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Report of the World Social Forum International Council meeting¹

Berlin, Germany (May 30-31st, 2007)
Venue: Hotel Christophorus Haus, Spandau

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¹ Report prepared having as a base the notes and comments sent by Gustavo Codas (CUT), Jason Nardi (Oneworld), Jean-Marie Fardeau (Cidse), Nicola Bullard (Focus on the Global South), Prabir Purkayastha (WSF India), Rodrigo Nobile (Clacso) and Rolando Lopez (Ibase).

1) Agenda: debated issues

The IC meeting program was organized in the following way:

May 30th

a) Morning: Mobilization 2008

Chairpersons: Bheki Ntshalintshali (Cosatu), Raffaella Bolini (ESF Italian Coordination), Luiz Guillermo Pérez (FIDH)

b) Afternoon:

Chairpersons: Prabir Purkayastha (WSF India), Chris Selig (GGJ), Erhard Chrome (Transform!)

- WSF 2009
- Communication

May 31st

a) Morning: Facilitation / Liaison group

Chairpersons: Candido Grzybowski (Ibase), Alessandra Mecozzi (ESF Italian Coordination), Joel Suárez (Encuentros Hemisféricos contra los TLCS y por la Integración de los Pueblos)

b) Afternoon: Decisions and follow up /next steps

Chairpersons: Gustavo Cotas (CUT), Njoki Njehu (Solidarity Africa Network) and Nandita Shah (WSF India/ NNAWG)

2) Information on the solidarity fund

This IC meeting has received logistical and financial support provided by Rosa Luxemburg and EED.

The German local committee has also chosen and supported directly the ticket of 05 organizations from the South. Besides that, they also have funded the participation of the WSF office and covered the integral costs of accommodation of another 28 people. Other 12 organizations from the South received Italian support with ticket up to Berlin.

Organizations participating at the meeting, both, from North and South, were also requested to give a contribution to pay the costs of accommodation and/or to be given to the solidarity fund. A total amount of 7.540 euros was raised through this mechanism. They were proportionally distributed among those who have requested solidarity support for the ticket (a total request of 14.151 euros), allowing partial reimbursement of 53% of the ticket of another 13 South organizations.

Check on the annex 2 the full list of organizations who have contributed to the fund and those who had received either support with accommodation and/or ticket.

Extra funds received after the meeting finished were used for the maintenance of the WSF office in Brazil and follow up of decisions.

3) Summary of the decisions/definitions

a) WSF 2008 global day of action / mobilisation

After the debates about the meaning of the global day of action and mobilisation in January 26, 2008 (approved in the Parma IC meeting; reconfirmed on Nairobi IC meeting), the working group on 2008 has presented to IC a proposal of common global call, to be owned by the various organizations who will sign it (and not the IC as a body). The first set of signatures were those from the organizations and networks who attended the IC meeting. New signatures can be added through a specific website created for that (www.wsf2008.net), where the call is available in many different languages.

Organizations and networks who sign the call commit to carry out different actions on that day. They are also expected to work actively on linking with other activists and movements, spread as much as possible the call and its preparation and give visibility to the actions. The IC working groups on mobilization and communication are finalizing the tools to be used to make these actions visible and to prepare them in a participative way. Further details on that will soon be sent.

Read the complete call on 2008 below:

Call for Day of Action and Mobilisation - January 26th 2008

We are millions of women and men,
organisations, networks, movements, trade unions from all parts of the world,
we come from villages, regions, rural zones, urban centres,
we are of all ages, peoples, cultures, beliefs,
but we are united by the strong conviction that

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

With all the richness of our plurality and diversity and our alternatives and proposals, we struggle against neo-liberalism, war, colonialism, racism and patriarchy which produce violence, exploitation, exclusion, poverty, hunger and ecological disaster and deprive people of human rights.

For many years we have been resisting and constructing innovative processes, new cultures of organization and action from the local to the global, in particular within the processes and Charter of Principle of the World Social Forum from which this call emerges.

Aware of the need to set our own agenda and to increase the impact of these thousands of expressions and manifestations, we are committed to strengthening the solidarity and convergence amongst our struggles, campaigns, and constructions of alternatives and alliances.

We commit ourselves to a week of action which will culminate in a Global Day of Mobilisation and Action on January 26

With our diversity which is our strength, we invite all men and women to undertake throughout this week creative actions, activities, events and convergences focusing on the issues and expressed in the ways they choose.

ACT TOGETHER FOR ANOTHER WORLD

b) WSF 2009

Two issues were in the debate in this item: one about WSF strategy and the other about the specific venue for WSF 2009.

