

Afterword

Amber Murray, A certain Amount of Madness, the life politics and legacy of Thomas Sankara, Pluto Press

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We salute the resistance of the people of Burkina Faso, particularly the progressive forces and those engaged youth of Burkina, who shouted '*Sankara lives*', while overthrowing the regime of Compaore. And we especially honour all the martyrs.

Thomas Sankara knew the risks he ran, for he respected and was conscious of the long line of martyrs stretching back to the dawn of African decolonization ... Ben Barka, Mondlane, Moumié, Um Nyobé, Rwagasoré, Lumumba, and Olympio, just to name a few. ... Although the list was already long, it continued to grow after the assassination of Sankara, with the addition of Machel, Dulcie September, Chris Hani ...and others.

It is said that behind every great man is a great woman. In the case of Thomas Sankara, that woman is Mariam Serme. The courage and resistance of this woman in the face of adversity is an example of resilience for all of Africa. As a First Lady, she remained humble and undertook her professional obligations as a true woman of the people. Until today, she remains convinced that social progress cannot occur without a radical change in the status of women. On the death of her husband and friend in the company of his unfortunate comrades, she proved a model of dignified resistance, which she sustained until the end of the ten-year ban. She also held faith with the International Committee for Justice for Sankara, when we dared to file a complaint dealing with Sankara's death. In doing so, the CIJS created a precedent against impunity. All Africa owes much to the Committee for the struggle against impunity including the defense of our martyrs and independence. Much ground has been lost during the thirty years that followed Thomas Sankara's assassination.

The disengagement and re-engineering of States has given rise to a new cast of plutocrats across the globe. With the connivance of a revamped imperialism, it has monopolized the resources of the African continent. This unjust enrichment has not only reconstituted the francAfrique fringe but also fed the arrogance of the regime in Ouaga. The government has positioned itself at the heart of rewriting the mining codes, holding a fire sale of State corporations and promoting the geopolitical recomposition of the sub-region. The regime has also demonstrated a capacity for creating conflict, displayed its bullying tactics, and functioned as a mediator and/or fire fighter-pyromaniac. In addition, it has corrupted many fringe elements of the left, including even those within the ranks of the Sankara-ites and considerably dampened resistance. Despite that, the resistance has continued and we are confident that it will put the regime to rest by throwing out the contradictions that it has created. Today, on the eve of the revolt of the youth of Burkina and the return of the Republic, confronting impunity has played a key role in the success of the popular uprising. In addition, securing justice for our martyrs will test the maturity of the army and the judiciary.

In the case of all of those martyrs like Cabral or Sankara, it was only the people in their inner circle, their intimates, who knew their secrets and could get prior knowledge of the day they would die. As the saying goes, '**too much trust breeds treason**'. Despite it all, Sankara like

Cabral never gave in to paranoia and potential crime. On the contrary, he followed his natural tendency towards tolerance and unity rather than divisiveness, and, in the end, that was what did him in.¹

Sankara was the last African head of state in the 20th century who successfully tried, without going through a stage of war for national liberation, to follow in Cabral's and Castro's footsteps. However, that stopped abruptly when he was betrayed by his brother-in-arms Blaise Compaoré in collusion with *Françafrique* and an international plot. Compaoré, the sophisticated face of treachery, as well as willing steward of French machinations and sinister designs against the whole region, was exfiltrated by his godfathers in total impunity, to be master of all he surveys. He was granted asylum, elite status and offered citizenship in Cote d'Ivoire. While he was the Minister of Justice, he brazenly and outrageously claimed that Sankara died of natural causes at the exact same time as a dozen of his colleagues. To this very day he refuses to allow the truth about his treasonous actions to come out. While there is impunity and imperialist protection for it, treason will never end.

"Impunity, either in life or in the law, is defined by what is missing. That can mean the absence of prosecutorial provisions against violators of human rights or those who neglect their civil, administrative or disciplinary responsibilities. It may also mean the absence of a properly constituted investigatory system that might lead to charges, arrest, trial, and, if parties are found guilty, conviction and appropriate punishment, up to and including compensation for the victims for having suffered prejudicial acts".²

Here's a review of the facts of our struggle:

Twenty years ago, the Group for Research and Initiative for the Liberation of Africa (GRILA, a Panafricanist group to which I belong) answered the call for justice by creating an international campaign with a two-pronged strategy that was both political and legal. It has been my privilege to co-ordinate a team of 22 lawyers defending Mariam and her sons, who put together a case for a full investigation into the murder of President Sankara and a dozen of his colleagues.³

