

## ICYCW participation in EYF

### Stop talking Act Now!

23,5 % of young Europeans are unemployed, among which (25 %) in France. Nearly half of young workers occupy precarious jobs. 14 million youth aged 15 to 29 years in Europe, have neither job nor any training and are out of the school system often without any social protection. These figures give a scandalous reality to see; that is why it is urgent to act.

It is in this sense that the European Youth Forum, of which the ICYCW is a member and the youth committee of the European Confederation of Trade Unions, organized a counter-summit on the November 11, 12 and 13 at the European summit for youth employment.

At the counter-summit, several National Youth Councils of the European Countries were present ( Belgium, Germany, France, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Spain,...). This was the opportunity for us, to look at the state of the Youth in Europe and bring out common findings.

The slogan was simple "Stop talking, act now! ". They demanded the release of 15 billion euros and the missing European recovery plan to create jobs

The European Youth Forum is a real opportunity to share what everyone lives in their country. The situation of young people is a problem in all the European Countries. If we want to avoid being in competition with each other, we need to know and bring the aspirations of all to the European level.

Europe was built for a better living together and avoiding the confrontation against one another. But we see that markets, finance dictate our conduct and bring us into competition within the same EU. We cannot accept. It is at the European level that we must act as well. The European Youth Forum, is there for that. But it is also the duty of YCWs of Europe to carry out a collective evaluation on the situation of young workers and act together. It is at the European level that we must also gain new rights for all the Young people, in order to avoid competition.

**(Gwendal Ropars - YCW France National Secretary for External Relations)**

## ICYCW participation in the GEPO

From 18 to 21 September, the GEPO (European Group Pastoral Workers), met in Manchester on the theme "Change to hope-The plight of migrant and other workers."

Movements from different countries were represented. Philip, President of the England and Wales YCW and myself, Elise, the YCW France were representing the ICYCW. The first day of the conference, each country was able to share about its action towards migrants.

In Germany, the YCW has made a booklet that explains the origin of the Roms, there is also evidence of some of them and examples of actions realized by the YCW.

Lidmila of WMCW (World Movement of Christian Workers), explained that her country, the Czech Republic, needed immigration "the birth rate is very low, the population ages, who will work in the Czech Republic? Who will help to solidarity? ".

Throughout the symposium, speakers came to talk about immigration, as Kathleen Walker Shaw, GMB European responsibility, the UK trade union did. Kathleen expressed that Europe had helped to create bridges between unions in different countries and social achievements at the national level were strengthened through Europe.

She also reflected on the rise of the extreme right in several European countries and was concerned about the outcome of the forthcoming European elections. During this conference, we did not just talk! It was an opportunity for me to discover Manchester. And no, I have not seen the football Stadium but I visited the district of Trafford Park, the first industrial park in the world.

The last day, was for planning action! Philip and I thought it was important that the various YCWs of Europe sensitize young people to go and vote in the next European elections. For young migrants, all the YCW can do better, is to continue to reach and enable them to live the life review.



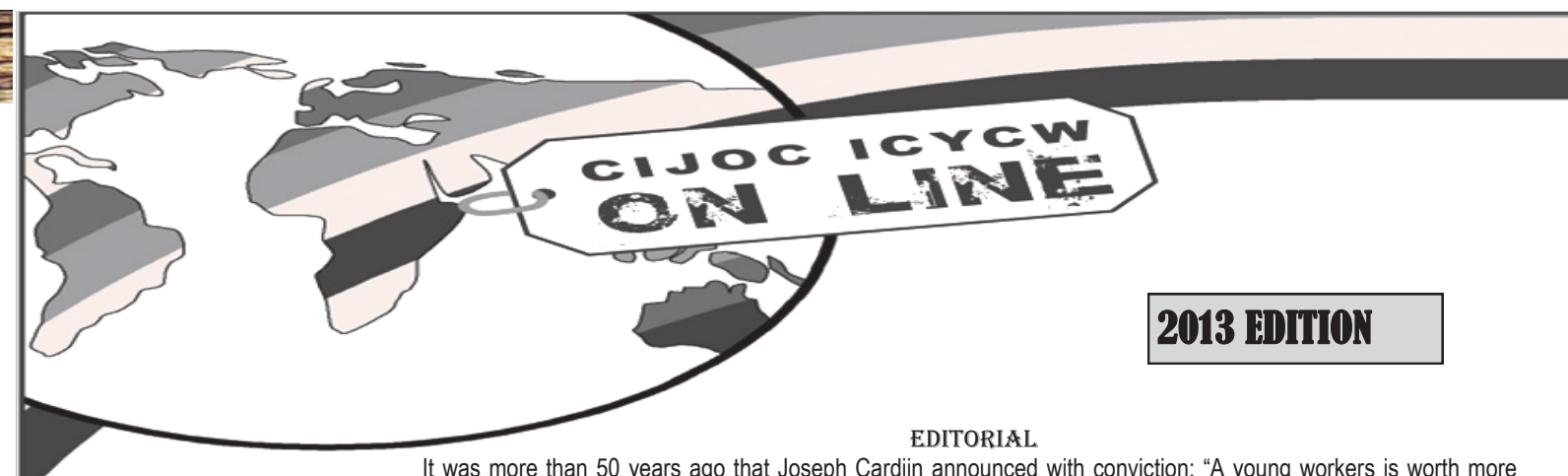
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The ICYCW is a non-profit International Youth Organisation for the evangelisation and education of young people of the world of work recognised by the Holy See through the Pontifical Council for the Laity as a private international association of the faithful.

