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Bandung Plus 50

A Call for a Tri-Continental Dialogue on Global Hegemony

1. Introduction

The Year 2005 will be the fiftieth anniversary of the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference. This paper is an attempt to present a few arguments about the importance to hold a second Bandung Conference, broadened to the Tri-Continental regions including Latin America and the Caribbean region in it. The Second Bandung should be a Peoples' Bandung, while the First Bandung Conference was a Conference of the newly emerging States of Asia and Africa. This is because the realities of the Post-Cold-War globalization require the peoples to form a larger counter-hegemonic alliance, whereas in 1955, it was the new nations who were the only agents of change who decided to form a counter-hegemonic alliance in face of the Cold War bi-hegemony.

We will first present an overview of what Bandung meant to the emerging Third World during the Cold War. We will try to show that it played an historical role in starting-off a process of counter-hegemonic activities which developed political, economic and cultural projects which succeeded in putting an end to the Cold War. We will then analyze the new hegemonic order which was formed at the end of the Cold War led to the emergence of a uni-trinitary hegemony of the United States in a Trilateral alliance with Europe and Japan, where the major agents of Bandung were co-opted by the hegemonic alliance. This is why a new Bandung has to propose a new project to form a new counter hegemonic coalition.

This paper is not meant to present a complete picture of the historical and contemporary conditions which call for a Second Bandung. It will only propose a few entry points for further dialogue among the social forces to be involved. It is assumed that the organic intellectuals of the Third World will develop further the points made in this very preliminary discussion about Bandung plus 50.

2. The Bandung Conference in the Cold War Context

The Bandung Conference has played a constructive role in mobilizing the counter-hegemonic forces of what was to become known as the Third World against the bi-hegemony which emerged in the Post World-War-II period, a (post-colonial, neo-colonial) global colonial period.

The Bandung Conference proposed ten principles for the counter-hegemonic alliance of the newly emerging nations. These principles were based on the Pancha Silla, the five principles of peaceful co-existence which were proposed as an inter-State framework for all the counter-hegemonic nations to form an alliance in spite of their political, economic and cultural differences.

The five principles enabled the cooperation of not-only the States but also the peoples of Asia and Africa, to which the Latin American States joined in later. The Principles, first proclaimed by India and China, represented an imaginative reformulation of the Modern Western international political framework of the Westphalian system. It based the cooperation among the newly independent States on the Western principles of sovereign States adding to it a non-Western ethical position stressing mutual respect and mutual benefit in the place of the Western concept of international "anarchy".

It was especially meaningful that these principles were first adopted by India and China, two new States with a long imperial history which had accustomed them to put themselves at the centre of a concentric world order of nations of unequal status, which were in spite of their inequality, basing their relations on mutual respect and mutual benefit. Obviously, two such

orders could not co-exist without accepting to live in a non-concentric world order recognizing the equality among its members. Thus was proclaimed mutual respect of each-one's territorial sovereignty, affirmed mutual non-intervention, and non interference in each-one's domestic affairs, first by India and China, and then by all the participant nations of the Bandung Conference.

These three principles, already regulating the relations among the Western modern States, were of special relevance for the two Asian civilizations to overcome their ego-centric concepts of world order. Their combination with the last two, gave to the Pacha Silla an entirely new meaning to the inter-State relations, by putting them in a cooperative framework in stead of an anarchic one. Mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence were two principles which was absent from the anarchic principles of the Westphalian System, and created a community of States, economically complementary and politically non-hegemonic.

The five principles were, and still are, important to any anti-colonial and counter-hegemonic alliance, in refusing the intrusion of the hegemon and of all the rich countires of the North in the Third World affairs, proclaiming their collective self-reliance and non-violent cooperation. After fifty years, the importance of the Pancha Silla has not decreased. Bandung has, nevertheless, been forgotten even by its initiators who are too busy, nowadays, in their efforts to survive in the global mega-competition with industrial States and MNCs, to refer back to their common historical experience of half century ago.

The globalization of the international political economy was accompanied, especially in the Third World by the emergence of ethnic, religious and other identity communities who challenged the State's legitimacy and power, and the framework proposed at Bandung which assumed the indivisibility of national State sovereignty is no more viable. We will discuss later the reasons why Bandung has a powerful message for those who want to form a counter-hegemonic alliance under quite different conditions of the global age. The application of the Bandung principles is valid on the condition that it is re-conceptualized in full accordance with the new realities of this time of global colonialism.

