

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, members of UNIAPAC, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your interest in my modest contribution as a young entrepreneur.

Actually, my presentation will not be full of learned quotations or working hypotheses, sophisticated projections or complex reading notes... but it will be a matter of immersing in the standing Africa which, through its young and older entrepreneurs, is trying to make concrete proposals to the suffering populations. Against this background, we are taking up the challenge of supporting positive initiatives to deal with poverty, underemployment, unemployment, training ... or despair.

The main objective is to highlight our achievements in our field of expertise: architecture, construction and project structuring...and also as part of our entrepreneur association.

We strongly believe that we are guided by the need to share the blessings from the Lord and the duty to help the needy.

Our actions are part of an overall movement, and all of this is a collective momentum that specially creates synergies between all positive energies of our partners, our associations and goodwill.

In this day and age, a simple reminder of the demographic situation shows that our planet is at the turning point of a mostly urban century, with over 75% of the population living in cities in France, 78% in all so-called developed countries, 79% in Brazil and nearly 50% in Africa.

In the capitals and cities of Africa often millionaires, a whole world of disadvantaged, cleared out and unemployed people, or in the best case workers with precarious status, form the great number of city dwellers facing the difficulties of everyday life and often hopeless.

And if proper care is not taken, this world will give birth to urbanity without a city overnight, despite the insufficient availability of certain forms of survival, the minimum social bonds and sometimes even in the absence of institutions and stabilized urban forms.

This beautiful city that warmly welcomes us today, Belo Horizonte, the beautiful horizon in English, seems to be a harmonious city...

I also wish to pay tribute to the memory of the founding fathers of this city.

With its grid-iron street system of diagonal cross, a city designed to be modern, with its system of zoning, the establishment of public buildings; health, leisure and culture facilities.

Yes indeed, one of the great thinkers of this hometown was Aarão Reis, an architect who mastered not only the technical dimension but was especially guided by a humanistic vision.

A vision of some progressive generation of the 1880s, basically inspired by Enlightenment ideals and those of Saint-Simonism.

These ideals combine education, economics and urban planning, industrialization and specially social justice, which is for us young generation a good source of inspiration.

Today, thousands of young people brave the seas, cross deserts in search of an ideal, a better future, unfortunately risking sometimes their lives... before the eyes and ears of the world without sufficient assistance. Sometimes with a feeling of abandonment and yet there are solutions locally, nationally and globally.

True it is that we are in a fragile global economic environment, marked by strong youth migration. From rural areas to cities, with many sub-regional and intercontinental migrations. They leave difficult backgrounds to go to other unknown destinations for a better tomorrow. Contrary to the picture, Europe with its 500 million inhabitants is not submerged: currently, its population has only 0.1% of refugees.

Is it not time to promote a more social and very solidarity economy for the benefit of the majority that sinks into poverty?

Given the diversity of threats and complexity of the problems we need to advocate more for endogenous solutions. We need solutions giving much hope to young people, to find a better life for everyone with a much brighter future.

In his Manifesto for a positive economy, published in the newspaper, Le Monde, Jacques Attali said in substance that to find a way out of the systemic crisis we are going through, we must promote a new model: positive economics.

An economy where wealth created is not an end in itself but a means to serve higher and altruistic values.

An economy at the service of future generations, and encourages responsible, sustainable and inclusive growth.

An economy respectful of the environment, which will finally and foremost, serve the society.

We have reason to believe it firmly when inspired by the long walk of Nelson Mandela and his idea:

"Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by the actions of human beings".

Incidentally, we can mention the spiritual courage of Mother Theresa, or religiously learn from the famous prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi and finally from the intellectual courage of Pope Francis...

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Actually, my career is just like that of a young professional convinced that success is within reach of all. At the same time, this career is that of many young people around the world but unfortunately encounters sometimes many difficulties related to financing, lack of experience, guidance or information, and to the difficult economic climate. Unfortunately many of them fall into despair. That is why we must build together this ideal assuming that it is possible to make it through by ensuring that we do everyday all we can to make this a reality.

Poverty is not an individual fate or a personal failure, but a collective failure of our societies.

As far I am concerned, I am convinced that if I have been successful it is because some people gave me a chance at some point in my career. Others gave me an opening I used to advantage... That is why I firmly believe that it is our moral duty to do the same for others in order to maintain the chain of solidarity...

As for me, when I came out of my architectural studies, after several years of practice in a firm, within a very short period, I have decided to go into the private sector by starting with small architectural achievements:

Improvements of travel agency, bank agency, private residence, restaurant furnishing, ... which allowed me to be able to make a living soberly, and slowly through perseverance, by building good relations I started to work on much larger projects: from schools, health centers, hotel complexes, large residential buildings, to the development of new city ...

