

Call from the Social Movements Assembly

Monday, 27 February 2006

In recent years, the popular struggles against neo-liberalism and imperialism in the Americas and in other parts of the World have generated a crisis of legitimacy for the neo-liberal system and its institutions. The most recent expressions of this are the defeat of the FTAA in Mar del Plata and the Agreement for a European Constitution in France and Holland. We live in a time in which military intervention by the United States and European governments and their allies in order to control and pillage the riches of the planet, or to abort the processes of liberation and deny the peoples' sovereignty to control their own destiny, is the order of the day; at times with the collusion of the local elite.

During this time in Latin America, we have seen an explosion of mobilizations against free trade, militarization, and privatization, and in defense of natural resources and food sovereignty. In some countries, these mobilizations have translated into alternative politics rising to government, emerging from the groundswell of popular struggles. The most recent example of this process is the victory of Evo Morales in Bolivia. Its origin lies in the struggle against the privatization of water and the grassroots, peasants, workers, and indigenous struggles which have been developing in this country since 2000. Therefore, in the face of announcements by transnationals such as Repsol (and others) to withdraw their planned investments as a means to place conditions on the new government's policies, especially in terms of the recuperation of natural resources, this Assembly calls upon the workers unions of these companies, and on the social movements in the countries where they are located, to stop this blackmail from happening and to diligently monitor these companies in order to guarantee the sovereignty of the people and of the Bolivian government to freely make their own political choices. In the face of access to government by alternative politics related to popular struggle, we social movements must maintain our political and programmatic autonomy, driving social mobilization to achieve our goals and apply pressure to prevent any adaptation by these governments of the neo-liberal model. Finally, the social movements gathered during this Social Forum in Caracas, in our commitment to confront the neo-liberal model, imperialism, and war, will advance four central campaigns throughout the year 2006:

1. International Day of Mobilization Against the Occupation of Iraq, March 18
Against the war and occupations: No more wars, peace is the only solution! We demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops from Iraq and an end to the privatization of energy resources.

We oppose all occupations by foreign troops and, as such, we call for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and for the creation of an independent Palestinian state. We oppose the threats of occupation of Syria, Iran, and of Latin America countries through the Plan Colombia, military bases, and other means, as well as the use of economic embargos as a weapon of war, such as the US embargo against Cuba. We demand the disarmament and elimination of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. We demand respect for human rights, civil liberties, and an end to torture, kidnappings, and illegal detentions, including secret prisons. We call upon all to mobilize on March 18, 2006 for a day of global protest against the occupation of Iraq, as part of the global campaign that will continue until the foreign troops in Iraq are withdrawn. We also call for participation in the conference in Cairo (Egypt) against US hegemony and the occupation of Iraq, which will be held March 24-27, 2006.
2. Against the Conclusions of the WTO Doha Round
After the ministerial meeting of the WTO in Hong Kong, which in spite of great efforts, popular movements were unable to stop, the ministerial declaration of the WTO now opens the way for finalizing free trade negotiations in the Doha Round. The agreement on this declaration was the fruit of European Union and United States intimidation tactics, as well as the decisive role played by the governments of Brazil and India in their choice to obtain a place in the power structure of the WTO. Despite this, all is not lost. In the next three months, the WTO has to conduct complex negotiations and the social movements must carry out campaigns and common actions that put pressure on the governments to reverse the outcomes of Hong Kong, in order to derail the WTO in the next meeting of the General Council in May of 2006.
3. Against the G-8 Summit, July 2006, in Saint Petersburg, Russia
Following on the convening of social movements and organizations of Russia, we call on the people of that country, and on all social movements and organizations that share the principles of peace, democracy, and social justice, to resist and to support our initiatives by participating in the People's Counter Summit, in opposition to the G8 Summit in Saint Petersburg to be held in July. Contact: alternativy@tochka.ru
4. Against the World Bank and IMF Summit, September 2006
The Social Movements Assembly adopts the call from the Peoples of the South Assembly for an international day of direct action confronting the headquarters of the IMF and the WB in several countries, coinciding with the annual meetings of these institutions in September 2006. It will be a mobilization day to denounce the illegitimacy of the financial debt imposed on the countries of the South, and to defend their repudiation and non-payment thereof, together with a recognition of the peoples of the South as creditors of an immense historical, social, and ecological debt, whose restitution and reparation we demand.