Already, the Bandung message was affected by the neo-colonial divisive forces which characterized the Cold War. It was regrettable that the Sino-Soviet dispute, a "socialist" version of colonial North South inequality between the Soviet Union and China, brought in the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement discord and division. Yet the message was clear and was further expanded by the Non-Aligned Movement and by the G77 movement, both logical continuations of the Bandung Conference.

Bandung triggered-off a process which prevented a nuclear annihilation of humankind, by providing the ground for the Non-Aligned Movement, which played a precious role in the United Nations against the nuclear arms race of the co-hegemons, the two nuclear super powers. Truly enough, the two hegemonic powers preferred to negotiate the adjustment of their nuclear strategic policies, and the major agreements on nuclear "arms control and disarmament" were negotiated between them, excluding the United Nations General Assembly where the Non-Aligned countries were adopting resolutions opposing nuclear tests and nuclear arms race. The end of the Cold War came, however, when the Soviet Union, recognized unilaterally the recommendation to start a process of disarmament proposed by the Non-Aligned Countries and by the international peace movements. Under the leadership of Gorbachev.

It helped his decision that the position of the Non-Aligned States was shared by the international anti-nuclear movement which involved not only States but also peace activists and pacifist groups from all over the world including the Capitalist countries. It is important to take note of this fact, since the Non-Aligned Movement, anti-hegemonic and anti-nuclear, was receiving a large support in the civil societies of the North, i.e. of the Cold War West. The end of the Cold War was, in a sense, the product of this large alliance involving Third

World Non-Aligned States and the peace-loving sectors of nations from the North and from the South.

The Bandung Afro-Asian Conference prepared also the emergence of the Third World economic platform, the G77 which was formed later in the 1960s, by the Tri-Continental alliance demanding a more equitable terms of trade between the rich industrial countries of the North and the poor countries of the South which surplus was sucked-up by the North by the trade mechanisms providing the primary commodities under unequal terms of trade. The G77 demands led to the project of a New International Economic Order in the 1970s. Truly enough, the demands of the G77 were often motivated by their neo-mercantilist position aiming at preparing the ground for rapid industrialization, and their political leadership often led to development despotic States pro-hegemonic in their attempt to obtain economic aid from the hegemons. This negative aspect of the G77 movement was, however, largely compensated by the fact that its demands triggered-off a broad based search for "alternative development" including "eco-development" by a large sector of the civil societies, both in the North and in the South. Thus, several versions of "New International Orders" were proposed.

A New International Cultural Order, a New World Information Order, a New International Constitutional Order, and several other new orders were proposed, officially and unofficially. These projects raised serious questions about the hegemonic order supported by, and maintaining unequal colonial relations between the North and the South. Unfortunately, the globalization of the world political economy evolved in stead of these proposed international orders a "new international division of labour" which after the end of the Cold War, led to the hegemonic "New World Order" proposed by President George Bush.

The present global hegemonic order(or disorder) seems to have put under its effective control the developing nations, eliminating the political economic projects of the Third World originating in Bandung. The historical trend of globalization led to the present uni-trinary hegemony, under which the corporate sector of the Trilateral regions prosper and the Tri-Continental regions are partly co-opted by and partly excluded from this global hegemonic alliance.

In spite of its apparent failure to implement its political-economic projects, the variety of myths, utopias, and projects of which Bandung was the origin, continue to be valid in their critique of the political-economic myths and projects of the neo-colonial hegemonic Alliance. We will study the present global hegemonic colonialist structures against which a new counter-hegemonic alliance has to be built. This will become possible, we will argue, only on the basis of a new interpretation of the powerful myth of Bandung.

3. The New Global Colonial (Dis)Order

The peoples' insecurity is one of the basic characteristics of the present global age. It is a consequence of the "New Colonial Global Order" or "disorder". The contemporary world economy is global in the sense that it is in the final (global) stage of a capitalist economic expansion of the world system which has so far been able to feed its economic/technological growth by the exploitation of the surplus from its frontier land, the periphery, i.e. the colonies or economic peripheries. The global economy is global in that it has reached a stage where such frontiers do not exist any more. So, the exploitation of the surplus can be done nowhere and must be done everywhere possible since the global economy needs surplus for its mega-competition and for its speculative activities.