The recent launch of the most prestigious hotels in downtown Dakar remains one of my latest achievements, which is a pride in our Christian community in Senegal.

The promoter Mr. Aimé SENE is a member of our association. This luxury hotel, very popular in Dakar has been blessed by the bishops as encouragement to Christian businessmen. One way of inviting them to invest more in economic activity to better support social works ...

Today, my interest in social housing in favor of the middle class prompted me to develop proposals in the field of academic research.

In the same way, a book published by Éditions universitaires européennes (European University Editions) entitled 'logements intermédiaires à caractère social' (halfway social housing) was released in France last month ... This is a proposal for an alternative type of social housing more suited to current lifestyles, taking into account the concerns of the population.

It is about social housing, one highly topical issue in poor urban areas, that best meets the differentiated changing lifestyles reflecting the current realities that reveal a certain predominance of single parent families often facing financial difficulties.

These basic principles can be applied everywhere, in the Paris suburbs, as well as in the favelas of Rio or even in the slums of Dakar

The key is to make functional and livable housing in larger numbers. It is important because without decent housing, families are at risk of poverty, obscurantism and misery.

The Christian dimension in my practice highly guided my relationship to society and community. Gradually I realized I have to be useful to my community.

For me, all changed when I realized that making money is good but it was even better to implement community development strategies for a better distribution of wealth and success in substance ...

I have been inspired by St. Vincent de Paul by his actions in favor of the poor community with an outstanding feature consisting in reconnecting social categories by causing the communication of gifts and talents.

In attempting to mobilize the best in all classes, from the princes to the farmers, using the talents, skills, ability of all people for the implementation of joint works.

Of course many others have devoted their lives to the poor. The characteristic of St. Vincent de Paul lies not so much in what he did himself, as in what he has aroused and created or what he got others to do.

My track is more guided by this approach; it's about contributing to the implementation of community development projects allowing the poor to have access to basic needs.

Through this voluntary approach, I decided to develop my knowledge and apply it in my community whenever necessary.

Experience shows that in human relationships we actually receive more than we give... Parents know what they receive from their children; sick-garde know

what they receive from their infirm; many bosses know what they get from their workers. True friends realize the importance of their discussions.

Sometimes, do we not give to others what we did not have, explain what we did not know well, or receive from others treasure they had not even the idea of it?

That is why we must build together this sharing chain for the benefit of all.

We share the idea that by combining our knowledge, our expertise, our know-how-to-be, we can do many good things for our societies in favor of the most needy and everyone.

Because these achievements will have a collective reach and allow to make a better life for some people and give more hope to others in a spirit of solidarity.

My commitment is effected via two levels:

- On the one hand by the achievements of private works socially oriented, with a strong community impact.
- On the other hand by my involvement with the association of entrepreneurs with direct support in logistics or human resources, aid for the acquisition of funding for different events within the community.

First of all my professional experience has helped realize the project of the care center for children with mental disabilities.

Indeed, mentally retarded children were hidden in homes because they were afraid of being the so-called dishonor of their families and often had no social support structure adapted in the popular neighborhoods of Dakar.

This could be achieved in coordination with the municipality of the small town of Ouakam which put the land available and the association ESTEL had contributed to the fundraising.

I coordinated technical, financial and organization issues. It is a complex with a waking room, training room, meeting room, dining room and a ... large playground to the delight of parents and children.

The center performs one of the finest Christmas and New Year holidays for kids.

On another remarkable site, marked by its secular aspect, its mythical landscape, people go there every year at the top of the hill of Mont Rolland in quest of healing for the sick and meditation for most of them ...

Because the Virgin Mary appeared to a shepherd in this place. This sanctuary has never had any rehabilitation since its existence, and the influx of the faithful is increasing.

The whole approach is to provide a full site restoration, preserving at best the heritage, historical and natural aspects of the site.

We will renovate the pilgrim route by integrating natural stone pavers, with sun protection for pilgrims, toilets, restaurant, shop for devotional objects. It is also planned to implement a large space for sharing knowledge, called the pilgrim shelter, a place for testimonials, experience sharing and solidarity ... The budget procurement process has started since six months, the goal is to launch work in early 2016.

It is now a pilgrimage site where converge all faithful believers.

In a fishing town in rural areas of Joal, women are well organized in association or economic interest group. Those women had enormous problems of childcare, supervision and support of children due to their very difficult work activities in the late hours of the day.

This is how it came the idea to launch the child care project for children of fish wholesaler women, transformers and fishing products traders in fishing communities.

With the support of the Town Council which could find a land available and the Italian NGO CESES that accompanied the financial side, I was able to implement a project to meet the needs of populations.