It is as an organisation of the Church focused specifically on young people entering or experiencing the world of work/unemployment who are often oppressed, voiceless and at risk.



### EDITORIAL

It was more than 50 years ago that Joseph Cardijn announced with conviction: "A young workers is worth more than all the gold in the world because he/she is a son/daughter of God". Today the socio-political situation of society throughout the world leads us to think that the system of work and the people who direct it proclaim rather: "All the gold in the world is worth more than the dignity of a young worker ". In effect the world economic crisis, corruption, conditions of work which are more and more difficult, show young people that the possibility of growth and development in their social and professional life is minimal. This is only possible if the network of people around us have a big influence on us. However the value of work has not totally disappeared because many people continue to proclaim a message of hope for a better future.

The international institutions such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) are campaigning for "decent work". The concept of decent work was formulated in a three-way project of the ILO – governments, worker organisations and employers – as a means of identifying the main priorities of the Organisation. It is founded on the idea that work is a source of personal dignity, of family stability, of peace in the community, of democracy and of economic growth which increases the possibility of productive employment and the development of businesses (source: ILO)

Pope Francis reminds us often to put the human person and work at the centre. We have to say: "We want a just system! A system which enables us all to progress". We have to say: "We do not want this globalised economic system which is doing so much damage! ". Man and woman should be at the centre, as God wishes, not money! (Pope Francis)

To be agents of this change and to build a society in which decent work is a reality, the YCW Movements in all continents reflect and make concrete projects to respond together to the needs of young people!

### PAN AFRICA MEETING

A future for the young people in Africa is dependent on the inquiries, reflections and actions of the young leaders today. The YCW has kept its resilience in forming and developing young leaders who take up the responsibility of transforming their own lives and the lives of fellow young workers. Without a doubt the YCW experience has built leaders whose individual and group actions have impacted positively in the church and society.

The present situations facing young people call for deep reflections and action within the context of today's realities. Young leaders from Africa laid down strategies not only to spur development and extension to reach out to more young people, but also to create networks and platforms of exchanges. As a result, a Pan African meeting was proposed to take place bringing together young leaders from the 26 national movements across Africa for formation, exchange, and strategic planning .



The meeting would provide a stage for joint realization of what Africa is today and what place the young people have to take in it. Exchanges and trainings would provide an opportunity to unite the young leaders from different socio-cultural, political, economic backgrounds with an aim of forging common actions for implementation at local, national, and regional levels. This would reinforce the contribution and responsibility of the young people in church and society.

The future is always first presented as an idea but it takes people to build on it through commitment, sacrifice, and concrete actions. It is necessary to meet, brainstorm, and be the agents of change in the society in order to reach out and benefit a large number of young people and particularly those who are isolated due to the difficulties they encounter in their daily lives.

"The best apostle for a young person is a fellow young person" (Joseph Cardijn). This is therefore a call to the young people in Africa and partners of the ICYCW, to take up this mission and make the Pan African meeting a reality that will transform lives and at the same time leave behind beautiful testimonies and lessons for future generations.