Beyond these four central campaigns, the VI World Social Forum in Caracas has been a convening point for movements to promote several networks and campaigns, whose resolutions are listed below:

* Against the FTAA

The Continental Social Alliance calls for maintaining a continental alert against any possible attempt to revive FTAA negotiations in any of its forms, and to forward the struggle against bilateral or regional free trade agreements in Central America, the Andean region, the Caribbean, and the new generation of agreements promoted by the United States, as expressed in the North American Security and Prosperity agreement, which furthers subordinate integration to the United States, including the area of "security." We also call for the construction of a bi-continental network for the Latin American-European Union Summit to be held in Vienna in May 2006, and especially for action against transnational abuse. In the face of new Latin American political scenarios, we also call for the increasing development and

concretization of development and integration alternatives, arising from the social movements as the new priority in this period. And finally, with the necessity to orchestrate a whole new strategy, plan of action and new forms of convergence and organizing, the Continental Social Alliance is convening a large Hemispheric Gathering of Social Movements in the continent, which will be held at the end of April in Havana, Cuba.* For Indigenous Peoples' Rights We indigenous peoples and movements seek to deepen our presence in the WSF framework, maintaining our identity and our own spaces of action, and we ratify our rejections of the Free Trade Agreements in defense of our lands and water, calling for joint actions to build another world. We stand in solidarity with all countries and peoples who struggle for sovereignty, such as Venezuela, Cuba, and Bolivia, and we call for participation in the III Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples which will take place in Guatemala City in October, 2006, and which was called for from the II Continental Summit in Quito.

* For Food Sovereignty and Holistic Agrarian Reform

Land, water, genetic resources and biodiversity belong to the people; we will not allow their privatization nor their commercialization: we defend and promote small farmer and peasant agriculture. We demand the recuperation and protection of native seeds, and at that same time we categorically reject the sale and use of seeds produced with Terminator technology, because it is immoral and is an attack on the foods of humanity and denies seeds to 1,400 million small farmers and peasants around the world. We call on the small farmer and peasant peoples, both organized and non-organized, to globally rise up against these policies on April 17 – the International Day of Peasant Struggle – and on October 16 – the World Food Sovereignty Day – and we extend this call to all networks and social sectors because this is a threat to all humanity and the planet. The drive for holistic agrarian reform and land protection will be the basis of our daily struggle.* For the Rights of the Palestinian People We support the struggle of the Palestinian people for justice, self-determination, and the return of refugees, and the creation of an independent and sovereign state with its capital in Jerusalem. Inspired by the South African struggle against Apartheid, we support the Palestinian civil society campaigns of boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against the Zionist colonizing efforts driven by the State of Israel. We demand:

- The end of occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and the destruction of the wall.
- The full enjoyment of social, political, and economic rights by the Palestinian people.
- The application of the right of return for Palestinian refugees to their homes and properties. (Res. 194 of the UN). We support:

- The call by representatives of the Palestinian civil society for a global day of struggle on May 15 (the 59th anniversary of the Nakba catastrophe), and invite all social movements to send civil missions to Palestine on this day.

- The IVth Week of National and International Action Against the Apartheid Wall will be held November 9-16th.* Against the Commercialization and Exploitation of and Violence Against Women (World March of Women)

We call for a permanent fight against racist, machista, homophobic violence in all its forms, taking on the feminist struggle for equality as a common challenge in the building of our efforts and alternatives to the politics of commercialization and war.