From 1997 to 2001, the CIJS exhausted all of the legal recourses available to it in Burkina and was shamefully blocked at the level of the Supreme Court by a judiciary controlled by the Compaore régime. The government of Burkina Faso, under the presidency of Blaise Compaoré, along with a highly compromised judicial system, blocked all efforts by the Campaign to bring the case to court locally. The absence of a public inquiry and legal proceedings to determine the identity and civil and criminal responsibilities of Thomas

¹ Aziz Salmone Fall, *The Cancer of Betrayal which We Must uproot from Afrika*, in Firoze Manji & Bille Fletcher, *Claim no Easy Victory, The Legacy of Amilcar Cabral*, CODESRIA, Dakar, 2013, p171

² ENSEMBLE DE PRINCIPES POUR LA PROTECTION ET LA PROMOTION DES DROITS DE L'HOMME PAR LA LUTTE CONTRE L'IMPUNITÉ
<http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/3beb2ad845c6874c8025666a003d41e2?Opendocument>

³ Aziz Salmone Fall, *Postface, Ndongo Samba Sylla, Redécouvrir Sankara, Martyr de la liberté*, Africavenir, Douala, Berlin, 2012

Sankara's assassins, and the failure to rectify his death certificate constitute a serious denial of justice. The failure to establish the competence of the military courts and to charge us an abnormally high deposit was to obstruct the examination of our complaint. The case was then dismissed for the non-payment of a symbolic deposit, that the one of plaignant Auguste Sankara a minor should have been exempted from paying under the legislation in force.

After exhausting all possible legal recourses within the country, the Campaign brought the case before the UNHRC. The UNHRC decided in favour of the International Justice for Sankara Campaign, and demanded that the government of Burkina Faso take action to shed light on the circumstances of Thomas Sankara's death. (Communication No. 1159/2003, UN Doc. CCPR/C/86/D/1159/2003 2006).

The UN Human Rights Committee, seized by the CIJS, considered that : following judgment No 46 of the Supreme Court of Burkina Faso of June 19, 2001, rendering definitive decision No. 14 of the Court of Appeal, declaring the jurisdictions of common law incompetent, the authorities of Burkina Fason refused to send the case to jurisdictions of the Ministry of Defense in order to begin judicial proceedings before the military tribunals, as provided by article 71(1) and (3) of the Code of Military Justice; and that the prosecutor wrongfully stopped the procedure we had begun. The Committee stated the following :

« The family of Thomas Sankara has the right to know the circumstances of his death...The Committee considers that the refusal to conduct an investigation regarding the death of Thomas Sankara, the official non-recognition of the location of his remains and the non-rectification of his death certificate, constitute inhumane treatment regarding Mrs. Sankara and her sons, contrary to article seven of the Pact.

With respect to paragraph 3(1) of article 2 of the Pact, the State party is required to ensure a useful and effective remedy for Mrs. Sankara and her sons, consistent, notably, with the official recognition of the location of his burial site and damages for the pain and anguish that the family has undergone.

The State party cannot explain the delays at issue and on this point. The Committee considers that, contrary to the arguments of the State, no ban can invalidate the action before the military tribunal, and from this point, the decision regarding non-denunciation of the matter before the Minister of Defense returns to the prosecutor, who has the sole authority to do so.

The Compaore regime proposed different non-contentious recourses : the College of Elders, the Commission of national reconciliation, the Fund for the compensation of victims of political violence, the Mediator of Faso. However, these recourses were not binding. In the face of the complacency of certain UN experts, the Compaoré régime found itself confronted instead with the determination of our lawyers. We demanded the designation of an expert, or that an independent and respected forensic laboratory proceed with the identification of the DNA.

But the Human Rights Committee did not retain the right to demand an enquiry, nor did it demand compensation or recognition of Sankara's burial place. Paradoxically, Burkina Faso has not provided any evidence to prove the authenticity of the burial site. The compensation

offered to the family came to 43,445 FCFA – around €66,231 or US\$65,000. Some experts estimate that the sum was more generous despite an obvious typo on the zero in the amount (\$650,000/434 450 FCFA) and that the State made an effort by crossing out the word ‘natural’ on the odious death certificate, which claimed that Sankara had died of natural causes. Despite the amendment of the figure by our lawyers and the fact that Sankara pilgrims to a grave in the cemetery are not proof that he is actually buried there, the Human Rights Committee declared in April 2008 that it was satisfied with its findings and had no intention of taking the matter any further. But the CIJS pursued the fight against impunity, especially as Burkina Faso continued to rack up other prosecutable violations. The truth must be known so that the Burkinabe can move on from an era of impunity.