TESTIMONIES

My name is Souleymane Almamy SYLLA. I was born in 1984 in Mopti. I went to school but had to stop in the sixth year in order to work and support myself. However, I have enrolled again for 3-4 years of studies, taking the evening classes. I am in the 10th year (equivalent to the high school).



I learnt the craft of leather making in my family. Since I was a child, I saw my parents (from my mother's family) do

this job and I learned by doing it alongside my big brothers from 1997 until 2007. I worked as an apprentice without getting paid. Since 2007 I am self employed, working in my own workshop and registered as a craftsman in the chamber of trades. My older brother went to work in Angola while another brother, Musa (who is paralysed), works in another area of Mopti. What I like about this job is that I am happy to do it and I'm happy because I love it! I love to create (shoes for example). I invent models and designs. The hardest thing for me is the lack of suitable equipment for sewing together the leather.

Currently I use hand tools which break oftenly. Additionally, the sales are not always consistent, as they are low when there are no tourists. Personally, I think that before working, you must have the heart! Before you do the work, you must love it! And if you love it, you have the courage to do it, and from then you can do serious work. As for working with leather, you have to do it with a lot of seriousness because it is a meticulous and precise work.

This is my toolbox! When i make a leather cover, I earn about 2,000 CFA (about 3.00 €). With a lot of work and good market, I can make up 60,000 – 70 000 CFA per month (about 100 €).

**(Souleymane Almamy SYLLA - YCW MALI)**

This year the Rodriguez YCW, gathered YCW job seekers from different regions of the island, different age, different levels of education and who are still seeking for a job. In the group, there are a dozen of young people. They meet as often as possible to the center hub that is located in Port Mathurin to share, discuss on the daily life crisis and also on the employment situation of the island.

These young people are finding it very difficult to find a job in Rodriguez. The massive exodus of Rodriguez to Mauritius and elsewhere has become a worrying phenomenon and young people are worried about their future in the island.

Given all these constraints and after several reflections, the Rodriguez YCW decided to take action by developing a project to help these young YCW have a permanent job and a fixed salary to support their needs. And the action will be done in collaboration with the Apostolic Vicariate of Rodriguez.

Our project consists in introducing a Creole store which will be located in the town of Port Mathurin, where we add value to local products including the sale of crystallized fruits, local fruits' juices (lemons, papayas, mangoes, pineapple ...) cassava, sweet potatoes, banana and other fruits' cakes. There will also be a space where two group members will display and sell embroidery hand made by them.

To realize the project, steps are underway, including meeting with Commissioner (Minister) for Youth, Madame Rose Delima EDWARD for the operation permit as well as the Bishop of Rodriguez, Archbishop Alain Harel for financing and other necessities.

**(YCW Rodriguez)**

What is YCW for me?

I think that this is the question that has been in my head for the last few months... if I had to summarize the answer in a word, it would be: change. A change in my way of understanding and seeing life.

Although I already knew something about the existence of YCW some time back, it was not until last Summer when I decided to join the Movement and start the experience of knowing it better by being part of the Movement.

For many years, I felt a big emptiness in my life, a need to take out what I was feeling and a need to recognize (or maybe know) myself. In Summer, when I knew and met people in YCW during the camp, from the first moment I had the feeling of being really where I wanted and needed to be and now I feel that I am really myself. Being able to share my concerns, my values and my way of understanding life with a group of young people, a group of people who are equal. I think it was a privilege.

For me, to be a Christian involves primarily a way of understanding life, some values, ideas and especially style of life in harmony with all that.

The vision of the Church and Christianity which is practiced today always makes me feel powerless; Empty of values, without any commitment, empty of any struggle for human dignity and it is too charitable. This is not the Church in which I believe nor the concept of Christianity that I have. And I like seeing that there are people and Movements that are also struggling to make known this "other face of the Church."

In our time, it is hard to find Movements formed by youths who search for "something more in life..." that can make them do something in order to change this unfair world in which we live and a space in which we can share experiences, thoughts and action proposals in order to achieve all these goals.

And I, personally, have found all this with YCW

**(Aina JOC Espagne)**



Participation of ICYCW at the International Labour Organization

TO SERVE, EDUCATE AND REPRESENT THE DIGNITY OF YOUNG WORKERS

The YCW gives a voice to those with no voice. It represents young people directly and fights for their just rights and human dignity. The YCW makes known the situations of oppression which young people suffer today in the world of work, education and family life. The YCW confronts these realities and is present as a sign of hope and freedom.

