



11TH FINNISH SOCIAL FORUM APRIL 21.- 22.4.2012

ARBIS, DAGMARINKATU 3, HELSINKI

OVER 50 DEBATES, SEMINARS, MEETINGS, PLUS FILM SCREENINGS, MUSICAL PERFORMANCES, WORKSHOPS AND EXHIBITIONS

HASSAN A. MOSA DINA AZIZ EL-MARARGHY

Egyptians Dina Aziz El-Mararghy and Hassan A. Mosa work to promote citizenship and youth empowerment by fighting xenophobia, racism, and discrimination. Intercultural learning is important for becoming active citizens and ambassadors of one's country.

El-Mararghy and Mosa from Development No Borders Association speak on April 22st, from 11:00 to 1:00 pm.



ALI LMRABET

"The Moroccan monarchy must be renewed!" urges journalist and human rights activist Ali Lmrabet from AMDH. He has faced situations of conflict with the Moroccan monarchy many times because of his dealings with sensitive questions about human rights, the property of the king, and the occupation of the Western Sahara. **Lmrabet speaks on April 22st, from 11:00 to 1:00 pm.**



DESPINA NAMWEMBE

Interfaith efforts, peace and justice programs, issues dealing with bettering women's lives are central to URI coordinator, Despina Namwembe who works in Uganda. Interfaith has many opportunities because it can bridge the gap between individual and community life.

Namwembe speaks on April 22nd, from 11:00 to 1:00 pm.

More info about the speakers and the program can be found at: www.sosiaalifoorum.fi



The Social Forum urges in Finland: Occupy Democracy!

This year the Occupy movement will be part of the Finnish Social Forum. Irja Askola, the Lutheran bishop of Helsinki, will be a visiting speaker, among others.

The Social Forum is in general an open meeting place where social movements, networks, NGOs and other civil society organizations come together to pursue their thinking, to debate ideas democratically, share their experiences freely and network for effective action.

"The Social Forum will inform you about the current civil discourse," says coordinator Minna Mannert. This year, the Forum offers more than 50 different events, organized according to seven different topics: democracy and poverty; economy and the financial crisis; working life; the environment and sustainable development; peace and dialogue; and education, culture and art.

"The majority of the world's labor force is unofficial, and workers fall through the gaps of the social safety net," notes Nina Kreutzman from The Finnish Construction Trade Union. One of the main issues related to questions considering working life is the existence of modern wage-slavery, and searching for solutions for ending human exploitation.

The activist Olli-Pekka Haavisto sees that Social Forum is one unifying phenomenon that offers alternative ways of understanding and realizing the world. "Political changes don't happen if normal people don't create pressure for a more just and sustainable society."

Occupy Helsinki-concert fights against racism

Beside the panel discussions and workshops the themes of Social Forum will be dealt with also through art. For example the Artists for Peace (Pand) is organizing a concert for the fight against racism on Saturday evening at the restaurant Kaisaniemi.

As with last year, this year the NGO for church social work employees (Kytkey ry.) is the leading association to organize the event. "The internet is an effective tool for communicating and increasing knowledge, but opinions can also clash sharply there. So we still need a place where people with different perspectives can meet face to face," says the Lutheran pastor Raija Korhonen.

Last year, the Finnish Social Forum had nearly 2500 visitors. Participants in the Forum have become more diverse every year. The events will be held by some 100 organizers. Participants include people from peace movements, social movements and networks, trade union movements and religious communities. This year the Social forum will be receiving international guests from countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Uganda, South Africa, Brazil and Russia. Some sessions will be spoken in both Finnish and in English. The Social Forum is supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

The Finnish Social Forum is a part of the international movement of the World Social Forum. Since the first world encounter in 2001, it has taken the form of a permanent world process seeking and building alternatives to neo-liberal policies. The World Social Forum is also characterized by plurality and diversity, is non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party.

www.sosiaalifoorum.fi