

# Call for proposals

## *International conference*



**AISLF**

**16 - 18 July 2007**

**Lubumbashi**

**(Democratic Republic of Congo)**

## ***The African universities' adaptation to the Bologna process***

### **Presentation**

After a long period of hesitation, African universities choose, one after the other, to adapt to the architecture of studies organisation which has been promoted since 1999 by the Bologna process.

In the South, the changeover is not simple: the model is imported from the North, there is no preliminary consultation between the European and the African universities on the characteristics it should have in order to be adapted to the economic, cultural and social context and needs of these two regions of the world. The European universities have adopted an organisation of the studies which they impose on their African counterparts, who are led to model themselves on them. There is no continent that is not influenced by the Bologna model which becomes universal. Asia and Latino America have undertaken reforms that go along the lines of a greater compatibility with the European higher education systems.

International financial organisations and institutions (UNESCO, World Bank, etc.) are in favour of the adjustment of African universities to the Bologna model, especially when it falls within concerted initiatives. Some of them support the Réseau pour l'Excellence de l'Enseignement Supérieur en Afrique de l'Ouest (REESAO) which was created in October 2005 and which brings together about twelve universities from six countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Togo), that will very probably be followed by others. As far as the Communauté Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC) is concerned, it has given its approval to the efforts that are made to implement the Bologna model in universities from its region. The Maghreb countries are also involved in the harmonisation process, even though there are still serious problems. Morocco has taken advantage of Bologna to initiate reforms which had been a long time coming, the neighbour countries begin to follow suit. The situation of universities from non-French-speaking countries is a bit more confused. The tradition of decentralisation of English-speaking countries makes the information more difficult to gather. It is obvious that cooperation and exchange agreements are being made over the oceans, and that some of them could contribute to move the scientific and political centre of gravity of the world.

The Commission Universitaire pour le Développement de la Communauté française de Belgique wished to encourage reflection on the passage of African universities to the Bologna model, in particular by supporting the conferences in Dakar (July 2005) and El Jadida (May 2006). These meetings offered the opportunity to academic officials and researchers

from many African countries to confront their analyses to the ones of their European and North-American colleagues. This third conference follows the lines of the first two, as it aims to put at the disposal of African universities all the elements that will enable them to appropriate the Bologna process in a critical way, and to make an object of analysis of it, the treatment of which will contribute to shed light on evolution trends of the relations between North and South countries.

This conference will be held in Central Africa. This region has been chosen because its universities have not integrated the Bologna schema and they are going to do it in a relatively disorganised order, and also because its universities are close to the English-speaking institutions, which have other rationalities than universities that are shaped according to the French model.

The conference will open space for dialogue for all the African universities that are represented there, with the explicit project of going beyond linguistic and organisational traditions that prevent them from collaborating together and that stir up sterile competition between them. Its aim is also to reinforce connivances between researchers and universities from the North and the South, which are motivated to produce concepts and theoretical patterns likely to make the ongoing evolutions more intelligible. The general objective of this meeting is to contribute to the analysis of the restructuration of the world research and higher education area by taking an interest in the effects in particular, that it involves as regard universities from the South. Another objective is to determine the means by which those Southern universities can appropriate the quality criteria linked to the Bologna process, without making themselves disqualified and without encouraging a *brain drain* with negative effects.

### **Scientific committee**

This conference is organised and financed by the University Commission for the Development (CUD) of the French-speaking Community of Belgium. It is placed under the direction of Professor Jean-Émile Charlier. The Committee Éducation, Formation, Socialisation of the AISLF (Association Internationale des Sociologues de Langue Française) is associated with the meeting.

The scientific committee brings together professors who are specialists of education policies from Southern and Northern universities:

**Professor Kaumba**, Rector of the *University of Lubumbashi* ; **Professor Dale**, *University of Bristol* ; **Professor Derouet** *Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique* and *University Lyon II* ; **Professor Nyamba**, *University of Ouagadougou* ; **Professeur Sall**, *University Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar* ; **Professor Charlier**, *Facultés Universitaires Catholiques de Mons*.

### **Proposals**

The conference will be bilingual, with French and English as work languages. No simultaneous translation has been planned. It is open to every universitarian, academic or administrative official, researcher or professor who is interested in higher education reforms in the North or South.

Proposals can deal with the following subjects:

- the decision process that has brought universities or the country to opt for the Bologna model (LMD, 3-5-8);
- the direct or indirect effects of the decision to adopt the Bologna model: reform of the cursus, quality assurance and accreditation, mobility, recognition and joint degrees, professionals masters/research masters and doctoral schools;
- the current evolution of the emerging countries' universities, their place in globalisation;
- the role of international and/or financial organisations in the promotion of the Bologna model.

Proposals (1.000 words maximum), in French or English, have to be sent for 31 March at the latest, at this address: [imd2007@tud.be](mailto:imd2007@tud.be). The authors will be informed of the decision of the scientific committee on 10 April. The acts of the conference will be published in 2008.

The registration for the conference, lunch and accommodation are done by the CUD for every participant whose papers will have been accepted. Twelve travel grants will be allocated to African colleagues first, in function of the ranking of the papers that will be done by the committee. Travel for other speakers will not be taken in charge.

### **Organisation committee**

Cesar Nkuku Khonde, *University of Lubumbashi*, Félix Ulombe Kaputu, *University of Lubumbashi*, Sarah Croché, *Facultés Universitaires Catholiques de Mons*.

**For complementary informations :** [imd2007@tud.be](mailto:imd2007@tud.be)