

AFRIKADAG - 18 NOVEMBER 2023

JOINT NICC REPORT



On the 18th of November the Foundation Max van der Stoep organized the annual Afrikadag at Pakhuis de Zwijger in Amsterdam. The NICC Foundation has been present with an info-stand, displaying items from the collection relating to Africa and International Cooperation



The theme of this year's *Afrikadag* was Climate Justice. Climate Justice aims to address the unfairness embedded in climate change: on no continent climate change challenges are greater than in Africa, with droughts, floods and temperatures being on the rise, resulting in loss of livelihoods and biodiversity and displaced communities. African countries bear the least responsibility for climate change, but are hit hardest by its harmful consequences. It is exactly because of this history that former minister Jan Pronk suggested that international cooperation of the future should be seen as reparation payments from the Global North to the Global South. As this is the basis for climate justice, it was the main topic for a lot of heavy debates during the rest of the workshops. Through our conversations with *Afrikadag* participants at the NICC info-stand, however, one thing became quite clear: by emphasizing the importance of remembering insights in the history of international cooperation, the NICC can be of huge value. Therefore, in this report, we would like to share with you the learnings and experiences of the NICC-team present at the *Afrikadag*.

Kitty Bentvelsen:

During the *Afrikadag*, The recent report of the AIV (Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken / Advisory Council on International Affairs) titled 'Necessity of global climate justice' was presented. The core message of the report is threefold: (1) international climate justice is in the interest of the Netherlands; (2) the Netherlands has to intensify its climate efforts in the context of international cooperation in dialogue and cooperation with the Global South; and (3) international climate justice requires a fast reduction of own emissions in the Netherlands, including the environmental footprint of the Dutch economy.

Similar insights were discussed in other sessions, such as the importance of dialogues and listening to voices from Africa. Cooperation between African countries and the Netherlands (and EU) on climate mitigation and adaptation should be on the basis of equity. Climate funding to address loss and damage should not be part of the 0.7% ODA commitment but additional. Climate mitigation in Africa must still allow for development, be it 'green'. More processing in Africa instead of just exporting raw materials was often mentioned as a solution.

This *Afrikadag* convinced that having a NICC timeline on climate should be a priority. Such a timeline should also highlight the unfair consequences of the climate crisis for Africa -and other Global South countries- and present the rationale for climate justice.



Pieter Marres and Esmée Lodder at the NICC info-stand

Natalia Hussein:

Stepping out of the grey Dutch autumnal rainfall, crossing the threshold of Pakhuis de Zwijger for Afrikadag 2023 was like entering a whole new world: we were greeted by a beehive of activity, everyone buzzing with thoughts and anticipation for the day's big conversations. The day ran in four sessions, each with simultaneous talks across many rooms. We heard from voices ranging from Dutch policy-makers to Ugandan activists, and from international trade union organisers to global academic theorists. I came away feeling both filled with inspiration and filled with a new awareness of the complexity of achieving climate justice across Africa. Most of all, I came away understanding that the path currently followed by many European governments and institutions is at risk of entrenching an unjust transition towards a more sustainable world, unless some key structural changes are made. At the same time, the tools for a just transition are at our fingertips, as long as we are willing to put in the hard work necessary to change global power dynamics.

As a volunteer researcher and writer at the NICC, my work focuses on understanding the history of global citizenship in the Dutch context, and making this accessible to today's students and wider public. The theme of justice at *Afrikadag* was a strong reminder that we must acknowledge the exploitative power dynamic of the past between European colonial powers and Africa – and the ways in which this continues to disadvantage African nations' ability to invest in climate mitigation and adaptation. When writing about global citizenship today, it is important to decentre Europe as the source of superior ideas and instead to centre examples of collaborative international cooperation.

We must advocate for a form of global citizenship in which solidarity and partnership are the core building blocks. This approach has already been discussed and attempted, for example through sustainable development agreements between the Netherlands, Costa Rica, Benin and Bhutan in the early 2000s, an endeavour that deserves renewed attention by looking at its successes and lessons learned.

However, today there appears to be a persistent dynamic of “global north” governments and elites acting as though they can fix the climate crisis through green capitalism – resulting in limited mutual responsibility. *Afrikadag* presented us with a myriad of ways in which to reverse this damaging trend, including mass debt cancellation, knowledge sharing between trade unions, cooperative enterprises, corporate accountability, and reimagining how resources are used – for example, focusing more on improvement of public transport rather than privately owned electric cars. Stepping back out into Amsterdam's swirling mist at the end of the day, one phrase from Fatima Denton (a British-Gambian climatologist) especially stuck in mind: “We are all developing countries in tackling the climate crisis. For once, we are all on the same, if unequal, field.”

Bob Tempelman:

In 2022 I started as a volunteer at the *Afrikadag*. This year I was nicely surprised to meet NICC, as one of the information stands at the info-market in which I had a role of facilitating the crew. I considered the NICC participation at the Africa day successful, due to the NICC Africa timelines and the work of NICC in general. I was aware that many motivated visitors of all ages were active with the theme of the day: Climate Justice: “a broad ‘climate justice’ movement in Africa is demanding action on just climate policies.” In that sense NICC is/was a source to all visitors. I could assist many people to find their way to interesting lectures, workshops, the Raw Elegance Exhibition and

Fashion Show, African literature, the outcomes of the Africa youth Think Tank, emotional keynote speakers as Hilda Flavia Nakabuye and of course Jan Pronk and Bert Koenders. It was great to see NICC between all those multicultural information sources. So it is not a surprise but a must that NICC is participating in these events!

