grotenhuis, director of Cordaid, author of several books about international development and president of the Society for International Development. In his view, the essence of the work of any organization that wants to improve the living conditions of the marginalized is **to change power structures**. [Read more](#)

ACTION

Write to Your Government asking to Ratify the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

Please write a letter ([click here for the model letter](#)) to your Minister of Foreign Affairs asking him/her to introduce the necessary legislation to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty without delay in order to facilitate the regulation of sales of conventional weapons. [Read more](#)

ADVOCACY

Presentation of the Report in the Belgian Parliament: "The Rush for Land"

On June 10, 2013, in cooperation with other Belgian civil society organisations, AEFJN presented the report "The Rush for Land, Is Belgium complicit in the new global Wild West?" to the Belgian parliament. This report analyses the involvement of Belgians in land-grabbing abroad and includes case studies from Africa and other parts of the world. (Report only in French). [Read more](#)

VIDEOS

[Video on the oil and mining industry in Chad and Colombia](#). Activists speak about their struggle. (5 mins)

["The scourge of bio-piracy \(Le fléau de la biopiraterie\)"](#) : the dangers of patents for seed and food sovereignty. (2mins)

["A qui profite le cuivre ?"](#) : Documentary on the copper exploitation in Zambia. (63min, only in French)

["Please Choose Us, Not Dictators: on the ATT"](#) : The importance of UN member states signing the treaty. The ATT will take effect 90 days after 50 member states ratify it. (2 mins).

["Le droit foncier, solution à l'accaparement des terres \(Land law, the solution for land grabbing\)"](#) : Video on a proposed solution to land grabbing, namely simplified land title deeds for family farmers. (4min, only in French)