

Declaration of the Participants at the Composition Workshop
Organized by the ACOTBA-SUBO
Gemena, Democratic Republic of Congo
May 8-13, 2006

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Priests and Preachers,
Pastors and Reverends,
Distinguished guests:

In 2006, the 13th day of the month of May, we participants of the first ethnomusicology seminar, which took place from the 8th to the 13th of May 2006 dealing with the composition of religious songs in traditional melodies, declare the following:

The workshop had these objectives:

1. to have songs based faithfully on Scripture
2. sung in the mother tongue of the composers
3. which are in a traditional style
4. conforming completely to characteristics of the highest quality in this style in terms of melody, rhythm, and poetry
5. which will be incorporated solidly into the repertoire of at least one church.

Given the importance of these objectives, we declare the following:

1. We have noticed with regret the remarkable absence of traditional music in our churches. This was caused by the arrival of the first missionaries, traditional music has been erased, leaving in its place modern music, which has given youth the feeling of being despised, wronged.
2. Yet God wants to be praised with various musical instruments, Western as well as African (cf. Psalm 150:3-4).

By the end of this workshop, we have been able to discover that we have incredible, multiple musical riches in our different African languages.

Let us recognize that a song inspired and composed in one's mother tongue touches the heart and can change the life of a person, console him, exhort him, make him joyful and lead him to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

May this workshop, the first of its kind, not be the last. We desire that the God who is the Master of time and circumstances open other opportunities so that this good initiative may contribute to the proclamation of the Good News and Salvation by songs in our heart languages, for our Lord is enthroned upon praises and adoration (see Revelation 7:9-10).

Thus, we participants of this workshop recommend that the Congolese Association for the Translation of the Bible and Literacy of Sukisa-Boyinga, ask our churches to help us incorporate traditional music with inspired biblical texts in our respective churches.

Long live the Lord!
Long live the Congolese Association for the Translation of the Bible and Literacy of Sukisa-Boyinga
[Conquer Ignorance]!

The Participants