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World Social Forum

Social Movements call for mobilisation

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Social forces from around the world have gathered here at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre. Unions and NGOs, movements and organizations, intellectuals and artists, together we are building a great alliance to create a new society, different from the dominant logic wherein the free-market and money are considered the only measure of worth.

Davos represents the concentration of wealth, the globalization of poverty and the destruction of our earth. Porto Alegre represents the hope that a new world is possible, where human beings and nature are the centre of our concern.

We are part of a movement which has grown since Seattle. We challenge the elite and their undemocratic processes, symbolised by the World Economic Forum in Davos. We came to share our experiences, build our solidarity, and demonstrate our total rejection of the neo-liberal policies of globalisation.

We are women and men, farmers, workers, unemployed, professionals, students, blacks and indigenous peoples, coming from the South and from the North, committed to struggle for peoples' rights, freedom, security, employment and education. We are fighting against the hegemony of finance, the destruction of our cultures, the monopolization of knowledge, mass media, and communication, the degradation of nature, and the destruction of the quality of life by multinational corporations and anti-democratic policies. Participative democratic experiences "like that of Porto Alegre" show us that a concrete alternative is possible. We reaffirm the supremacy of human, ecological and social rights over the demands of finance and investors.

At the same time that we strengthen our movements, we resist the global elite and work for equity, social justice, democracy and security for everyone, without distinction. Our methodology and alternatives stand in stark contrast to the destructive policies of neo-liberalism.

Globalisation reinforces a sexist and patriarchal system. It increases the feminisation of poverty and exacerbates all forms of violence against women. Equality between women and men is central to our struggle. Without this, another world will never be possible. Neo-liberal globalization increases racism, continuing the veritable genocide of centuries of slavery and colonialism which destroyed the bases of black African civilizations.

We call on all movements to be in solidarity with African peoples in the continent and outside, in defence of their rights to land, citizenship, freedom, peace, and equality, through the reparation of historical and social debts. Slave trade and slavery are crimes against humanity.

We express our special recognition and solidarity with indigenous peoples in their historic struggle against genocide and ethnocide and in defence of their rights, natural resources, culture, autonomy, land, and territory.

Neo-liberal globalisation destroys the environment, health and people's living environment. Air, water, land and peoples have become commodities. Life and health must be recognized as fundamental rights which must not be subordinated to economic policies. The external debt of the countries of the South has been repaid several times over. Illegitimate, unjust and fraudulent, it functions as an instrument of domination, depriving people of their fundamental human rights with the sole aim of increasing international usury. We demand its unconditional cancellation and the reparation of historical, social, and ecological debts, as immediate steps toward a definitive resolution of the crisis this Debt provokes.

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Financial markets extract resources and wealth from communities and nations, and subject national economies to the whims of speculators. We call for the closure of tax havens and the introduction of taxes on financial transactions. Privatisation is a mechanism for transferring public wealth and natural resources to the private sector. We oppose all forms of privatisation of natural resources and public services. We call for the protection of access to resources and public goods necessary for a decent life.

Multinational corporations organise global production with massive unemployment, low wages and unqualified labour and by refusing to recognise the fundamental worker's rights as defined by the ILO. We demand the genuine recognition of the right to organise and negotiate for unions, and new rights for workers to face the globalisation strategy. While goods and money are free to cross borders, the restrictions on the movement of people exacerbate exploitation and repression. We demand an end to such restrictions.

We call for a trading system which guarantees full employment, food security, fair terms of trade and local prosperity. Free trade is anything but free. Global trade rules ensure the accelerated accumulation of wealth and power by multinational corporations and the further marginalisation and impoverishment of small farmers, workers and local enterprises.

We demand that governments respect their obligations to the international human rights instruments and multilateral environmental agreements. We call on people everywhere to support the mobilizations against the creation of the Free Trade Area in the Americas, an initiative which means the recolonisation of Latin America and the destruction of fundamental social, economic, cultural and environmental human rights.

The IMF, the World Bank and regional banks, the WTO, NATO and other military alliances are some of the multilateral agents of neo-liberal globalisation. We call for an end to their interference in national policy. These institutions have no legitimacy in the eyes of the people and we will continue to protest against their measures. Neo-liberal globalisation has led to the concentration of land ownership and favoured corporate agricultural systems which are environmentally and socially destructive. It is based on export oriented growth backed by large scale infrastructure development, such as dams, which displaces people from their land and destroys their livelihoods. Their loss must be restored.

We call for a democratic agrarian reform. Land, water and seeds must be in the hands of the peasants. We promote sustainable agricultural processes. Seeds and genetic stocks are the heritage of humanity. We demand that the use of transgenics and the patenting of life be abolished.

Militarism and corporate globalisation reinforce each other to undermine democracy and peace. We totally refuse war as a way to solve conflicts and we oppose the arms race and the arms trade. We call for an end to the repression and criminalisation of social protest. We condemn foreign military intervention in the internal affairs of our countries. We demand the lifting of embargoes and sanctions used as instruments of aggression, and express our solidarity with those who suffer their consequences. We reject US military intervention in Latin America through the Plan Colombia.

We call for a strengthening of alliances, and the implementation of common actions, on these principal concerns. We will continue to mobilize on them until the next Forum. We recognize that we are now in a better position to undertake the struggle for a different world, a world without misery, hunger, discrimination and violence, with quality of life, equity, respect and peace.

We commit ourselves to support all the struggles of our common agenda to mobilise opposition to neo-liberalism. Among our priorities for the coming months, we will mobilize globally against the:

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- World Economic Forum, Cancun, Mexico, 26 and 27 February
- Free Trade Area of the Americas, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 6-7 April and Quebec City, Canada, 17-22 April
- Asian Development Bank, Honolulu, May
- G8 Summit, Genova, Italy, 15-22 July
- IMF and World Bank Annual Meeting, Washington DC, USA, 28 September - 4 October
- World Trade Organisation, 5-9 November (Qatar)

On April 17, we will support the international day of struggle against the importation of cheap agricultural products which create economic and social dumping, and the feminist mobilization against globalisation in Genoa.

We support the call for a world day of action against debt, to take place this year on July 20. The proposals formulated are part of the alternatives being elaborated by social movements around the world. They are based on the principle that human beings and life are not commodities, and in the commitment to the welfare and human rights of all.

Our involvement in the World Social Forum has enriched understanding of each of our struggles and we have been strengthened. We call on all peoples around the world to join in this struggle to build a better future. The World Social Forum of Porto Alegre is a way to achieve peoples' sovereignty and a just world.

Porto Alegre, January 28, 2001