The structures of the global political economy is composed by three segments. A global segment of mega-competition among MNCs and States is at its core. Technocrats, workers of MNCs, global civil society agents and intellectuals, operate within this segment within the neo-liberal framework of the global hegemonic governance. A second segment, periphery to the first one, serves the interest of the global hegemonic alliance, passive subject of the global hegemony. This segment is composed by the subaltern agents of the first sector,

including small and middle industries, the majority of Third World States unable to compete with the MNCs and the States in the first segment, as well as a large part of the civil societies which serve the technocratic elites and support the global hegemony. A third segment is composed by all the sectors of the societies in the South and in the North, excluded even from the subaltern sector. Many social groups and categories, women, indigenous peoples, landless peasants, and many agents who failed to remain in the subaltern segment compose this third segment of the global political economy. The so-called informal sectors are an increasingly important part of this segment.

This is an excluded segment by and from the global economy. It does not mean that it is excluded from the contemporary historical process of global transformation. It has two important characteristics as a matrix for new agencies.

Firstly, it includes a variety of identity communities who are preserving the "asabiya" lost by most civil societies in the "global city". This sense of identity and dedication has to become the basis of a counter-hegemonic alliance as indicates the analysis of hegemonic change by Ibn Khaldun. Secondly, the excluded sector includes a large sector of the migrants, especially migrant workers moving from South to North, and infiltrating into the civil societies of the industrialized Trilateral North. They are victimized by the global segment of these societies, but can form an important political force if they succeed in forming an alliance with the civil societies in their host countries.

The exclusionary processes of the global market creates insecurity for all the subaltern exploited social formations and all the peoples in the South and in the North who are in the excluded segment of the global structures. A variety of colonial relations of exploitation and exclusion cross-over in the surplus extraction from the South by the North, from women by men, from the rural by the urban sectors, from the local communities of each country by its metropole, from the ethnic minorities by the global "majorities".

This structure of the global political economy is quite different from the North-South structure of the Cold War days which legitimacy was put into question by the Third World nations at the Bandung Conference. The global political economy has created a situation where the three segments exist in both the South and the North, and where their difference lies in their relative proportion. This is why the counter-hegemonic alliance which was formed by the Third World States in Bandung, can not remain limited to the Third World States. It should include non-state agents in the subaltern and the excluded segments of the Trilateral regions.

The above analysis of the global political economic structure may lead to the wrong conclusion that the historical bloc formed in Bandung by the emerging Third World nations is no more valid under the global colonial situation which extracts surplus not only from the South but from the subaltern and excluded segments of the North. If the global hegemony had not developed a new exclusionary structure between the Trilateral North and the Tri-Continental South, we may not need to go back to Bandung in our attempt to build a new counter-hegemonic alliance.

However, the United States and its Trilateral allies are creating a new divide between the North and the South by their efforts to strengthen their security, both national and "human", by strengthening the "Human Security" of the Trilateral (North Atlantic plus Japan) security community and by making "humanitarian" interventions in the Tri-Continental regions. In spite of the political-economic elimination of the borders between the South and the North, the North/South divide has not been filled, since the hegemonic security project of the New Global Colonial Order excludes the South and intervenes in it.

This creates a new North-South exclusionary structure where the Bandung myth and projects become highly relevant for the building of a counter-hegemonic alliance.

The New Global Colonial Order is composed by one single "security community" in the global North which is built on a complex network of inter-dependent overlapping "security communities" inter-dependent on each-other, and a network of interacting fragmented "security communities" excluding and suspecting each-other, in the global South. The global North is the core region of the New Global Colonial Order, it is the "North Atlantic security community" plus Japan, a fortress "protected" by the hegemonic alliance of NATO plus x (in Asia). The global South, the periphery of the same Order, is composed by States surviving in the mega-competition of multinational firms and "welcome States" by welcoming foreign capital even by sacrificing their role of "welfare state". They have to renounce their role of "security community" for their people. The peoples are fragmented and are forced to organize their own "security communities", on ethnic, religious or any other "identities".