President Compaoré, Sankara’s suspected killer, became a mediator in the Guinea crisis. On Radio France International, he declared without missing a beat: ‘We cannot tolerate that there are still discussions in Guinea about disappeared people whose bodies have not been found’. Thomas Sankara’s body was never found and that’s why one of our former lawyers Me Nkounkou introduced a confinement request procedure, to which the authorities have not responded. Following up on the UN decision, CIJS waited years for the authorities to prove that the supposed tomb of Sankara is indeed his. On 15 October 2009, the legal committee of the CIJS, represented by Me Nzeppa, filed a request for a subpoena and order for the DNA of the corpse in the sepulchre, erected by the Burkina Faso government, to be compared with that of Sankara’s children. A procedural calendar was established on February 9, 2011. On March 11, 2011, the State of Burkina Faso raised an objection, noting that the Tribunal de Grande Instance de Ougadougou lacked the jurisdiction to proceed, that the demand was inadmissible. Then, the presumed tomb of Thomas Sankara was vandalized June 20, 2011. The Compaoré régime affirmed that it was someone with a mental disorder that committed this act and announced the deployment of police at the site to ensure the security of the presumed tomb. Only two years and four months later, the presumed tomb was once again vandalized and liquid was spilled all over it, in spite of the presence of police in front of the main door of the cemetery. By judgement, dated April 30, 2015, the complaint of the CIJS regarding DNA identification, was rejected due to the alleged lack of jurisdiction of the Tribunal.

At the time, Blaise Compaore was also President of the Superior Court of the Magistrature. The magistrature was so infected by impunity that it was excluded from the process of transition. Only a judiciary with integrity can ensure that the struggle against impunity is effective, with courts and tribunals that are impartial and vigilant regarding the protection of collective and individual rights.

There were high hopes that after the popular uprising, a constitutional assembly could correct the distortions of the judicial system and its dependence on the executive as well as reforming the army. Meanwhile, taking note of the courageous determination of the new regime to investigate Sankara's graves, our lawyers advised that this process be undertaken with forensic scrutiny and according to law, so that no evidence would be overlooked.

Therefore, we required forensic expertise and counter forensic expertise. However, the judge never retained the international lab that we recommended for the expertise. The results

revealed that the two analyses on the bodies of the victims were negative. We were surprised that the sample of genetic material from the remains of about ten of the victims of October 15th 1987 had decomposed to the point that nothing could be identified. The legal-medical investigation in Burkina is technically limited and appears to offer little recourse. The scene of the crime was never really sealed off after October 15th 1987 and we cannot confirm the quality of the process of sterilization that followed the exhumation of the bodies.

The state undertook to supervise, recuperate and examine the presumed remains of the president (including his clothes and personal effects). Me Benwende Sankara requested a bailiff during the second act of vandalism of the tomb of the president when the liquids were spilled everywhere. We were not able to obtain any samples of the contaminated soil in order to determine if the liquid had a corrosive property. In that case, could a corrosive liquid have been poured on all of the tombs? At this stage, the identification of a degraded DNA and the negative results cannot be allowed to prejudice the proceeding.

The fight against impunity means taking a holistic approach. Today impunity is enthroned in every facet of African life. That includes human, civil and political rights, as well as economic, social, cultural, gender or ecological rights.

By firing on the patriotic and unarmed youth, RSP has aggravated impunity issues, and has been sullied by atrocities that have spread blood over the entire sub-region. Several of its leaders, like other pundits of the old regime, have comfortable pensions from the mining, transport and real estate sectors. They have become rich from the wars of Sierra Leone and Liberia, and by circumventing the ban on UNITA diamonds in Angola. Profits also flowed from destabilizing the Côte d'Ivoire during the mediation process, ambiguous hostage-taking and terrorist exploitation in the Sahel.