This project is designed as kindergarten, with secure play areas, classrooms, dining room to facilitate the education of children, mentor children by giving them a better education, in secure play areas.

This center has given more freedom to women in their daily tasks, enabling them to work better for more productivity.

Our retired bishops and priests, as a result of loyal service to the benefit of the faithful, often found themselves on the threshold of their mission to spiritual retreat in not suitable housing.

This is why the archdiocese of Dakar, expressed the need for a functional retirement residence at the height of their mission for the faithful.

On this project with the support of several financial partners, based on the architectural presentation file we could make a retreat, meditation residence as an alternative place for our religious.

This is why the design and construction of this place have mainly focused on sobriety, with rustic materials, cold colors and especially an introvert space promoting relaxation and spirituality.

In that large religious residence you can find a chapel, a conference room and many equipped bedrooms along with a large mineral and green space in the back yard.

The project is now completed and will be launched as from the next month by the Emeritus Archbishop of Dakar, Cardinal SARR.

Our association of Christian entrepreneurs, as part of its social works, tried to bring an isolated village out of extreme poverty ... through the provision of functional and sustainable energy facilities. It also helped to guide the good community management of works.

We established a solar village with photovoltaic panels and a wind system along the lines of the energy mix.

This interesting device brought light on all of the public spaces of the village but also some family compounds. In addition, we definitely solved the problem of the availability of sufficient and drinking water. Contaminated water was responsible for most of diarrhoeal diseases among children. The method involved setting up a submersible pump into the 2 large wells of the village, which are fed by the energy mix, in order to power two large water tanks.

We subsequently equipped the water tanks with a treatment system that gives this village of 500 people access to drinking water ... and the installation of a multi-purpose community hall. Today the facility is managed by a neighborhood association that ensures maintenance and service to the great satisfaction of the populations.

Radio Espérance Sénégal, which has been broadcasting since last year on the 95.2 FM band in the Dakar region, was the result of a partnership between the church, we entrepreneurs and the faithful.

We drew upon existing examples to create a commercial radio with a capital of EU 300,000, open to all the community.

Nowadays Radio Espérance Sénégal is a radio of conviction and openness that proposes to everybody the "Message" of the Gospel as the Word of God to human beings ; reports on the teaching and mission of the Church at the service of the Gospel worldwide, by promoting testimony of life and prayer, rights and

requirements of democracy while refusing any partisan or sectarian interference.

Radio Espérance is also a solidarity radio, whose purpose is to give voice to the excluded, the "voiceless", the most isolated; it is responsive to the "marginalized people" and recall at all times the demands of justice freedom and above all peace ...because there cannot be development without peace.

Finally, it is a community radio intended to give listeners information that enables them to better participate in the life of the Church and the city; promote exchanges between associative life partners; give voice to associations and project holders and provide citizens with the opportunity to learn about issues concerning them.

Radio Espérance Sénégal adopts a networking approach with the other media, thus promoting the exchange of best practices of cooperation.

This communication tool will shortly become a press group with newspapers and a television. Today, this radio brings great satisfaction to the faithful.

In response to the employment crisis among unemployed workers, new graduates and others, we proposed internships and jobs in our companies, but this was not enough ..., hence the idea of organizing last year the 1st forum for young Christians' employment with the cooperation of the Ministry of Employment and Youth.

We worked closely with youth movements, scout and guide associations and coordinations of young Christians.

Following the forum, findings were used to :
create a database containing all competencies
set up a directory of job-seekers.

Today, this forum has facilitated access to information for young people and provision of information on training opportunities, exchange of experiences, possibly proposals for available internships or jobs.

This forum was a great success at the national level and we hope that it will find a point of convergence with the new dynamic of the Uniapac in favour of the youth, and our association is willing to contribute in that respect...

In conclusion, we reaffirm that the work should be part of a comprehensive approach of life, underpinned by spirituality. This vision is also that of most of our members who are trying essentially to draw inspiration from the fundamental Charter of the Christian as much as possible, namely testimony of charity and truth...

We must be aware that the Christian society has developed this form of charity better than anyone else in the past. It developed relations that favour the division of tasks without distending more than enough relations, all of them being underpinned by humanism... Yes, the world with God exists and the way to live it will be the best testimony, said Carlo Brugnoli.

This is why we are trying this permanent quest for faith, perseverance, excellence, generosity, love and joy in our workplaces, which are indicators that show those around us. We Christians have a large "plus" inside us ... In Senegal, we are only 10% in our context, surrounded by more than 80% Muslim brothers. Of course, we must no longer yield to the materialistic society, which is that of selfishness and every man for himself, while in reality we are nothing without the others.

As entrepreneurs we have to promote a true, fair and supportive vision and encourage community development dynamics.

Thank you for your kind attention.