All the domestic conflicts involving States vs. ethnic groups or ethnic groups against one-another, are all part of this web of fragmented "security communities" fearing each-other and over-reacting to each-other's attempt to increase their security. Their sense of insecurity is, to a large extent, caused by the harshness of the exploitative process sucking their surplus, the scarcity of essential resources to satisfy their needs, the failure of the governments to play a minimal welfare role, all caused by the exploitative and exclusionary nature of the global political-economy.

Unlike in the global North where all States do not fear that others would attack them, in the high risk environment of the global South, each "security community" perceives other's efforts to increase their security as a threat to their own security. The mega-competition which engages MNCs in the core of the world system, takes the form of militarized competition among "security communities", States, religious groups, ethnic minorities etc.. What is believed to be pre-modern conflicts of under-developed traditional groups in the developing regions are ultra-modern (or post-modern) conflicts of identity groups engaged in a violent mega-competition in the periphery of the New Global Colonial Order complementing the "peaceful" mega-competition of the TNCs and States in the core of this Order.

The present global political economy thus generates in the North various sources of insecurity within the "security", It also generates insecurities between "security communities" in the South. It also generate all sorts of global insecurity in both North and South. This is why the New Global Colonial Order has developed the concept of "global governance". This "governance" is colonial especially in that it is based on the tutelage of the South by the North which deploys its military forces in high-risk regions, ready to intervene anywhere where the interests and values of the global hegemonic order is put into question.

The Trilateral hegemons from the global North intervene in the conflicts between different "security communities" to punish the culprits who they designate as the ones who have started these conflicts, be it the case of Saddam Hosain in West Asia or of Miloshevic in the Balkan. This intervention is in most cases arbitrary and lacks international legitimacy as it was the case in the past centuries when the Western Powers were intervening in the South on any pretext and thus were expanding their colonial influence.

Such interventions by the North requires the maintenance of a network of forward-deployed military bases. It assumes, as in the old days of traditional colonialism, that the Western industrial democracies have the right and obligation to act as the missionaries of universal values, and assume the role of a global constabulary, as a "white-men's burden". They should better realize that the conflicts are caused in most cases by the pressure from the global economy which forces each "security community" to maximize their power to grab some resources in order to achieve a minimum level of security. Their competition over the scarce resources is a zero-sum process where each community perceives others as competitors and potential threats to them. The only way to overcome these conflicts is to build into their inter-community relations some plus-sum elements and enable them to seek a common security.

This is where the Bandung principles of peaceful coexistence and mutual benefit become indispensable, not only in inter-states relations of the global South, but also in all relations among the different types of security communities, gender-based, class-based, ethnic, religious etc.. The Trilateral security community should cease to intervene on "humanitarian" ground, and should rather eliminate all the exploitative and exclusionary mechanisms of its neo-liberal global political economy. It should also cease to restraint the South to North migratory trends and rather regulate its criminal tendency to violate the basic rights and security of the migrants, especially of the victims of trafficking and smuggling of persons. A non-hegemonic system of governance must be built to replace the present global hegemonic security system. This should be a project for the New Bandung alliance, which comprises both a security dimension comparable to the non-aligned movement security project, and an economic dimension comparable to the G77 demand of economic reforms.

4. Against Global Hegemonic Governance

The present system of global hegemonic governance is a hegemonic process accompanying the New Global Colonial Order giving to it a "civilized" appearance. For the mega-competition among MNCs and States to sustain itself in the core of the global order, it needs to get a sufficiently broad support from the international public opinion not only in the North but also in the South, i.e. from the "civil societies" composing both parts of the world. The hegemonic alliance needs to develop a set of "stable" universal values in the name of which it can exercise its "governance". It has to build a security system of surveillance, control, and punishment not only of the states, hegemon and allies, but of the global economy and of the civil societies. It needs to create enough room for the "dissidents" in the civil society not to revolt against the New Global Colonial Order.

To use a neo-Gramscian definition of the New Global Colonial Order, the hegemonic forces, the United States and its allies, the Trilateral alliance or the G7, are engaged in developing "passive revolutions" in the South, and to a certain extent in the non-Western region of the North, i.e. East Asia, in order to prevent the formation of an anti-hegemonic alliance. The global States in the South and their global intellectuals use the discourse developed by the globalizing civil society of the North and of the co-opted parts of the South, "democracy and human rights", "human development", "human security" etc.. They co-opt their efforts to build alternatives, e.g. human development now is adopted by the World Bank. The hegemonic North supports "human security" as if they were ready to renounce their inhuman national security projects.