RSP, in its arrogance, claims to defend the interests of supporters of the former regime. In fact, General Diendere was a centerpiece of Françafrique along with some other personalities in his entourage. In 2008, Gilbert Diendéré, was honoured in France and received the *legion d'honneur*, one of the highest national honours in France. This indicates that in Burkina Faso, as well as in France, people who killed Thomas Sankara are not just tolerated with total impunity, but actually supported and promoted by some prominent politicians. Diendéré was also a leading architect of Flintlock manoeuvres and US-led counter-terrorism operations in the Sahel. He has overseen the secret bases for drones, Sand Creek, Ouagadougou airport and Aztec Archer intelligence services for the Embassy of the United States.

The political and constitutional crisis in Burkina has unleashed an explosion of international indignation. While Compaore has been chased out of power in October 2014 by the popular uprising after 27 years of misrule, he has still left behind his right-hand guards, the RSP, and some rogue terrorists from the Niger-Mali-Lybia compact. After repeatedly disrupting the political transition, the RSP is now attempting to obstruct the political transition sought by the people of Burkina Faso. They have failed for now, although they are still trying to undermine the army and judicial reforms. *The Islamist terrorist cells allied to Compaoré are*

still active in the whole sub-region and there is ongoing political blackmail behind the militarised management of the continent.

On Tuesday September 29th, 2015 the regular army surrounded the camp of RSP. Gunfire was heard near the presidential palaces and the RSP barracks. Around 300 of the presidential guard's estimated 1,200 soldiers had surrendered at a second camp in the capital. Regular army troops had taken control of strategic locations previously occupied by the renegades. Many of these soldiers and their supporters have dispersed into the countryside. Their reputation as death squads and their refusal to surrender have fueled fears in the population. The government ordered an inquiry of the coup, and on Saturday September 26th the state prosecutor froze the accounts of Diendéré and 13 others suspected officers linked to the coup.

Diendéré never accepted being dismissed from the leadership of the RSP, and like his sponsors, has not digested the decision to ban representatives of the old regime from presidential candidacy. The coup, lead by General Diendéré, occurred just hours before the scheduled hearing of the investigating judge in the Sankara case. The judge had convened attorneys of the *CIJS International Campaign Justice for Sankara* on September 17 to share the results of the ballistics and DNA testing. It is very likely that findings from those tests might have helped to incriminate General Diendéré. Diendéré is a notorious member of the death squad that put a bloody end to the Burkina Faso revolution in 1987.

His coup aimed to redistribute the cards and change the balance of power. It is therefore not surprising that the Heads of States of ECOWAS, improvising as mediators, have proposed softer crisis solutions than those of the African Union. Together as heads of state, they fear copy-cat uprisings in their own countries which are afflicted by the same problems. They dare not intervene against neocolonial plans, against preserving the status quo and ongoing recolonization. If their intention is to avoid civil war and to appear as neutral mediators, their position has been far from impartial, as they have reinforced the mutineers. This is due to an endemic culture of impunity, political destabilization and economic and violent crime, as happened in Burkina and in the subregion. *Balai citoyen* took courageously to the streets to end impunity. Grassroots opposition fiercely resisted the plotters as well as the regulatory measures of the ECOWAS mediators, so that Diendere was later arrested and charged. The Burkinabe military tribunal issued a warrant of arrest against Blaise Compaoré. It indicted 13 suspects in connection with the assassination of Sankara and his comrades. While we are awaiting and preparing for the trial, the death in 2017 of Etienne Zongo, Valere Somé and Salif Diallo represent significant losses for those counting on the testimony of witnesses.

Air Force Lieutenant Etienne Zongo, Sankara's chief military officer, had served at his side since the revolution. After Sankara's assassination, he was captured, tortured and detained without trial for two years. After President Rawlings' mediation, he was released and, fearing for his life, sought asylum in Ghana. He was disconnected from his family for seven years, as described in his daughter's book.⁴ He has testified before a judge but still

⁴ Nathalia Zongo, *When Everything Has Fallen*, Booksurge Publishing, 2007

possesses important secrets. His sudden death is ambiguous. Valere Somé young ideologist of the revolution was asked by Sankara to draft a program for the unification of revolutionary organizations and factions. After Sankara's assassination, Somé sought asylum in Congo Brazzaville and later went back home and formed an opposition party, the Party for Social Progress. He told me that there are things that he will only reveal the day of the trial.

Salif Diallo died in France as Burkina Faso National Assembly president and head of the ruling party. He surfaced on the waves of the transition after the 2014 upheaval. But in fact, he was Compaore's best and closest ally for years. Director of the Cabinet of Compaoré from 1987 to 1989, Minister of Environment and Water and Minister of Agriculture from 2000 to 2008. One year after we lodged the Sankara complaint in Ouaga, on the night of November 27th 1998, Salif Diallo pretended that sensitive, key documents related to Sankara were stolen from his room at Hotel Bristol in France, while he was on an official visit with Ablassé Ouedraogo the then foreign minister of Burkina Faso.