The World March of Women and the Campaign of Women Say No to the War will organize on March 8, 2006, days of feminist action against the tyranny of the market and war.* For the Right to Sexual Diversity (Diálogo Sur/Sur LGBT) (We affirm our respect for sexual diversity and the autonomy of individuals. We respect each person's right to freely make decisions about their body and sexuality. We reject any form of discrimination related to personal choice and we call for support of the mobilization on June 28 for the full recognition of sexual diversity.* Health is Not for Sale (World Health Forum) We highlight the Right to Health as a central axis of the WSF in Africa in January 2007, bearing in mind the dramatic health situation in Sub-Saharan Africa. We call for mobilization and participation in the regional and national health-related preparatory events for the WSF in Africa, culminating in participation in the II World Social Forum of Health to be held within the WSF framework in Nairobi. We support the international mobilization of April 3-7, 2006, as well as the Humanitarian Camp to be held in Bogotá, Colombia, April 4-7. On the 7th will be a continental / global day for the Right to Health. We will organize an International People's Tribunal for the Right to Health, asserting the concept of genocide arising from the inequalities generated by neo-liberal policies. In this year of 2006, we add ourselves to the Global Campaign for the Right to Health and to the focus on health promoted by a coalition led by the Peoples Health Movement – PHM- in conjunction with the World Social Forum on Health.* Week in Defense of Public Education for All, November 2006

Education is an inalienable public right that must be guaranteed and financed by the State. Education is not a commodity nor can it be included in any free trade agreement. We will keep fighting to keep education as a right of the people. We confirm that the next World Education Forum will take place within the framework of the World Social Forum and we will convene a week of mobilization in defense of public school for all, in the third week of November 2006.* Youth and Student Campaign Against the Privatization of Education The V International Student Gathering calls for mobilization against the inclusion of education in free trade agreements, the privatization process, and in defense of free public education. We will mobilize on November 17, International Students Day, against the commercialization of education and the war.* Right to Housing (Frente Continental de Organizaciones Comunitarias, FCOC) The organizations that fight for the rights of the city and urban reform understand that fighting against the eviction of millions of men, women, and children ensures the social function of private and public property, fighting for the universalization of the right to water and environmental sanitation, as well as all social rights. We call for all to join the Zero Eviction Campaign and to participate in the X Gathering of the FCOC and the People's March that will be held May 4-6 simultaneously in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, as well as other countries.* For the Right to Communication Understanding Communication as a right and not a commodity, we see the fight for the democratization

