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## LETTER TO THE FRIENDS OF SISTER EMMANUELLE

N° 101

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Dear Friends,

The main purpose of this letter is to invite you to **our Statutory General Meeting**.

We all the more warmly invite you to come that this year **we are honoured to welcome many of our foreign donors and partners**, like our Austrian friends from Caritas, our English partners of Saint Vincent de Paul Society, our French associates from Opération Orange and ADE, and our German friends...

### NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

On the 7th and 8th of March, **the municipality of Plan-les-Ouates** has organized a **Forum called « Cooperation for development »**. About thirty Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) financially helped by the municipality have taken part in this event.

As the poster said, **« All aspects of solidarity »** were present: traditional clothes, songs and dances, revealed some of the colourful aspects of other continents...

The associations had put up several stands with photos and products produced in the countries where they operate. **ASASE and Haiti Cosmos** were there, and gave information on their programs in **Sudan and Haiti**.

**A debate entitled "North-South"** enabled us to think about the setting up of sustainable partnerships, the autonomy of projects, the role of women in development, and the important issues to be addressed in the north and in the south.

The exchanges of views between the members of the different associations have been fruitful, and they gave us the opportunity to see how enthusiastic all these persons involved in humanitarian organizations are.

Congratulations, and thank you Plan-les-Ouates.

### NEWS FROM HAITI

#### **Jean-Claude reports:**

The production of drugs is a success. People like our medicines that are more effective and cheaper than traditional ones. The pharmacies in Central Plateau are interested in our products. But we shall wait until we have supplied all our clinics before initiating a discussion with them.

Two graduates from Polytec have passed an American University entrance examination, and were admitted to a Master in Business Management. So the certificate that we are delivering is accepted abroad.

Here is the testimony of **Pr Norbert Gisler, from the University of Geneva**, who came to Hinche to give a lecture in our technical school.

*Haiti interested me for many years. In December 2007, I was finally able to go to Hinche for a short stay. I used to follow the action of Haiti-Cosmos for several years, reading its annual reports. But after this trip, it became apparent that I only knew the theoretical part of it. Fortunately, curiosity and the wish to see the projects on the spot, with my own eyes, have overcome my fear of travel. I visited the various projects supported by Haiti-Cosmos, namely the dispensaries, the laboratory, the plantations and the tree nursery, Polytec technical school and Ceramond primary school, where I even attended the General Assembly of the parents association. It was a moment full of emotions.*

*Once in Hinche, Jean-Claude welcomed me to his house. The main purpose of my trip was to give a two-weeks course on "Bank Techniques" to the students from the Polytec school. During this visit, I could see the smooth functioning of this school, and the important role it plays in this small town. The project is running well, but as everywhere, there are always things to do and organize, if only to maintain the aimed standard or, for instance, to have the school recognized by the Ministry of National Education, a matter that is being attended to.*

*The experience I had with my 40 students, all showing great willingness and a craving to learn, was absolutely extraordinary. On the one hand, I had to constantly adapt to their level, so that they do not get confused by the complexity of the subject. On the other hand, it was necessary to find concrete examples that were meaningful to them. For even if banking is a universal trade, it is not practiced in Haiti as it is in Switzerland or in Europe, and the economic situation of the country shows it dramatically. Finally, I realized that these young people did appreciate the vocational training I gave them, and I was very touched when, at the end of our last course, the whole class stood up to sing a little song of thanks and gratitude.*



*The laboratory Phyto-Cosmos is a fine example of a set of integrated actions for concrete assistance to development. It aims to produce drugs out of medicinal plants and to supply them to the 27 Cosmos dispensaries in the region. The first deliveries took place during 2007. Even if there are still things to improve, significant efforts have been made on the bottling, labelling and conservation of the products. It is absolutely essential to find trustworthy people to ensure the continuity of a project of this kind. In my opinion, this project (Nursery - Plantation - Laboratory) is the most representative of the beneficial effect of Haiti-Cosmos on the region: sustainable development, involvement of the beneficiaries, and creation of several jobs.*

