



Le Centre des Affaires Humaines (CEDAH) Un think tank pour la prospérité



Le Centre des Affaires Humaines (CEDAH) , the first libertarian public policy think tank founded in Burkina Faso held a conference on IT and globalization at the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on Saturday, April 12, 2008. 83 students of the University of Ouagadougou attended the conference. At the opening of the conference, Mahamadou SINTE ,the Executive director of this start-up think tank said:



I would like to thank you very much for the sacrifice you make to be here for this conference of CEDAH. CEDAH is an independent, non-profit organization with no affiliation to any political party. The independence of CEDAH is so remarkable that it doesn't accept government's funds and political parties funding. In our country, public debates on various issues are too often dominated by political parties and public officials, while civil society is bypassed and rarely given consideration. That's why CEDAH has been created in December 2007 and recognized by the government in March 2008 to propose original and innovative solutions for the crafting of efficient public policies, using successful reforms applied elsewhere as models. The CEDAH studies how markets function with the aim of identifying the mechanisms and institutions which foster the prosperity and long-term welfare of all the individuals which make up our society. The American think tanks inspired us a lot that we are emulating their model of functioning and conducting events in our country. We are also

convinced that freedom is most important fundamental of our life and promoting it can lead to human well being in our country in particular and Africa in general. Then, CEDAH will promote ideas of liberal thinkers such as Frederic Bastiat, Frederic von Hayek, Locke, Adam Smith, Leoni Bruni .etc. Generally speaking we are going to promote what we call libertarianism. Individuals liberty, private property right, peace, limited government, spontaneous order... are the core concepts of libertarianism. You will have time to discover it if you remain in touch with us by participating in our activities. Among those activities we have conferences, workshops, a summer seminar called Sominga University and essay contest with valuable prizes and a journal called Atlas Economic Magazine . For more details you can visit our website on www.cedahburkina.com.

Concerning the topic IT and Globalization of this conference, the significant increase of the prizes of food makes that some organizations, in place of thinking about how to get sustainable solutions to this problem witch due to natural phenomena and the high demand of those goods in the global market, attack an irreversible , positive and profitable concept witch is Globalization. I think that some of you participated or heard on medias a group of organizations called Forum Social du Burkina(www.forumsocialburkina.info) which attacked free-market ideas. As a free market think tank, CEDAH will not be quite unconcerned about this controversial issue. That's why we select strategically the theme IT and Globalization to counter those king of ideas by showing the opportunities that IT offer to us in this context of Globalization thus by showing the beneficial part of what they call «liberal Globalization». I will not spend more time demonstrating the advantages of this Globalization wile some great experts such as Tom G palmer of CATO Institute, a prestigious think tank based in Washington DC, have published famous articles on the subject. For this reason, i invite you to read the essay la mondialisation, c'est magnifique! of Tom G Palmer on his blog :<http://www.tomgpalmer.com/> . Our speaker of the day is Mr Tiguiane Yelemou who is a lecturer at the polytechnic University of Bobo-Dioulasso. He holds a master in IT with specialization in Informatics methods applied to management (MIAGE) at the university of Picardie(France) and is a Ph D student in the same field...





Mr Tuiguiane Yelemou after thanking the participants defined IT (information technologies) and Globalization.

He then scheduled the theme into three parts:

- 1. IT and economy in the context of Globalization**
- 2. IT and culture in the context of Globalization**
- 3. IT and politics in the context of Globalization**

1. First, concerning the IT and economy, the speaker said that Globalization is real great opportunity for developing countries to improve their different economies by trading globally with developed countries through IT. E-business is an occasion for us to trade without being physically where our partner is located. We don't need to go to Japan for a Sony Walkman, to US for an IBM laptop. By two clicks on the net and filling with the number of a credit card we can buy without going out of our home. Speaking about trade, the lecturer took an example about the association SONGTAABA, a local organization of women who sell 60% of their goods via internet... The fact of selling their goods for Europeans and Americans in Euro and dollar improve their standard of living making that they are able to pay education of their children and other expenses... He took another example of an old man talking to his son who is in the US via cellular phone to ask him funds which will be sent via Western Union in only a few minutes...



2. About the second part, the speaker said that IT are interesting tools for developing countries to learn from other cultures and to promote their own culture in this context of Globalization. Through internet, SMS and other technologies, the campaign against female

genital mutilation is now producing good results. The cultural events in Burkina Faso such as SIAO (international exposition of arts in Ouagadougou), SNC (national week of culture) are advertised worldwide on TV, radio and internet. Those events attract tourist in our country and allow the manager of a restaurant to get more costumers and hotels to have clients. IT allow us to make friends from other cultures around the globe and build peaceful relations with theme to fight for better living of human being in all over the world...



3. Concerning politics, IT can play a crucial role in the promotion of good governance. IT are tools for citizens to conduct free debates at the time of electoral campaign in order to elect good leader for good governance. Democratization of developing countries will go forward because, they will emulate good electoral practices that they learn through IT from other nations. The electronic system of vote through IT is an interesting way to organize elections and allow citizen of a country located in somewhere on the globe to vote. This system brings more transparency. Communication via IT is a good way in influencing public policy by proposing original solutions. For example , CEDAH and its web site will be a reference for decision makers because innovative and original solutions will be published by world's renewed experts ...

At the questions-answers session, students asked several question on the topic and CEDAH. The main questions are:



1. Should we believe in all kind of information that we receive through IT?

2. Are IT tools for rich nations to impose their view on poor nations?

3. Etc

In reaction to those questions, the speaker said that we should make a difference between good information and bad information. Searching for bad information (for example on terrorism) can lead to bad behavior and searching for good information (for example an article of Frederic Bastiat) can lead to good behavior (promotion of free-market and peace). He added that the domain of information is not a matter of rich or poor country. It is a way for everyone to express his point of view regardless of money or power.

After advertising the seminars of the Institute for Humane Studies (IHS), IES-europe and Imani Center for policy and education, the executive director thanked the students for their participation.