Global hegemonic governance involves, in this way, two major problems. Firstly, on the economic and social level, it supports and sustains the neo-liberal global economy which is nothing but a global casino which distributes, among the gamblers, the surplus produced by the exploited and excluded majority of the people, both women and men but especially women, both in the North and in the South, but especially in the South.

Secondly, on the political-military level, it is a hegemonic governance (in the Gramscian sense) system, based on a broad alliance not only of the big industries and big powers of the global segment of the world, but also of the smaller enterprises and States, intellectuals and civil society agents of the subaltern segment, who hope to survive and join-in one day the mega-competition of the first segment. In the subaltern segment, quite a number of the workers of the sub-contracting firms of big industries hoping to survive harsh labour-cuts by working harder for their companies, and there is also quite a number of civic leaders who hope to get concessions from governments useful for the people, support "passively" the neo-liberal New Global Colonial Order for lack of alternatives.

The "passive revolutions" is now taking place in the South in the name of "democracy", and in the North in terms of "human security". The conflicts in the South, and the "Peace" (doubtful in the subaltern and excluded segments of the societies but existing among states)

in the North enables the neo-colonial myths of Pax Democratica (peace through the propagation of "democracy") to serve as a pretext for the hegemons to intervene militarilly in some of the conflicts of the South which endanger the global economy, or simply meet the disapproval of the United States' military/industrial/technocratic complex.

The intervention of the hegemons is highly selective and depends more on their interests than on a realistic assessment of the local situations they intervene into. This is why they create everywhere more insecurity than security, yet it is believed to bring democracy to the South "undemocratic" countries.

The hegemonic alliance of the "industrial democracies" combines with this interventionist policy into the global South, a rejection policy vis-a-vis all "undesirable" elements to the "human security" of the civil societies of the North, coming from the South. This includes AIDS/HIV, drugs, trafficked women, terrorists and "illegal" migrant workers. They exercise a kind of "triage" and cultural cleansing to protect the "human security" in the global segment of the North.

In this way, the New Global Colonial Order combines an interventionist policy vis-a-vis the Third World with an exclusionist policy vis-a-vis its peoples. This creates a new North-South relations of dominance, intervention and exclusion, different from the North-South relations of the Cold War period to which the newly emerging nations objected in Bandung. The Tri-Continental South is no more a producer of primary commodities, but comprises a segment highly developed engaged in the mega-competition, and a subaltern sector co-opted and exploited by it, though quite small in comparison with the same segment in the Trilateral nations. Its excluded segment is quite large and is more and more left to itself by the States, the civil society and the intellectuals.

Most conflicts take place between security communities whose majority of members belong to this segment, and yet it does not receive the attention due to it, because the global States (called sometimes "welcome States") are more concerned about inviting in transnational agents and in receiving international economic cooperation than about strengthening their national integrity and meeting the social security needs of their people. The welfare States are now replaced by welcome States!

This is why a new Bandung involving the peoples of the Third World and not only the global States, has become indispensable. Otherwise, the Tri-Continental regions will remain divided. Politically and militarilly. It will remain divided among different security communities within each dis-unified States. Economically it will continue to be divided into its global and subaltern segments and its excluded segment. The uni-tyrinary hegemony of the United States in alliance with Europe and Japan, will continue to divide and rule it.

The Third World intellectuals have to play a key role as integrators of their national societies, by building a political framework for the common security and common prosperity of the ethnic, religious and other security communities, refusing the useless and harmful interventions from the Trilateral hegemons. Economically, the intellectuals will have to reintegrate into the national division of labour the excluded sectors. This implies culturally that they will have to cease to serve the interest of the global States and develop an endogenous cultural base for the national and regional integration, endogenizing the exogenous global culture. They will have to reinterpret all the values of the civil societies so that they can be shared by the peoples of the excluded sectors. Only when they assume this arduous task can they be called "organic" intellectuals.

The above considerations indicate how much needed is the message of the Bandung Conference, its myth of Afro-Asian solidarity broadened to the Tri-Continental regions, and its Projects of political non-intervention, economic co-prosperity, and cultural solidarity. They all have become relevant in this new context of the New Global Colonial Order.

