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World Social Forum

Meeting of the radical anticapitalist left in Mumbai

- IV Online magazine - 2004 - IV358 - April 2004 -

Publication date: Monday 5 April 2004

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There has been a broad pluralistic meeting of international radical anti-capitalist organizations from different ideological origins for the first time taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the meeting of the WSF.

Organizations from 25 different countries and all continents met. As an initial stage they adopted a [joint statement](#) and agreed to meet next year at the 5th World Social Forum.

An international meeting of parties of the radical, anti-capitalist left took place on January 200, 2004 in Mumbai (Bombay) in the Andheri district - thus within the World Social Forum. It was a real success in both the atmosphere and warm solidarity in which it took place and the political breadth and number of organizations represented: 48 from 25 different countries (5 others involved in planning this initiative were not in the end able to come to Mumbai).

The meeting of a World Social Forum is always an exceptional occasion for many organizations to meet. This is obviously true for the organizations that prepare the forums. It is also true for those that support them and participate in their activities. This WSF was special in that it was meeting in Asia for the first time. There are many associations, movements and trade unions, the relations are a lot more tenuous between the two extremities of the Asian continent than between Europe and Latin America for example.

The opportunity offered by the World Social Forum's move to India was therefore particularly precious. In this context, 18 radical, anti-capitalist parties from Europe and Asia launched on December 5, 2003 an invitation to a meeting in Mumbai. For the Asia-Pacific region there were three Marxist-Leninist Communist Parties from India (CPI-ML Liberation, CPI-ML, CPI-ML Red Flag) and two Pakistani organizations (Labour Party LPP, and PKMP), the New Left Front (Sri Lanka), the DSP (Democratic Socialist Perspectives) from Australia, two movements from South Korea (Power to the Working Class and All together) and the Filipino parties: the Marxist Leninist party of the Philippines (MLPP), the Philippine Workers' Party (PMP) and the Revolutionary Workers' Party-Mindanao (RMP-M). The invitation was signed in Europe by the Left Bloc (Portugal), the United and Alternative left (Catalu  a), the Revolutionary Communist League (France), the Scottish Socialist Party, the Socialist Workers' Party (Britain) and Solidarit  S (Switzerland).

Despite the lateness of the call the response was very positive. Participation broadened to Latin America although unequally, with three Brazilian components including Democracia Socialista (DS of the PT), the United States (the International Socialist Organization (ISO), and Solidarity, Canada and Quebec (including the Union of Progressive Forces from Quebec); and to the African continent with South Africa and for Niger the Revolutionary Organization for New Democracy (ORDN). We should also note for Europe and Asia the presence of Communist Refoundation (Italy), the Alternatifs (France), Akbayan!! and other Filipino movements, and organizations from the Spanish state, Japan, Egypt...

The organizations present were very different in their social implantation and size. Important movements and currents were still absent. But the meeting was nevertheless representative of what the revolutionary and anti-capitalist left is, what the radical parties are. There were many different ideological roots: different currents of Maoists, Trotskyists and many components who could not be categorized as an "ism" (a form of categorization moreover which is increasingly dubious today).

If the meeting was a success it is because it responded to a need, to a desire. Today, in the era of imperialist globalization - on both the military and economic fronts - the lack of any framework for international collaboration

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between anti-capitalist parties is particularly strongly felt. There is an increasing sense of urgency. Most of the organizations concerned broke several years ago with the worst sectarian traditions that tended to dominate in the 1970s. Mutual solidarity relations have been forged, going beyond the differences in historical and programmatic references. Regional networks have been formed such the European Anti-Capitalist Left (EACL), and the Asia-Pacific International Solidarity Conference (APISC, started in Sydney). The development of movements against globalization has created a new space for political action, which is both very broad and from the outset international. Thanks to this - and this is essential - it has become possible to act together, to help the mobilizations succeed, and not simply to exchange experiences and alliances. Given the major developments underway the radical parties have to take both political and practical responsibilities.

This dual sentiment of new possibilities and responsibilities dominated the Mumbai meeting. A first step was taken in forming an international framework for collaboration between radical parties. It is no more than an initial step, and without any formal links. It was clear for the participating organizations that time would be necessary to consolidate such an initiative. Many of the organizations present did not know each other at all - or hardly - before meeting in Mumbai! And everybody was thinking about what this international link could become: how should it be different from previous experiences of Internationals? There are obviously many more questions than answers on this topic. But a start has been made. The processes can develop.