

## **Final statement of the Peoples' Summit "WTO Out, Building Sovereignty"**

The Peoples' Summit "WTO Out, Building Sovereignty" gathered on December 11-13, 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, against the XI Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in this city.

**The networks and trade unions, human rights, territorial, students, women, political, peasants, social and anti-extractives organizations amongst others from all over the world constituting the Peoples' Summit reaffirm our rejection of free trade policies of the WTO.** The WTO reflects the interests of a more concentrated transnational capital aiming to eliminate barriers to the free movement of goods, services and capital. It is an organization that only takes into account the needs of capital, helping the reproduction of capitalist relations of exploitation and looting. These policies affect rights conquered historically through the struggles of the peoples of the world.

Transnational corporations act under the umbrella of an Architecture of Impunity which includes the system of Debt, Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and the protection of investments and multilateral organizations such as the WTO, which produce a form of globalization based on their desire for and pursuit of profit. In this context, **public Debt** has become one of the main tools of capitalist expansion of concentration, inequality and oppression. It subordinates the models of production and consumption to the need to pay ever-increasing interests. We commit ourselves to work towards unveiling the repercussions that debt entails in the multiple forms of resistance, denouncing its illegitimate character, demonstrating who really owes what to whom and building a horizon of transformation and hope, while standing as People Creditors of debts that are not only economic, but also social, historical, ecological, democratic and gender, amongst others. We need to continue building from the struggles of the peoples to advance in this process, which includes actions such as comprehensive and citizen audits of Debt, ethical courts and popular consultations, amongst other strategies.

Faced with **corporate power** impersonating the dispossession of territories by transnational corporations, we commit ourselves to globalize the struggles and to continue strengthening ties and articulations. We must continue fighting to achieve an international treaty that ensures the respect of human rights by transnational corporations. We must dispute legislative and judicial spaces, denouncing how laws are violated, twisted, misinterpreted and adapted in the interest of transnational corporations. We must maintain the autonomy of social movements in relation to governments, emphasising our solidarity with persecuted and repressed Peoples, communities and organizations all over the world.

The liberalization of trade and financial flows unevenly impacts the daily lives of **women** and deepens inequalities and poverty by expanding unemployment, informality and compulsively financializing our lives, thus deepening all forms of patriarchal violence. Women, lesbians, trans, transvestites, bisexuals, gays, non-binaries, Afro-Argentines, afro-descendants, migrants, displaced, refugees, indigenous, blacks, peasants, self-managed workers gathered in the forum and the great Feminist Assembly against free trade affirm our anti-patriarchal, anti-racist and anti-capitalist struggle.

This is why we express our rejection of the WTO Declaration on Free Trade and Economic Empowerment of Women, as it is based on false claims and a reductionist vision of the economic empowerment of women. The evidence provided by Feminist Economics shows that the processes of trade liberalization have been detrimental to most women. The trade rules promoted by the WTO threaten the livelihoods of urban, peasant, indigenous, afro and quilombola women, favour the dispossession of their territories, restrict women's access to public policies for access to water, health, education and a long etcetera, limit access to essential basic goods such as medicines, and promote forms of production based on the race to the bottom of all standards of labour, salary and social protection, which affects us especially. We repudiate the political use of our struggles and demands to save a failed summit. Not in our name!

The WTO agreements impede the **rights of migrant workers** and their families. The absolute priority of valuing capital encourages labour exploitation of migrants. The pursuit of greater foreign investment leads to the signing of trade agreements that promote globalization and flows of capital rather than flows of people, whose mobility is both questioned and criminalized.

The recognition of migration as a human right (on a national, regional and global level) opens the space to debate the freedom to transit through territories and the construction of a universal citizenship. For this right to be fulfilled, it is important to promote political participation and sustainable, independent and solidarity economies leading to the local and regional development of migrant communities.

The WTO and FTAs expand and accelerate the conversion of our food into merchandise. This has caused the greatest **food crisis** that humanity has suffered. Currently, more than 50% of the world's population suffer from hunger, malnutrition or suffer from the obesity and overweight epidemic we are facing. Simultaneously, these policies support the destruction, hoarding and contamination of our territories and expel indigenous and peasant communities from them, endangering cultural continuity. The agribusiness, together with the indiscriminate extraction of fossil fuels, is primarily responsible for the two most important socio-environmental crises that we experience today: climate change and the massive extinction of biodiversity.

Faced with this situation, we promote an alternative based on Food Sovereignty that goes hand in hand with an agro-ecological peasant production, in which seeds are understood as the heritage of peoples at the service of humanity. We propose integral and popular agrarian reforms, local markets and the fundamental voice of the peasants, taken as the main protagonists in policy-making.