5. The Peoples' Bandung

This leads us to propose a Bandung plus 50 celebration, which would be an occasion to reignite the fire of the Bandung spirit in the contemporary context of global colonialism. It will be a Peoples' Bandung, organizing a counter-hegemonic alliance crossing the border of North and South, but under the hegemony of the Third World peoples. It will build an alliance between the subaltern social formations, and the civil societies with the peoples in the excluded segment of the different world regions. Their alliance will be made possible by the myth and projects of Peoples' Bandung.

Bandung plus fifty can, in deed, provide the global myth necessary for the organization of a counter-hegemonic alliance, a broad alliance of the civil societies of the South and of the North with the excluded and marginalized peoples, women, peasants and workers, indigenous peoples, as well as the marginalized peoples in the informal sectors of both industrial and developing societies. This broad alliance should be organized under the hegemony of the peoples of the Third world. They should constitute a post-colonial and post-modern global "Prince" following the historical path of the "Prince" of Machiavelly and of Gramsci.

The organic intellectuals of the Tri-Continental regions should translate the myth of the peoples' Bandung into a series of projects, political, economic and civilizational. To the hegemonic project of "pax democratica" which presents, with the support of globalist technocratic intellectuals, the hegemonic alliance as a defensor of human security, human rights and human development, the counter-hegemonic political project should oppose the exogenous, formalistic formulation of these values by denouncing their abstract nature, and propose in their place endogenous projects embedded in the life-environments of the peoples, and based on their own will and praxis. A truly human security should be a people's security. A truly human approach to the rights of the peoples should be based on the rights to life and to development of each and every human communities. A truly human development should be endogenous, rejecting outside imposition of exogenous models. The principle of peaceful coexistence should be expanded to all human security communities, and non-interference in domestic affairs should be guaranteed to these groups, as well as to each individual in all human communities whose self-determination should be respected by the larger units, be it States, regional organizations or TNCs.

Bandung plus fifty should oppose the neo-liberal version of the global political economy. It should especially regulate the casino capitalism harmful to both the subaltern and excluded segments of the world. It should also reject hidden hegemonic economic projects of global or regional neo-mercantilist nature. It should aim at regulating the "global standards" imposed by the neo-liberal economy in order to guarantee that all peoples of the world can have a decent work in a humanly acceptable working condition. The new "enclosure" movement of the transnational capital affecting, among others, the land rights of the indigenous peoples should be regulated. The gender inequity and all other forms of discrimination built in all aspects of the global political economy should be eliminated from all aspects of the economic life, production, reproductions, service and consumption.

The political-economic projects of the peoples' Bandung has to be negotiated between the agents in the subaltern segment of each national communicites and the marginalized social classes and categories through the mediation of the organic intellectuals, and the door should be kept open to the non-hegemonic members of the technocratic elite who accept the people's hegemony. Mutual benefit can thus become a principle for all the different groups joining the counter-hegemonic bloc.

The New Bandung intellectuals have especially an important role in developing a civilizational dialogue among all the participants of the counter-hegemonic alliance, as well as with the Trilateral hegemonic alliance. The combination of the two dialogues are the only way to avoid the hegemons to trigger-off a "clash of civilization". The Peoples' Bandung and

its organic intellectuals have to engage in a critical dialogue, with the modernizing elites with a neo-liberal, technocratic vision of a Euro-centric progress of human civilization. All the post-modern and post-colonial intellectuals will have to be invited to join in the dialogue. The organic intellectuals have an extremely difficult task to involve in their dialogue, the voiceless peoples who know the risk they take in opening their mouth. They have also an impossible task which is to invite even the fundamentalists, who reject any dialogue, to take part in their counter-hegemonic epistemological exercise. The "peaceful coexistence" of the different anti-hegemonic intellectual currents and civilizational projects should be established and respected by all intellectuals.

In all of its principles, the Pancha Silla has to be applied to the relations between the different epistemic communities, who should respect each other's autonomy, agree not to interfere in each-one's internal debates, develop a mutually profitable exchange of thought between these communities in a state of peaceful coexistence.

The above points need further reflection and deepening. It is our hope that the present very preliminary notes can become an entry point for the organic intellectuals of the Tri-Continental regions to begin their collective reflection in preparation of Bandung plus Fifty.