

Contribution to the preparation seminar of the World Social Forum (WSF) 2011 Dakar

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Letter from several social movements:

1. The purpose of this letter is twofold: to share some views on the direction of the WSF and to express a concern about the WSF 2011 in Dakar, in particular its relation with the Social Movements Assembly (SMA).
2. The WSF deserves high praise for its forum where thematic and cross-thematic networks meet, grow, and work together. The WSF also has enabled to make more visible the social struggles and its connections. Similarly, the WSF has promoted and has organized major actions in order to build the other world for which we are fighting.
3. However, in recent years, the WSF has been showing signs of exhaustion. Therefore, various social movements have demanded the creation of a space "more productive" with a unifying and mobilizing character.
4. Based on this growing demand, some discussions have started, and various responses and methodological initiatives have been tried. But until now, we can say that we have not achieved the anticipated results.
5. In order to make the WSF more attractive for social movements, we think the solutions require a strategic nature, so that the WSF can become more useful for the globalization of the struggle, promote calls for concrete actions and contain greater political radicalism.
6. All of the foregoing could serve several purposes: attract and involve new actors in the process; make the WSF more contemporary ; and make its policies a real counterweight to those of capitalism, the latter being fully responsible for the damages with which we are struggling to correct.
7. From the beginning, the SMA has been acting and evolving within the WSF. While recognizing its weaknesses of SMA, we are also obliged to recognize its legitimacy as well as its accomplishments. We have also to recognize that the SMA responds in some ways to the strategic demands expressed above.
8. The SMA does not reflect the total universe of those who are engaged in social struggles. It does not presume to be the epicentre of the process. But the fact of the matter is that the SMA constitutes a space where those organizations, networks and movements primarily using struggle and mobilization action as instruments of struggle, can meet and work together. This point is important especially if we ask: how many we are and how many we should or we can be to create greater resistance and struggle.

9. If WSF had the capacity to promote such initiative and action, it would become more useful to the social movements and its struggles. Similarly, the WSF would be also reinforced with increasing participation and involvement of social movements.

10. So, in order to make the WSF a space “more productive” and useful to the social struggles, it is necessary to take the SMA more into account and to promote and to facilitate its potential.

11. One initiative could be to facilitate the preparation and organization of SMA during the WSF 2011 in Dakar.

12. Although this idea was raised during the previous meeting of the International Council (IC) of WSF in Mexico, unfortunately, we had no time to really discuss in a profound way the issue and to arrive at a consensus.

13. Some members of the IC have advanced the argument that the SMA is an assembly like any other assembly (war, debt, TLC, climatic, ...) and as such, it would be impossible or a lack of respect to give a preference or greater importance to the SMA in relation to the others.

14. First, it is important to note that the thematic assemblies are very important and most of us are actively involved in them. Second, the SMA is not an assembly like the others. It is in fact an assembly that aims to build an agenda of cross-mobilization and struggles.

15. We think that to close the WSF with the SMA, will certainly give the meeting a connotation of greater “productivity.”

16. But it is not an absolute necessity to close the WSF with the SMA. We believe that thematic assemblies play an important role, as the assembly of assemblies (we will have to avoid the errors of the WSF 2009 in Belém).

17. But social movements really need adequate space, visible and coherent in order to concentrate on the political process of the SMA and not only about logistical issues. We have to remember what happened at the WSF in Nairobi, where it was almost impossible to organize the SMA. Also in Belém it was very difficult, with the SMA “lost” in the middle of the WSF with hundreds of other important activities.

18. So, we are asking to the organizing committee to think how to organize a time and space for the SMA during the WSF 2011. If it is not possible to put it at the end of the WSF, it can't be at the beginning or in the middle of the WSF, because the AMS has to be a process of collective elaboration and construction group, and also need to take into account the results of the thematic assemblies.