A proposal presented by Via Campesina (VC) and supported by other organizations tried to deal with various aspects concerning the strategic debate - mobilization, regional expansion, deepening in thematic issues. In summary, VC proposed to have: the action day in 2008 and WSF events in 2008 and 2009, either around themes or in regions where WSF has not yet arrived. Then, for 2010, have again one centralized event. Other perspective stated that it would be important to have a centralized event in 2009 after the global day experience in 2008.

The final consensus reached on the issue (*see the box below*) express the following:

1. It confirms the decision to held a new centralized WSF event in 2009. It decides to hold it in the "Amazon region" (which is composed by 9 countries). Brazilian organizations have already indicated Belém (Pará) as venue.
2. It registers the concern in linking the global event (in January 2009) with the hemispheric one to be held in Guatemala (in October 2008). The proximity in time (only 4 months separating both of them) and place (North of Brazil and Central America) demand a joint work. This is an issue still to be adjusted.
3. It express the commitment to held a debate (as a seminar) about WSF strategy, right after the global day of action in 2008, in order to discuss the issues brought about by Via Campesina and other IC networks and organizations in Berlin.
4. It defines that next WSF global event, after the 2009, will be held in the Africa continent.

5. It also prioritizes Asia and Africa as regions for WSF expansion. This issue however has not been enough deepened in Berlin and will probably come back to the discussion soon.

Statement on the next steps of the process – Berlin IC meeting

The IC confirms its decision taken in Parma and renewed in Nairobi to hold the next World Social Forum as a centralised global event in 2009.

The WSF 2009 will take place in the Amazonian region. The IC is aware of the need to link the WSF 2009 dynamics with the Americas Social Forum which takes place in Guatemala City.

The IC-meeting following the global day of action and mobilisation in January 2008 will be held in Africa and should be organized as a seminar in which there will be a general and open strategic debate about the global political situation and the role of the WSF, its events and the needs of the process. This strategic debate which will be held at the IC meeting will take into account particularly the need to expand the WSF process to Asia in the period from 2008 to 2011. The next WSF as a centralized global event after 2009 will take place in Africa (tentatively in 2011 subject to the global situation evaluated by the IC).

c) Communication plan

The communication plan for 2007-2008, revised after the meeting of the Communication Commission in Florence, was presented to the plenary (*see the proposal presented in the annex 3*).

During the plenary presentation, the communication plan was reconfirmed with some integrations. Babels has offered to help out with translations throughout the build-up process. Translations were stressed to be one of our main challenges. Press work should and can be shared as well as organized at the local level, using the resources and experiences available in many of the organisations of the IC (and beyond). Simultaneous press conferences can be organised in many places, and should be done not just in December, but also just before the Global day of action [and right after as well]. The tools on the internet should be easy to use but also oriented to social networking and to the possibility to allow people to post information themselves. In particular, the map of activities/actions and the world social clock will be developed as mobilisation tools.

Connections between activities were also encouraged, as a way to link the movements worldwide between continents. Alternative media are our natural allies and should be involved as much as possible. There should also be an invitation open to film makers to contribute with their work. Other such "calls" or invitations can be made to artistes, musicians, librarians, youth (through schools to "draw the other possible world!"), fair trade merchandizing, etc.

A suggested calendar was presented in order to schedule and set deadlines for communication.

It was stressed that both, event activities and process activities, are necessary and need financial support. To help with that there is an appeal made by the commission members to each one of the organisations to read the communication project and to decide what activity or task can be taken up by each organisation. It was also stressed the need that communication WG and the mobilisation WG coordinate their work. One way to expedite things is to have a member of each WG in other WG to coordinate and agree on division of labour and begin to coordinate in practice.

The commission will review the plan, taking into account the comments expressed in the meeting.

Decision: the communication commission and the 2008 mobilisation group will work in liaison with all the organisations who offer to share the work in order to implement the plan and fund-raise for it as needed.

d) Facilitation / Liaison group

The debates around facilitation / liaison group have to do with the body that has as main goal to facilitate the initiatives resulting of the IC decisions. This body replaces the former International Secretariat – formed by the Brazilian and the Indian Organizing Committees.

The working group on that issue has presented a proposal to the plenary, which is based in the

conception that IC should work around a concrete set of objectives. Concerning the composition of the facilitation group, the general idea is that it should be formed by around 7 members and other 7 alternates. This number would be a reference; the group should express the different dynamics that today conform the IC, as well as to integrate regional and sectorial expressions.

The need of creating a liaison / facilitation group was recognized by the IC. This group would be considered as a working group among other groups. However, it was stressed the need of having a clear term of reference of the work to be done by the facilitation group; its relationship with the IC and accountability; duration of the mandate of the group etc.