The WTO and FTAs hide behind the mask of "green alternatives" while ultimately and solely supporting the **extractivist model**, especially mining and the extraction of fossil fuels. In this logic, water is considered a commodity and not a Human Right. We know that there is no alternative for life on the planet within capitalism, which not only exploits us but also contaminates and kills. In order to overcome these contradictions, we promote popular alternatives, such as model of *Buen Vivir* proposed by different indigenous peoples; eco-feminism; eco-socialism; and concrete practices such as energy sovereignty, agro-ecology and permaculture which can be transformed into systemic alternatives to capitalism if applied as a general policy and not individually.

These experiences, framed in a **popular, social and self-managed economy** are both the manifestations of peoples' survival and their resistance to the designs of a capitalist rationality. By using the means of production available to workers, which in turn allows us to claim our rights, we can think of building spaces of power to contest the hegemonic model. From this perspective, we understand the role of experiences of production without employers as a deep identification of class for building alternatives. The choice between continuing in a capitalist economy of the poor or moving forward in the construction of an alternative project depends on us. It is not only about fighting for power to get the society we want, but also about building the roads that bring us closer to it. We need to reclaim what is ours from the State while consolidating an alternative power, based on an economy from and for the peoples.

Free trade threatens the **right to health** and causes the increasing precarization of public health systems, which carries serious consequences for people's lives. Health and medicines should not be regulated by the WTO as health is a human right, not a business; and medicines are a social good and not a commodity. The WTO trade agreements will never respond to the needs of public health. To the detriment of public health, this emphasis on the interests of the market favors transnational capital through extortionate and unjustified prices imposed by the big pharmaceutical companies, which results in disease, despair and the death of people.

Therefore, health sovereignty implies sustaining public health models that guarantee the primacy of public interest and social justice. In this regard, we demand the suspension of the Agreement on Intellectual Property Rights related to Trade (TRIPS) of the WTO for health technologies; we reject any commercial agreement that adversely affects access to medicines, such as the Treaty between the European Union and MERCOSUR; we demand new R&D (Research and Development) models that promote free and accessible technologies for all peoples, independently from the country or region in which they live and whose results (data, processes and products) are considered common goods.

Free trade and the WTO promote a set of initiatives that try to turn **education** into a marketable good, permeated by different mercantile and privatizing logics that present greater or lesser degrees of visibility. Thus, social and educational rights are threatened by the logic of the market, property rights and capital as education is becoming a marketable service.

On the other hand, educational sovereignty constitutes the right that we have as peoples to self-determination on how we want to educate ourselves, with what values and in what way. In the midst of the civilizational crisis that we are going through, we propose alternative educational formats, more horizontal forms of participation, contents and values that express political and social alternatives.

Free trade policies would not be possible without a strong **security and repression apparatus** that accompanies the implementation of austerity policies. The increase of military bases at a global level reflects this situation, as well as the use of police force within nation states. Militarization implies the genocide and silencing of entire peoples in pursuit of the needs of big capital. We demand the withdrawal of troops from Haiti. We demand the liberation and decolonization of Palestine, the end of the Apartheid regime, we adhere to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction Movement and we express our strongest repudiation before the unilateral decision of the USA to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the Zionist State of Israel.

The alternative to militarism and perpetual war embodying imperialism in all its forms, especially in its Zionist one, is the increasingly united resistance of the peoples and the States. Imperialism is one of the main causes of world wars, arms race, genocide, torture, mass lies, psychological terrorist action, selective killings and massacres of civilian populations, the formation and performance of paramilitary terrorist forces like ISIS.

In view of next year, the Peoples' Summit calls upon all the peoples of the world to mobilize against the **G-20 Presidential Summit** that will take place in Buenos Aires in 2018. The G-20, like the WTO and all FTAs, only reflects the thirst for profit of companies rather than the needs of the peoples. It is no coincidence that both the WTO and the G20 are held in Argentina: this country wants to show itself as a regional leader in trade liberalization. This is why the mobilization of our peoples is crucial. It is us who must raise our voice and make our alternative proposals to the climate and civilizational crisis heard.

Likewise, we call to build an **international women's strike** on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2018 from a broad vision of work that takes into account our heterogeneous realities. There would be no capitalism without the unpaid care work of women.

The organizations and movements of the Peoples' Summit WTO Out also call for the continuity of resistance struggles to the current offensive of international capital against the rights of the peoples, through the collective construction of the edition of the **World Social Forum 2018**, in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, from March 13 to 17. To resist is to create, to resist is to transform!

The global resistance has made itself seen and heard in Buenos Aires. Once again, wherever the great global forums go, the resistance of the peoples standing up and fighting for their rights will await them.

**WTO Out!**

**G20 Out!**

**The Peoples' Assembly, The People's Summit "WTO Out, Building Sovereignty", December 13<sup>th</sup> 2017**