



## **Invitation to the Civil Society Development Forum 2008 Geneva Component**

### **"A Platform for Development: Countdown to 2015" Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development**

**International Labour Office --- Geneva, 27 – 28 October 2008**

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

25 September 2008

The Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) has the pleasure to invite you to the **Geneva Component** of its **Civil Society Development Forum (CSDF) 2008 - "A Platform for Development: Countdown to 2015: Implementing the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development"**. This event is being organized with the support of several CONGO members, substantive committees and partners, including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The Geneva Component of CONGO's CSDF 2008 is to carry further the conclusions and recommendations spelled out in the [Outcome Document](#) of the [New York Component](#), held from 27 to 29 June 2008 back-to-back with the Substantive Session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Geneva Component is expected to deepen this review and develop further the positions on key global issues brought to the forefront in that document. This task includes an assessment of the document's impact on the [Ministerial Declaration](#) of the 2008 High-Level Segment of ECOSOC.

The ultimate objective of the Geneva Component is to produce the *Geneva Recommendations* which will be subsequently submitted to the ECOSOC Bureau and the United Nations Secretariat (UN/DESA). The *Geneva Recommendations* would be expected to feed into discussions at ECOSOC, including into ECOSOC's reporting to the UN General Assembly. They should be valuable instruments for assisting civil society organizations in shaping their own strategies at international, regional and local levels to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

The Geneva Component will focus on two main substantive topics (with a cross-sectoral gender approach), comprising one session on each:

- 1) Global food crisis, food sustainability and food sovereignty;
- 2) Human rights and the development nexus (including issues of political decision-making and speculative commodity and financial movements).

Each session will feature presentations by two keynote speakers and an eyewitness account, followed by two breakout sessions in which participants are encouraged to express their positions on the topic of that session, with a view to shaping the text of a conclusive document. They will thus provide the many substantive elements for the *Geneva Recommendations*.



A discussion later in the afternoon of 28 October 2008 is to preview the topic of "MDGs and Health" so as to prepare the participants for next year's ECOSOC Substantive Session and the expected 2009 CONGO Civil Society Development Forum.

With this invitation, CONGO has the pleasure to invite you also to a reception on the evening on 27 October 2008 to celebrate the "Double Sixtieth Anniversary" of CONGO and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. One speaker each will evoke the 60 years' history of CONGO and of the Universal Declaration.

Due to space limitations and for the purpose of urgent logistics preparations, please complete the registration procedures no later than 15 October 2008 by completing the registration form that can be obtained on the [CSDF 2008 Website – Geneva Component](#).

We trust that you will make your travel arrangements early. We stand by to assist you in every way to secure your entry visas to Switzerland – should you need any. As this process costs time and resources, we will help in obtaining the visas after we get assurances from the participants concerned that they have the necessary means to attend the conference, unless other arrangements had been found following discussions with the CONGO offices.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Geneva.

Best regards,

Liberato Bautista  
CONGO President

Anna Biondi  
CONGO First Vice-President