Decision: The existing Facilitation working group will continue its work up to the next IC meeting. Its next tasks and calendar are:

1. Receiving new names of people who are volunteer to work in the facilitation (*new names to be added to the working group can be sent to fsmci@forumsocialmundial.org.br*)
2. Produce a new document, based on the proposal presented in Berlin and in the various comments and concerns expressed during the meeting. This new document will be sent to the IC list in beginning **July**, in order to receive comments up to the end of that month. Produce also a draft of letter to invite organizations to nominate persons to join the facilitation group.
3. In **August and September**, the facilitation group will receive names of volunteers that wish to take part in the Facilitation/Liaison Group
4. In **October**, the working group will prepare a proposal of composition of the facilitation / liaison group.

Proposal for the liaison working group is under preparation.

4) Information on assessment of WSF events

Follow below the agreements concerning the assessment of WSF events, after the debates held on the seminar of May 29, 2007:

1. The mandate of the assessment working group be extended until the first IC meeting after the Global Day of Action
2. The aim of the working group is to provide material and analysis that can contribute to the strategic discussion about the WSF process planned for that IC meeting
3. The comments and suggestions from the discussions on the guidelines, survey, and synthesising existing evaluations held during this IC meeting in Berlin will be incorporated into the terms of reference and the ongoing work of the group
4. To start discussions on the guiding principles, a first draft will be prepared by Vinod Raina
5. The survey team will prepare a final draft survey for circulation to the working group
6. The input collection & analysis team will carry out a systematic analysis of articles, reports and other texts evaluating the WSF. For this purpose the 12 tasks /analysis grid will be revised and circulated in the assessment working group list (assessment-wg@listas.rits.org.br).
7. The working group is calling on the IC and on all organisations in the WSF process to provide existing articles, reports and other evaluative texts regarding any WSF event or the process as a whole. These can be sent at the following address inputsonorganizingwsfevents@wsfprocess.net
8. The working group requests the cooperation of organising committees of the world and poly-centric forums in providing contacts of participants who can be invited to take part in the on-line survey and of activity organizers who can be invited to make or provide inputs.
9. The budget for the work of the group (in particular the survey) will be incorporated into a global budget for the ongoing WSF process

5) Next IC meeting

It is proposed to be held in Belém (Pará, Brazil) from **October 29 to November 1st**. The general idea is to have the following schedule:

- Oct. 29: evaluation of the mobilization for the global day of action
- Oct. 30: working groups and IC commissions
- Oct. 31st and Nov. 1st: IC plenary meeting

Belém was chosen because the first IC meeting in 2008 is scheduled to take place in Africa. In this way, the Belém IC meeting will be an opportunity to have an exchange between members of the IC and from the Amazonian region as well as a moment to mobilize for WSF process.

ANNEX 1 – List of members and observer organizations that were present at the IC meeting

1. ABONG - Associação Brasileira de ONGs
2. AAWC - Palestinian grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign
3. Action Aid International - AAI
4. ALAI - Agencia Latinoamericana de Informacion
5. Alternative Information Center
6. APC - Asamblea de los Pueblos del Caribe
7. APRODEV - Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organizations in Europe
8. Articulación Feminista Marco Sur
9. ASC - Aliança Social Continental
10. Assembléia das Nações Unidas dos Povos
11. ATTAC- Brasil
12. ATTAC France
13. Babels
14. CADTM- Comité pour l'Annulation de la Dette du Tiers Monde
15. Caritas Internacionalis
16. CBJP - Comissão Brasileira de Justiça e Paz
17. CIDSE – Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité
18. CIVES – Associação Brasileira de Empresários pela Cidadania
19. CLACSO
20. COMPA - Convergencia de los Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas
21. Conselho Mundial de Igrejas
22. COSATU - Congress of South African Trade Unions
23. CRID - Centre de Recherche et d'Information pour le Développement
24. CUT – Central Única dos Trabalhadores
25. Encuentros Hemisféricos contra el ALCA
26. ENDA – Environnement et Développement du Tiers Monde
27. EURALAT - Observatorio Eurolatinoamericano sobre el Desarrollo Democrático y Social
28. Euromarches – Marches Européennes
29. Federación Mundial de Juventudes Democráticas
30. FIDH – Fed. Internacional Direitos Humanos
31. Focus on the Global South
32. Global Progressive Forum
33. Grassroots Global Justice
34. GTA – Grupo de Trabalho Amazônico
35. Herriak Aske
36. HIC – Habitat International Coalition
37. IBASE – Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas
38. ICAE - Consejo Internacional de Educacion de Adultos
39. IGTN – International Gender and Trade Network
40. International Alliance of Habitants
41. IPAO – Institut Panos Afrique de l'Ouest
42. IPF - Instituto Paulo Freire
43. IPS – Inter Press Service
44. Italian Coordination of European Social Forum
45. ITUC – International Trade Union Confederation
46. Jubilee South - Asia
47. Jubileu Sul América Latina
48. MST – Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra
49. NIGD - Network Institute for Global Democratization
50. NNAWG - National Network of Autonomous Women's Groups/WSF India
51. OCLAE - Continental Organization of Latin America and Caribbean Students
52. Oneworld
53. OXFAM Internacional
54. PPEHRC – Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign
55. Projeto K
56. REPEM – Red de Educación Popular Entre Mujeres
57. ROAD - Réseau Ouest Africain des Alternatives pour le Développement
58. Social Watch
59. SODNET – Social Development Network
60. Solidar
61. Solidarity Africa Network in Action