The regime was nervous, because on march 23, 1998, in order No06/98, the examining judge decided, in contradiction to the prosecutor decision not to open a judicial investigation, that the Ouagadougou Superior Court was the proper court of competence to examine our case. According to Blaise Compaoré 's version, he and Salif Diallo were together when Blaise allegedly heard the gun shots on October 15th, 1987. Some high-ranking Liberian soldiers who were part of the plot denied the facts, saying that Compaoré was indeed in a Conseil de l'entente on D day.

Salif Diallo was always trying to prove that whatever else transpired, he was not part of the tragic plot and the Bristol documents would have proven it. In 2004, Salif Diallo fell ill and was sent to France, where Compaore visited him in hospital and then reserved a suite at the very same Bristol Hotel. Salif Diallo later sent his Cameroonian friend to bribe me after our victory at the UN in 2006. In 2008, Compaoré cut ties with him, and he was appointed ambassador to Austria. He still played various diplomatic and mediation roles for the regime before resigning from Compaore's party on January 6th, 2014.

On January 25th, 2014, he joined Simon Compaoré and Roch Marc Kabore to found the ruling People's Movement for Progress (MPP). Salif Diallo pretended that he escaped death on October 15th, 1987, because Compaoré sent him to deliver a secret note to Thomas Sankara, two hours prior to the assassination. ⁵ I was expecting explanations about that bribe incident, as well as those famous Bristol documents, during his June 2017 visit to Canada, when our scheduled meeting was abruptly cancelled.

⁵ "I was at the home of Minister Blaise Compaoré. He was suffering, he had a document that he had to hand over to President Thomas Sankara, and to tell you the truth, I was two fingers away from the meeting where Thomas Sankara died. I should have been at the meeting. I only barely escaped it ... Had it not been for the fact that Thomas Sankara sent me to retrieve the document, I would have been among the victims". Interview with Salif Diallo, L'événement, <https://www.evenement-bf.net/spip.php?article1662>

The struggle against impunity is difficult and holistic. As human beings we need to understand that we should respect the rights of all other living beings on this earth, including those who have no rights. This is a question of critical importance. For example, let's look at what's happening in the Congo. As the world averts its eyes with studied indifference, six million Congolese have lost their lives, sacrificed on the altar of globalization and consumerism, largely because impunity is embedded in the system that governs their lives, and networks of transnational corporations always operate beyond the reach of any law. The laws themselves permit our resources to be pillaged and our sovereignty to be whittled away. Elsewhere, in the Maghreb, in spite of an uprising for democracy, the prevalence of impunity prevents accountability and, in the final analysis, facilitates counter-revolution. Obscure religious forces that fit right into the globalized security and neoliberal order gut progressive gains and betray whatever hope they bring.

Sankara was a dedicated organic intellectual of the masses and a leading figure of the so-called Third World or Global south. He inspires the Bandung and Panafrikanist spirit of the 21st century - the formation and crystallisation of intellectuals who are organic to the interests of the masses and the working class, the victims of imperialism. Intellectuals may find a role in a revolutionary moment, not necessarily as farsighted leaders, but alongside those who struggle for democratic power. The Bandung legacy is no longer one of neutrality. Today its spirit needs to build an anti-*comprador* social bloc, rooted in a tri-continental strategy within the so-called Global South. I call that internationalist constellation, *TransInternationalism*, since change in the 21st century arises from the South.⁶

The 60 years of non-alignment offer an opportunity to start a fresh page, instead of enduring the unipolar era and its fatal spiral. Most of the Non-aligned Movement's spirit are in the 10 items of Bandung's platform and are still pertinent: resisting the military control of the planet; advocating national and international policies for a more equitable management of resources for all peoples and safeguarding the rights of nations to choose their own development, while ensuring peace and solidarity among them.