19. It is clear that the Assembly would not be the exclusive patrimony of social movements, but on the contrary, would be a space being integral part of the WSF process, where everyone would have access, not as members of the Assembly, but because of the results which are following from, which surely would be shared by many and in an growing way.

20. The SMA does not intend and does not pretend to be the spokesperson of the WSF. We understand that we have to avoid this problem; and we are sure that we can avoid it.

21. We don't want to impose anything to the organizing committee of the WSF. We are sure that the committee is working very hard to make the next WSF a big success. We, as social movements, will also put the most energy, time and money as available in order to make this WSF a

success and an important moment to build a world with social justice and respect of the nature, from the struggles, from and for African peoples and the world. As you know, we are preparing a world seminar of social movements in Dakar by the beginning of November 2010, precisely in this regard.

First signatories

	Pays	Organisation	
1	Réseau Mondial	AIH	Alliance international des Habitants
2	Réseau Mondial	EAI	Espace Afrique International
3	Réseau Mondial	CADTM International	Comité pour l'Annulation de la Dette du Tiers-Monde
4	Réseau Mondial	FDIM	Federación Democrática Internacional de Mujeres
5	Réseau africain	CADTM Afrique	
6	Réseau latino-américain	CADTM AYNA	
7	Réseau latino-américain	OCLAE	Organización Continental Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Estudiantes
8	Bangladesh	Nabodhara	
9	Bangladesh	VOICE	Voices for interactive choice and empowerment
10	Bénin	CADD	Cercle d'Autopromotion pour un Développement durable
11	Brésil	CUT	Centrale unitaire des travailleurs
12	Burkina Faso	Attac Burkina	
13	Congo Brazzaville	APASH	Association Pour une Alternative au Service de l'Humanité
14	Congo Brazzaville	Solidaires	
15	South Korea	KCTU	Confédération coréenne des syndicats
16	Côte d'Ivoire	FNDP	Forum National sur la Dette et la Pauvreté
17	Côte d'Ivoire	Convergences	
18	Côte d'Ivoire	CN de la MMF	
19	Guinée	CERIDA	Centre d'Etude et de Recherche pour l'Intégration Régionale et le Développement
20	Inde	VAK	Vikas Adhyayan Kendra
21	Inde	NACDOR	National Confederation of Dalit Organisations
22	Mali	MSV	Mouvements des sans voix
23	Mali	CAD	Coalition des Alternatives Africaines Dette et Développement

	Pays	Organisation	
24	Mali	AP/Mali	Alliance contre la Pauvreté au Mali
25	Mali	RDL/AFEF	Réseau pour le Développement Local et l'Auto promotion de la Femme, l'Enfant et la Famille
26	Maroc	ATTAC Maroc	
27	Maroc	FAM	Forum des Alternatives Maroc
28	Niger	RNDD	Réseau National Dette et développement
29	Pakistan	WWHL	Women Workers Help Line
30	Pakistan	CADTM Pakistan	
31	RDC	NAD	Nouvelles Alternatives pour le Développement
32	RDC	UFDH	
33	Sénégal	UNSAS	Union national des Syndicats Autonomes du Sénégal
34	Sénégal	UDEN	Union Démocratique des Enseignants du Sénégal
35	Sénégal	FDIF Sénégal	Fédération Démocratique Internationale des Femmes
36	Sénégal	CADTM Sénégal	
37	Sénégal	CIMAC	Comité d'Initiative pour une Mobilisation Alternative Citoyenne
38	Sénégal	APROFES	Association pour la Promotion de la Femme Sénégalaise
39	Pakistan	CPF UDEN	Commission permanente des femmes de l'UDEN
40	Sri Lanka	UFL	United Federation of Labour
41	Sri Lanka	ZBNFM	Zero Budget Natural Farming Movement
42	Togo	Association CADIP-Univers	
43	Tunisie	RAID ATTAC Tunisie	
44	Venezuela	RVCD	Red Venezolana Contra la Deuda
45	Venezuela	MOUSHA, Haiti-Venezuela	