*I myself tested two drugs: first Diarix, to treat mild diarrhoea in Hinche; and then Bronchomal, to treat a persistent cough in Geneva. This training allowed me to see very closely that the money of the generous donors is well used, without any kind of loss or flight, thanks to low overheads.*

*I have been heartily and respectfully welcomed by Haitians, and I was deeply touched by that. I am very grateful for the moments of emotion that I could live on their land. During this stay, I learned a lot. For instance, you cannot give to everybody, you have to chose. And also, you must always ask for something in return. Aid should not be free. We must teach people how to fight, to try hard, and to get involved. Sometimes, the harsher you are, the more you help. Finally, for me, it was above all an inner journey; and sometimes I wonder who, between the students and myself, has more learned... Mési Ayiti, Mési anpil.*

## NEWS FROM SUDAN

The efforts made by all of us to finance the increasing costs of our programs in Sudan have already been quite fruitful at this stage of the year.

In particular, we have obtained the agreement of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs for both our project to create a vocational training centre in the South in Juba, and for the renewal of their valuable support to our babies feeding program.



The search for funds for the other programs is proceeding quite well, and consequently no drastic cut seems necessary today, despite the growth of the programs that are meeting the still great needs of the displaced populations (construction of a new farm for teenagers completed in 2007, construction of new training centre in Juba planned in 2008, strong growth of the medical program) in a highly inflationary national environment, with a euro rising.

The 2008 budget is then far from being balanced.

Kamal has just arrived in Switzerland for his annual tour (Switzerland, France, England, Germany, Austria). May the Lord bless his path and all those who will generously respond to his appeal to support the most deprived of our brothers.

EWS – LATEST NEWS - LATEST NEWS - LATEST NEWS - LATEST NEWS - LATEST NEWS - LATES

We have just received this very encouraging information: **among the alumni of our vocational training in Khartoum, SVDP has identified 963 people who are currently working in the South! 120 are employed by the government of Bahr el-Gazal, 25 by the Ministry of Education, 17 by the Ministry of Agriculture, 19 by the Ministry of Communication, 9 by the Cabinet, 85 by the State Company of Electricity, 65 by the Water Treatment and Supply National Company, 35 by the National Company of Irrigation, and the rest are working in various private companies!**

These are only the persons whom we could get information on. Many others have returned to the South, but we have lost their tracks.

**These results validate all the efforts made by Kamal and his team during these last 21 years... All these people who return to the South, now that peace prevails, can take an active part in the reconstruction while earning a living. ALLELUIA!**

## STATUTORY GENERAL MEETING

In 2007, we have transferred nearly 2.6 million CHF to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society in Sudan, a record (again) since our creation.

This was achieved thanks to donations from organizations and institutions from many countries, particularly thanks to you, dear Swiss (individual or institutional) donors, whose contributions have increased by 46% compared to last year!

However, the income statement is still in deficit, because we had to draw on our reserves to complete the funding of the programmes.

We invite all the members of the Swiss Association of the friends of Sister Emmanuelle to attend its statutory general meeting, which will take place on:

**Friday the 30th of May 2008 at 8 p.m.**

**At the Cercle de l'Espérance**

**8 rue de la Chapelle, 1207 Genève (Eaux-Vives)**

During this Assembly, will be discussed and voted various points raised by the persons who will be present.

**Please find enclosed a postal check.**

The members of the Committee and myself thank you in advance for your support that enables us to keep on our aid to women, men and children who still live in very difficult conditions.

**Now Sudanese are also suffering from the global rise in food prices. We have just received the results of a study ordered by Caritas Austria to Kamal: the current average price in Dinar of fifteen basic foods is 17% higher than in 2007, and 26% higher than in 2006! In two years, the price of sorghum has more than doubled; rice: +66%; lentils: +56%; oil: +54%; salt: +54%; beans: +28%.**

**These increases affect in particular our Babies Feeding program, where food accounts for over half of total costs. But they also affect, to a lesser extent, our Street Children program.**

**In a globalized world where inequalities seem to grow, our modest action, with your precious support, seems more necessary than ever, unfortunately ...**

May the Lord bless you and the Holy Spirit guide us in our decisions,

Sincerely,

**Michel Bittar**  
**President**