62. Transform!
63. UBUNTU - Foro Mundial de Redes de la Sociedad Civil
64. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam Network
65. Via Campesina
66. World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)
67. World March of Women

IC observers

1. ALIS
2. Bunge la Wananchi
3. Ciranda
4. DC
5. Fórum de Autoridades Locais
6. Fórum Parlamentar Mundial
7. Greek Social Forum
8. Respect
9. Social Science Research Centre
10. WSF India
11. WSF Pakistan Organizing Committee
12. WSF Solidarity Network in Japan

ANNEX 2 – Solidarity Fund: list of organizations that have contributed and those that have received support

a) Organizations (members and observers) that have contributed towards the fund

1. Abong
2. ActionAid International
3. Alianza Social Continental / Hemispheric Social Alliance
4. AMARC
5. Aprodev
6. Articulación Feminista Marcosur
7. Asamblea de los Pueblos del Caribe
8. Attac
9. Caritas
10. CIDSE
11. CLACSO
12. COMPA
13. COSATU
14. CRID (Centre de Recherche et d'Information pour le Développement)
15. CUT
16. Encuentros Hemisféricos contra los TLCs y por la Integración de los Pueblos
17. ESF ITALIAN COORDINATION (Arci, Fiom, Euralat)
18. Euralat
19. FIDH
20. Focus on the Global South
21. Fórum de Autoridades Locais
22. Fórum Parlamentar Mundial
23. GGJ/PODER/USSFNPC
24. Global Progressive Forum
25. Greek Social Fórum
26. Grupo de Trabajo Italiano sobre los Foros Internacionales
27. Habitat Internacional Coalition (HIC)
28. IBASE
29. ICAE
30. International Gender And Trade Network (IGTN)
31. International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
32. IPF
33. Jubilee South - Asia
34. Jubileu Sul América Latina
35. NIGD
36. OCLAE (Organización Continental Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Estudiantes)

37. Oneworld
38. Oxfam Novib
39. PPHERC
40. Project K
41. Repem
42. Respect
43. Social Watch
44. Solidar
45. Solidarity Africa Network
46. Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute
47. UBUNTU - Foro Mundial de Redes de la Sociedad Civil
48. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam Network
49. Via Campesina
50. World Council of Churches
51. World March of Women
52. WSF Solidarity Network in Japan

b) Organization who have received support (accommodation and/or ticket):

1. Alianza Social Continental
2. Asamblea de los Pueblos del Caribe
3. Attac Brasil
4. Bunge la Wananchi
5. CADTM / VAK India
6. Campana de los Pobres por los Derechos Humanos Economicos (PPEHRC)
7. CBJP
8. Cives
9. Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)
10. Convergencia de los Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas (COMPA)
11. CUT
12. ENDA
13. GTA
14. ICAE
15. IPF
16. Jubilee South - Asia
17. Jubileu Sul América Latina
18. MST
19. NNAWG
20. OCLAE (Organización Continental Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Estudiantes)
21. Pakistan Organizing Committee
22. Panos Institute West Africa - PIWA
23. PENGON / Palestinian grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign
24. REPEM – Red de Educación Popular Entre Mujeres de América Latina y el Caribe
25. Réseau Ouest Africain Dette et Developpement " ROAD"
26. Social Development Network
27. Solidarity Africa Network
28. Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute
29. Via Campesina
30. WSF India/IOC
31. WFDY / FMJD – World Federation of Democratic Youth / Federacion Mundial de la Juventud Democratica

ANNEX 3 – Communication plan presented at the Berlin IC meeting

Check on the link the power point presentation made at the meeting:

<http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/download/Communication%20plan%20Berlin.ppt>