In its role of representation the ICYCW, through the International Secretariat, has as its mandate to make the voice of young workers from everywhere in the world heard in the different international fori and organisations. This year the ICYCW International Secretariat and Joel Bonita of YCW Portugal took part in the 102nd session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva.

This is Joel's testimony :  
« The Conference :  
In the opening session the three themes were presented which were going to be worked on during the working days of the Conference :  
Employment and social protection in the new demographic context ;  
Sustainable development, dignified work and green employment ;  
Social Dialogue.

During the first meeting of the Secretariat we divided responsibility among ourselves for the three themes since with ICYCW we could be present at all three. For the days during which the NGO's could observe the work carried out we were present in the work rooms where the participants were installed in the following way : workers, government and owners with the employers and the workers having to elect a

Partners of ICYCW

For a universal basic income

The World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW) launched a campaign themed "Universal Basic Income" to raise awareness and recognition to declare the need for everyone to have enough to live with dignity and cover all basic necessities for them and their family.

The situations of suffering families for not having minimum resources to live by, severe poverty, infringement of fundamental rights, inadequate decent jobs, exploitation and humiliation in work places is a reality that cuts across the continents. As such, people do not enjoy goods and rights; salary, social protection health, that come with having a decent job. The balance between capital and work is breaking down leading to loss of protection of workers' rights that previously accompanied any worker.

representative to be the spokesperson of their group.

In each of the sessions proposals were presented which were discussed and if possible approved. I was impressed by the way in which things were



organised by the different countries , continents ... the question was: Could we arrive at a common solution despite the big differences?

During the days in which we participated no resolution was presented regarding the problems identified, in response for example to the high percentage of elderly people in certain countries and on the other hand to the high proportion of young people without jobs in others.... and also in response to the countries which did not have any social security, where there was child labour, work without dignity ....

But I came out of this conference with the hope of

arriving at a consensus and felt that those present had the same objectives.

It was a very rich experience from all points of view: from knowledge of the ILO to the work of the ICYCW and its role. I experienced each day that I was there in an intense way. The language barrier was not a problema and I thank especially the International Secretariat who made me so welcome.

During the conference I was in the « Social Protection »group with Amélie where I was able tonote that the realities in different countries are quite different and I focussed particularly on things that related to the EU to hear what we intended to do in relation to this question in Portugal where our situation is a bit better –but not for long... »

Further to this participation in the Conference the ICYCW has

worked with other International NGO's in order to consolidate our efforts and speak with a united voice on the ILO programmes. We worked together to draw up a declaration on decent work and the post-2015 programme of development.

« As our contribution to the discussion on nature of post-2015 development, we, organisations of catholic inspiration, reaffirm that the most effective way to escape poverty and the world economic crisis is essentially linked to the promotion of decent work and putting in place adequate social security. »

By constructing a more just, fraternal, and sustainable society, practical measures can be taken to ensure people to live with dignity, through recognition of fundamental human rights, social inclusion and recognition, and the right to work. The Universal Basic Income would serve to grant all members of a community the baseline recognition as citizens of a society, provide a way of valuing and recognizing activities that are work, overcome social inequalities.

As Christian workers, our mission arises from our personal and community promise to provide concrete proposals that contributes to solving the problems of impoverishment of many working families. We have to support the political, economic, and legal reforms necessary to address the needs of the people, create employment, and offer protection to people's social rights. As Christian workers we want to show our willingness to contribute to the establishment of principles of social organization where each person can live with dignity that God has wanted for each one of his sons and daughters.  
**(Charo Castelló Co-president, World Movement of Catholic Workers—WMCW)**

\* Project of information for workers on food and hygiene in everyday life: TOGETHER WE PROTECT OUR HOME!  
\*Cleaning our homes inside and out (especially avoiding accumulating rubbish).  
\*Washing and ironing our clothes well as one should (especially avoiding letting them dry in dusty places).  
\*Cleaning food before eating and washing our hands.  
GOOD HOME, GOOD FOOD, GOOD WATER (boiled or bottled) = GOOD HEALTH!

**(Samnang YCW Cambodia)**