



PRESENTATION BY MR. Yves CABANNES

"URBAN GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY".

The speaker, Mr CABANNES, focused his presentation on the contribution of participatory democracy and its added value.

To deal with this topic, the speaker stressed on one of the three (03) classical dimensions of governance, namely societal governance, which refers to the relationship between a local government and its citizens.

In his retrospective introduction, he mentioned two major elements. On the one hand, participatory budgets that were a factor of good governance and participatory democracy. On the other hand, he invited to consider the issue of food emergency and urban agriculture due to the cumulative effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Then, bouncing back on the presentation made by Professor Giovanni ALLEGRETTI, whose communication dealt with the topic "Right to the city", Mr CABANNES was keen to make a distinction between the terms "Right to the city" and "Rights in the city". According to Mr CABANNES, the Rights in the City are the sum of individual rights that have been determined by the United Nations (right to food, to health, etc.). In short,

it is a set of rights. With regard to the "Rights to the City", he referred to the work carried out by LEFEBVRE from 1968 to 1972. In this respect, two major elements of this work should be noted. The first one is that the urban revolution must be based on daily life and on the inhabitants who live in cities. The second thing is that every citizen can participate in what is called "the work for the city". This is like developing a non-existent city, a new city. It is a higher right and a philosophical principle framed on a legal basis.

Along his presentation, Mr. CABANNES pointed out that the first participatory budgets happened in 1989 in Brazil, considered as the "Laboratory of participatory democracy". However, the United Nations documents on that issue only appeared in 1997. As a result, the UNDP Policy Department defined nine (09) pillars of what is referred as good governance. Therefore, we cannot achieve development without good governance. In addition, UN-Habitat (United Nations Human Settlements Programme) is fully committed to its global campaign for governance. Therefore, an index of good urban governance based on a certain number of pillars was developed. This was the first opportunity to include participatory budgets as a tool for good urban governance. This paved the way for exchanges and transfers between Latin America and Africa. Recalling the nine (09) pillars of good governance, Mr. CABANNES reminded that Participation, Transparency and Equity are the three (03) most relevant indicators.

Furthermore, in his explanation, Mr CABANNES raised the following question: "To what extent governance has been an obstacle to certain participatory budgets as well as to some initial logics referring to participatory budgets?"

In this regard, the speaker highlighted three (03) ideas that could answer this question:

- ✓ Ultimately, participatory budgets should allow improvement of living conditions, but also strengthen a community-based pillar capable of establishing a horizontal dialogue between the other actors of the city. For the speaker, according to " les amis de PORTO ALLEGRE", it is a process that allows citizens to acquire some political skills. This results in the emergence of a community sphere that will lead through forums and assemblies to the election of Participatory Budget Councils (PBC).
- ✓ secondly, the idea is to give the citizens an institutional power.
- ✓ the third idea is the tendency promoting re-distribution.

To illustrate this, Mr CABANNES quoted the example of SAN SALVADOR, a country that adopted the policy of participation and transparency, the right to participate. This right to participate can be understood through five (05) points:

- The right to request and receive information;
- The right to be consulted and make proposal ;
- The Right to be involved in decision-making process ;
- The right to co-management ;
- The right to audit (control of resources in transparency and denunciation).

To conclude his first point, Mr CABANNES recalled that the participatory budgets had been improved in relation to the previous statement of the United Nations. However, these budgets acted as an obstacle to possible progress.

In the second and final part of his speech, Mr CABANNES showed that the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in hunger and malnutrition

throughout the world, particularly for those working in the informal sector. He indicated that in Brazil, 58% of the population live in food insecurity. To him, single-crops are cultivated to the detriment of subsistence crops considered as speculative. In Peru, we are also witnessing the existence of a community-based network which is materialized by the construction of nine hundred (900) community gardens and urban agriculture in the middle of the desert with the recycling of waste water. This is called building governance from community-based approach.

Furthermore, Mr CABANNES described food governance as a development based on initiatives throughout the value chain, either in urban agriculture or processing. Due to the challenges recorded in urban areas (housing, health, employment, etc.), the trends in Asia is that 80% of people eat from the street. In Mexico City, we are witnessing a mixed model of food governance that is materialized by a community kitchen generating fifteen million (15,000,000) community meals in 2020. In Bangkok, networked governance models are experienced.

At the end of his speech, he recommended better integration of urban agriculture and food system in the planning of cities.

During the discussions, only one concern was raised by Mr. Roland KOUASSI who requested the speaker to clarify the nine (09) pillars of good governance.

In response, the speaker outlined the nine (09) concepts of good governance:

- ✓ minimum level of good governance ;
- ✓ rule of law, which is a set of codified rules applicable to everyone.

This is the most important pillar;

- ✓ Transparency (dealing with tax , policy, enforcement);
- ✓ "Responsiveness (no favouritism, meet the expectations of all stakeholders);
- ✓ Consensus, emanating from a democratic concept starting with consultation and ending with an agreement. Among other things, it includes voting;
- ✓ Equity (gender, multicultural, property, public resources);
- ✓ efficiency and effectiveness (good management) ;
- ✓ Reporting / Accountability which is reporting to the people ; making them sovereign ;
- ✓ strategic vision (lack of urban planning).