Thomas Sankara knew that the logic of the market, destructive of social relations and the environment, is embedded in development, just like a Trojan horse. Development has gone astray in the acceleration of capital accumulation. Globalization, however, a historical reality many centuries old, has become a euphemism to describe the acceleration of capitalist accumulation and the redeployment of imperialism. This is done under the leadership of oligopolies, plutocracies, and the strong, remaining pockets of State power that are still geopolitically dominant. The pressure that this conjunction of oligopolies, plutocrats and dominant states still exerts on labor exploitation and surplus value accentuates global polarization. The economic asymmetry is aggravated by a confusion between modernization

⁶ Aziz Salmone Fall, Postface, *Towards a New Movement : Aligned Trans-Internationalism in Darwis Khudori*, Editor, Bandung at 60, New Insights and Emerging forces, Pustaka Pelajar-ARENA, CIRFA, CODESRIA-Global U, Yogyakarta, 2015

and westernisation that accentuates tendencies towards homogenization and standardization, without being able to achieve them, despite the capture of hypnotized masses.

Submitted to structural adjustments policies and harsh conditions, in the past three decades, African countries seem paralyzed and scattered under the brutal dispossession they undergo. The Nation-State has been sorely lacking in the development of public politics. The negative socio-political and ecological consequences of these measures will take decades to stamp out in our countries.

People and societies are not passive, but the depolitization of the neoliberal era has even undermined political organisation. However, resistance persists everywhere, especially with the "emergence" of the so-called BRICS, still less than 15% of world GDP, who somehow manage to have better control of their accumulation. That control threatens the hegemony of the dominant blocs of the imperialist Troika - United States-Europe-Japan. Having lost in the economic field, the Troika is reduced to co-opting the so-called emerging countries, as in the G20, to reinvigorate their own declining growth-rate, while maintaining all the other countries in stagnation.

Their modus operandi is strategic and geopolitical interference to reaffirm supremacy in the South; dispossession of natural resources by exploiting conflicts and controlling various terrorist expressions. In many places, the latter also have their own genuine agenda. The strategy practiced entails forcing all countries to align under the Troika's safe crusade or face disruption of international cooperation and redirection of foreign investment. Comprador bourgeoisie, subaltern allies of the globalised bourgeoisie are benefitting from this globalized consensus. Growth without proper redistribution to the masses is a big part of the problem!

North-South co-operation and solidarity remain a chimera maintained by the global elites. So-called development aid, ODA, has never reached 0,7%; and the famous millennium development goals and poverty reduction strategies that just failed were mainly diversions in the neoliberal agenda. Even the brand-new UN's sustainable development goals, to be reached in 2030, which need roughly a yearly investment of \$4000 billion over 15 years, or even the African Union's agenda 2063 depends on the compliance of so many kinds of complicated political will, as well as conditions from flow from the private sector and its fiscal impositions, that we can already question their outcome. Sankara understood it all and had the foresight to know that most of these international co-operation tricks were objectively regulatory strategies for actively including African countries in the role of dependents in the world economy.

However, resistance continues since the failed NIEO (New international economic order). In objecting to capital flight; in trying to regulate investments; in defending agrarian integrity against land-grabbing as well as land reforms ensuring food self-sufficiency and protection of their production and peasantry; in developing antibodies against the neoliberal virus; in advocating peace versus militaristic crusades, the spirit of progressive Panafricanism persists in many strata of our societies.

On the other hand, far too many of our intellectuals are willing to cut embarrassing deals for a few filthy perks. How did our elites sink to such depths of consumerist greed that our people have become numbed and can no longer defend those gains carved out of the struggles that

our martyrs led? We badly need to repoliticize our youth based on panAfrican ethical rules and fundamental human values. But that would demand an extensive mobilization campaign with the objective of erasing the culture of impunity, which both covers up and funds treachery. Today, we are facing a bigger threat than the national liberation struggle was tackling, and it is continent-wide.

In the film *Africom Go Home: foreign bases out of Africa*⁷ the issue of getting all foreign military bases out of Africa is front and centre, particularly AFRICOM, the French occupation, and now Japanese, Chinese or German military facilities. The documentary follows Nkrumah's and Sankara's footsteps, exploring how the US AFRICOM came into existence and what it means. It also provides a way of interpreting imperialist rivalries and ambitions on the continent, including why they spy on each other and exposes the contradictions that have surfaced in the "fight against terrorism".

The film gives voice to disbelief in claims of humanitarian goals by those who established AFRICOM for Africa, with the help of surrogate forces like the Compaoré regime, after building a whole network of bases stretching as far as Germany. It explores contradictions that have also arisen between Africans and within African organizations as they try to defend themselves within a context of conflicts tied to the looting of their resources and the appropriation of their ancestral lands. It examines the continued and urgent need for panAfrican and internationalist resistance as well as the re-politicization of our Youth for a democratic future.