of communication as a key component in the fight against neo-liberalism and imperialism, and for the construction of a new society. This means that the articulation and development of our own solidarity involves building citizenship, promoting policies that guarantee diversity and pluralism of media and preserve information and knowledge as public goods, reclaiming their access and resisting their privatization.* Campaign Against the Privatization of Water We declare water to be a common good and access to it to be a fundamental and inalienable Human Right. Water is not a commodity! Therefore we reject all forms of its privatization, including those carried out through public-private associations. We demand that water be excluded from the market laws imposed by the WTO, NAFTA, and the rest of the free trade and investment agreements. We commit ourselves to creating committees that will fulfill these objectives through education, organizing, and mobilization (at local, national, regional, and global levels). We also commit ourselves to the "citizen days" in March in Mexico City.* Triple Border: Gathering of Peoples in Defense of Life and Natural Resources We put forth a call for the Gathering of Peoples in Defense of Life and Natural Resources, especially for the Guaraní Aquifer. We demand the withdrawal of US troops from Paraguay and the end of World Bank and IDB intervention in the country. We will convene the II Social Forum of the Triple Border, June 21 – 23, 2006 in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay.* Campaign Against Climactic Change, November 11, 2006 We recognize the threat of "global warming," climactic change, for all humanity. We must put pressure on businesses and government to reduce CO2 emissions. We call for global mobilizations next November 11, 2006, the date in which the United Nations will hold discussions on the climate.* Energy is Not a Commodity Energy resources cannot be treated as commodities, but rather as strategic goods that belong to the people and not to transnational companies. We will work to have our countries regulate frameworks that guarantee access to energy for future generations. We reaffirm the deliberations from the I Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Energy Workers (Caracas, March 2005) and we support the convening of its II edition in Mexico City. These proposals should orient the actions of the social movement in energy issues during the upcoming period.* Energy and IIRSA In terms of the integrations of energy and physical infrastructures, the model can not be based on purely economic logic that only looks at profits and ignores indigenous communities, peasant farmers and their families, and quilombos, among others. For us, the model has to be based on a social logic of inclusion, with respect for diversity, the environment, and workers' rights. IIRSA – Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America – will have to attend to the interests of the people and not generate more inequality. We denounce this initiative for being conducted with a lack of transparency and dialogue with the parliamentarians and civil societies of the countries involved. The current IIRSA proposal creates an infrastructural integration that perpetuates the role of our countries as exporters of non-valued-add raw materials and products, aggravating the problem of natural resources year after year. From the point of view of alternative energies, the processes have to be both renewable and sustainable, and also not reinforce the logic of agribusiness, monoculture, and latifundio estates.* Campaign for the Demilitarization of the Americas (CADA) The Campaign for the Demilitarization of the Americas demands the withdrawal of North American troops from Paraguay and the withdrawal of foreign troops from Haiti.* Campaign Against North American Military Bases We condemn the action of the CIA, the M16, and the European secret police who carry out illegal detentions, kidnap civilians and carry them in secret flights to US military bases in Europe that are the "European Guantánamos" of today. We express our solidarity with the 28 Pakistanis who were illegally detained and kidnapped in Greece. We will not sacrifice our civil liberties in the name of the "war on terror" of Bush, Blair, and their allies. [We are preparing an international gathering of the movements that make up the campaign, to be held in Ecuador in March.]* For the Freedom of the Five Cuban Prisoners Held in the United States The United States government, with its double-standard morals in the fight against terrorism, refuses to extradite or try in its territory Luís Pozada Carriles (responsible for the explosion of a Cuban civilian plane that cost the lives of 73 passengers), while at the same time, it continues to hold five courageous Cuban fighters against terrorism. We demand their immediate release as well as the trial of Pozada Carriles.* Solidarity Days with Haiti, February 15 and 29 We demand the withdrawal of foreign troops from Haiti and the annulment and reparation of the financial debt that the international financial institutions and other supposed creditors hold against the people. We call for carrying out actions on February 15 for troop withdrawal and the annulment of Haiti's debt. At the same time, we call for March 29 (Haitian Constitution Day) to be a World Day of Solidarity with Haiti.* Campaign for Self-Determination for the Last Colonies on the American Continent We strongly condemn the presence on the continent of French, US, Dutch, and British colonies, and we denounce the pretense of the French colonial power in presenting this colonization as a positive act. We declare our solidarity with the struggle for self-determination of the peoples of Puerto Rico, Martinique, Guadalupe, French Guyana, Surinam, and Saint Maartin. We insist that these countries be included in the UN list of countries yet to be decolonized.* Campaign Stop Coca-Cola Assassin The Assembly of Social Movements adopts the campaign "Stop Coca-Cola Assassin" being carried out by the US Students Against Sweatshops in defense of workers' rights and of people who have been victims of violence imposed by this transnational.* European Union /Latin America and Caribbean Counter - Summit, Vienna (Austria), May 2006 Marking the fourth presidential summit between the EU and Latin America / the Caribbean, social movement networks and NGOs of both continents will organize a large parallel event in Vienna (Austria), May 10-13, under the name Linking Alternatives 2. The event will include the People's Tribunal Against European Transnationals, bi-regional forums on alternatives to neo-liberalism and militarization, meetings and public demonstrations, etc. (This summit will organize a mobilization from the European Social Forum in the preceding days, which will take place in Athens, Greece, on May 7, 2006)* Statement of the WSF on Childhood (WSFC) held in Caracas January 24-29, 2006. In the framework of the WSF on Childhood, held January 24-29, 2006 in Caracas in the Andrés Bello school, the children, adolescent, and adult participants declare: 1. That another world is only possible with the pro-active participation of children and adolescents and the full, direct implementation of all their rights. 2. We suggest to all organizers of the Forum that they consider having Childhood be a crosscutting axis for the next Forum, and that they guarantee spaces for the direct participation of

children and adolescents in that axis.3. We request that the WSF Hemispheric Council include organizations made up of children and adolescents.4. That the agreements, proposals, and conclusions coming out of the various tables of the WSF on Childhood be promoted and disseminated through the various mechanisms available through the WSF, with the aim of inviting the organizations, children, adolescents, and adult participants of this forum to share and discuss the suggestions and proposals coming out of the Forum.5. We commit ourselves to building a network to promote the implementation and follow-up of the agreements, conclusions, and recommendations from the FSMI tables, and principally the pro-active participation of children and adolescents in future world social forums.