It is important to build on the historical struggles that have been fought and to work more boldly on others, in order to realize the genuine achievements of our people. There have been substantial but fragile gains of the left in Latin America. The brakes have been placed on the uprisings in North Africa, as well as more recently on tiny Burkina Faso. We need to work against the disarray of the Left and for a democratic repoliticization of the masses. A major portion of these populations, the so-called lumpen-proletariat or reserve army, has been rendered superfluous by global capitalism, which tries to contain their desperate migrations. As Guevara in his speech at the Afro Asian economic forum in Algiers: «In this way an immense underlying force in our continents, miserably exploited but never aided in their development, could be put in motion, and a new stage of an authentic division of labour could be begun, based not on the history of what has been done up to now, but on what can be done in the future»⁸

United against the oppression of nations, the potential to regain the path of self-reliance and strengthen the Tricontinental front are the only exit possible against the crisis of the global South. But this radical reform of the post-Bandung front is eminently political and must be realized through the rediscovery of internationalism and the defense of the common good of

⁷ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Wu8vC9MLoU>

⁸ Ernesto Che Guevara, Internationalism and Anti-imperialism, Afro asian economic seminar Alger 1965, in Tricontinental, 1967, p25

humanity. Democratic re-politicization of our masses, to resist the tide through the rebuilding of the Tricontinental entente may counter the military momentum of collective imperialism.

Whether multilateral or transnational, the regulatory mechanisms that exist globally to protect the commons, have become archaic or inoperable. It therefore falls to the Tricontinental Front, to an international of workers and people, to address the issue of “the commons”, the last non-commodified public spaces and promote the adoption of a Universal Declaration for the common good of humanity. This strategy must reflect viewpoints from progressive forces in the South, but also those in the North who are willing to offer their support.

To do this, we must now pass this phase of indignation and engage more deeply. We must show, as Sankara did, even more audacity and organisation towards the development of a tricontinental internationalist political platform of convergence, until we reach the *transinternationalist* phase. That will be a second decisive step in reviving the Bandung spirit and towards affirming democratic and popular sovereignty. At this point, however, it is important to make a firm commitment to complete the gains of the preceding era and to affirm an alignment with Nation-States, popular movements, social groups, associations, or individuals, on the basis of internationalism on the basis of the specific contemporary condition, that is a marker of this transnational era.

The new Panafricanist path opened by Sankara provides a roadmap for a societal project in a polycentric world, where popular forces of the South are fed up with the North-South monologue. The term I coined, *Panafricentrage*, describes a proposal to reorient globalization towards development that is truly about balance-*ma'at*-, social justice, protecting Mother Earth, well-being, proper conduct and attitude.⁹

CIJS trusts that the new regime in Ouaga will find the appropriate and impartial structure to ensure that our 20 years of work will end with the establishment of the truth and turn the page of impunity once and for all. CIJS repeats its plea to civil society in FRANCE, the USA and the Ivory Coast, urging their help in opening up the files that can reveal the identity of anyone with a hand in Thomas Sankara's assassination. CIJS is thankful for the initiative, Justice pour Sankara, Justice pour l'Afrique, simultaneously pursued by Bruno Jaffré and his comrades. It gained the support of many MPs for declassifying the French archives regarding Thomas Sankara's assassination. We are also grateful to the Burkinabe people for their ongoing support and encourage them to be vigilant and keep up their struggle against impunity..... We hereby join with all progressive forces in recommending to the responsible leaders of Burkina that they make a commitment:

- To ensure the independence of the judiciary and allow prosecution of all pending cases.
- To end Impunity
- To prosecute *those complicit in the terrorist destabilisation of the Sahel*

⁹ Panafricentrage , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTLT4-xC6VM>

- To prohibit travel and freeze the assets of all members of the so-called "National Committee for Democracy" and anyone who has contributed to their terrorist enterprise
- To provide an audit of public funds of all stake-holders, politicians and senior government officials in charge of portfolios during the Compaore' era.
- To revise the mining code, including its military and security component, signed by the Compaore regime, international development cooperation programs.
- To dissolve and disband the vestiges of the RSP by restructuring the national army and its neocolonial trusteeship under foreign forces.
- To convene a national conference on development focused on meeting the basic needs of the population and a implementing a fair redistribution of the resources and production of the country.