

Letters: preparation of the "RadPart" Porto Alegre Meeting

Thursday 26 June 2008, by [ROUSSET Pierre](#) (Date first published: 18 January 2005).

To : Radpart Network

January 18, 2005

Preparation of Porto Alegre

Dear friends and comrades,

We have not been able to do a number of things we were hoping, to prepare the Porto Alegre Radical Parties Meeting. For my part, I was planning to write something a bit substantial on the (possible) (future) international framework of collaboration between "radical" (anti-capitalist) parties. It proved impossible.

An additional problem: Some parties won't be present in Porto Alegre, because of financial reasons (the travel cost from Asia to PoA is very high: see the Labour Party Pakistan) or other agenda (see the unification congress of the CPIML/CPIML Red flag in India). We envisaged mechanisms to cover the financial costs of some parties, from the third world, but it would have meant a very early preparation, which was difficult.

I guess that we'll have to be less ambitious, regarding the PoA Radical Parties Meeting, than we initially were. Nevertheless, I am convinced that this meeting remains very important for us. I just wish to offer some thoughts about this, and present some proposals.

1. To start with, let say that two things seems to me very significant. First, the success and very positive spirit of the first International Radical Parties in Mumbai. Second, the deep silence characterising the Radical Party email list and the difficulties to prepare the second meeting in Porto Alegre.

The first (enthusiasm in Mumbai) shows that the need for international relations between radical parties is very much felt. The second (deep silence) that it is quite difficult to give flesh to this wish, to practically engage the process between organizations which often had no links beforehand, did not know one another. A question we'll have to address in Porto Alegre.

2. Up to now, the RadPart email list has not been a channel for political exchanges, which it should be. It has first been used as a channel to circulate information by a limited number of parties, which is in itself useful (CPIML Liberation newsletters, declarations of the European AntiCapitalist Left...).

More significantly, the post-tsunami situation gave us a taste of how this list can be utilized in times of emergencies. It did help me a lot to receive information from the ground on situations in India or Indonesia, and to read critical elements of analysis from comrades abroad, and I hope it has also been the case for others. But it could be done more efficiently, more systematically.

We should of course be selective in what we send through the RadPart email list. We should avoid an overflow of mails and documents. But we can reinforce its role in regular and in times of emergencies information.

The need to reach a point when this list will be also used as a channel of political exchange between of, a channel to prepare the content of meetings, etc. remains.

3. Can we draft a political declaration, general in scope, to be adopted at the PoA meeting? If there are proposals, we should look at them. But I doubt that it is feasible. Drafts should have circulated beforehand, weeks ago already.

In addition to a simple communiqué (as in Mumbai), we could nevertheless prepare a “focused” declaration. Concretely, I am thinking of a declaration centred on the lessons of the tsunami disaster. We are not the only ones going to take stands on this question. But it will allow us to bring a number of essential political issues in a non-artificial way, without having to deal with everything, every programmatic topic. It should make good sense.

4. The anti-war, anti-capitalist globalization international mobilisations have reached very high levels in the past few years. But the military and social offensives of bourgeois and imperialists powers have not ceased and it is not so easy to maintain the dynamics of the people’s struggles. The situation is uneven depending of the regions and the dynamics is not broken. In spite of the situation, which is not good, the PoA WSF will probably be a big success in terms of participation. But there are big question marks on the future developments.

It is especially important at this juncture for us to be able to contribute to the debates about perspectives, and to contribute to the strengthening of the left, radical wing of the mass/social organizations/movements. If we can collaborate in such a perspective, it will be a big help.

5. In the radical political Left, there are presently contradictory trends. On one hand, there is a greater sense of the need of unity, beyond historical ideological differences. On the other hand, some organizations are getting more and more sectarian. Depending on the situations and regions this later trend takes various forms, but where armed groups exist, it can go to the point of assassinating cadres of other Left and revolutionary organizations. (as a matter of policy). It is true in India and it takes an unprecedented scope in the Philippines. This issue is being internationalized.

It becomes all the more important, in such a situation, for us to show in practice that we reject these ultra-sectarian trends, and to offer an alternative to ultra-sectarianism.

6. Presently, somehow, the radical, anti-capitalist political (and non-sectarian) Left is the only trend to have no international capacity of coordination. It is a great weakness, which does affect our capacity to act. On the middle/long run we have to build a new international framework of collaboration between our organizations. It will necessarily be quite different from the Internationals of the past period. We do not know what forms it will take. But we have to advance, and test possibilities through practice.

At this stage, we should not try to formalize things. But we do have to examine the ways to work more efficiently together. The International Radical Parties Network is the only inter-continental broad network at hand. It means that in Porto Alegre, we should discuss how to function more efficiently, how to initiate real political exchanges, how to meet and act together. It would be good if organizations were coming with proposals.

These are quickly written thoughts. Nothing to do with a “position paper”; just an informal way to introduce a number of issues. If others could throw on the mail list their own thoughts, it could still

help the preparation of the PoA Meeting.

Good luck to all of you,

See many of you in Porto Alegre,

In solidarity,

Pierre Rousset

To : Radpart Network

January 9, 2005

Preparation of Porto Alegre

Dear friends and comrades,

I was planning to write a substantial contribution to prepare the Porto Alegre Radical Parties meeting. Unfortunately, time and again, unplanned or unexpected emergencies get in the way.

1. The latest emergency is, of course, the terrible tsunami disaster. Because of its scope and the media coverage, there is a very broad movement of solidarity in European countries. We try to provide independent and critical information on the roots of the disaster and the situation in the concerned territories (in Aceh, etc.); to mobilize in France on demands like the cancellation of the debt countries hit by the tsunami (instead of moratorium): the Paris Club is meeting January 12; and to direct financial help toward grassroots and militant organizations.

We find very useful the information and analysis sent from Asia (newsletters of Liberation, PK's interviews, Indonesian regular mails about the situation in Aceh and Northern Sumatra...).

As political parties we can provide some financial help to parties in the tsunami stricken countries (see the NSSP call, for example). But the main channel of direct "people to people" solidarity is through mass organizations. Many French militant organizations, part of the anti-globalization movement, are answering to the call of Via Campesina (for Indonesia and Sri Lanka).

The LCR is popularizing these calls. The difficulty we are confronted too is the number of countries concerned. With a concrete question about India. We are asked, including by mass organizations, where the financial solidarity could be sent, in India. Is there a coalition of mass organizations/social movements, where progressive organizations combine forces to provide grassroots support?

2. There is a second emergency I'll have to write to you about. Last December, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has published a "map" of "counter-revolutionary" groups in the Philippines. ALL the other Left parties are mentioned in this "map". And many names of "counter-revolutionaries" are also listed. Some of them are very well known and very active in the anti-war and anti-globalization movements, like Walden Bello and Lidy Nacpil (Jubilee South). Others are less known internationally, but nevertheless very significant.

The matter is quite serious. When an organization is labelled "counter-revolutionary" by the CPP in

the Philippines, it means that it becomes a “legitimate” target for the NPA. It does not necessarily mean that each person mentioned is actually placed in the Order of Battle of the NPA. But the threat is serious enough: several of the named persons have already been killed...

The fact that people like Walden and Lidy are named in the CPP “map” of “counter-revolutionaries” means that the issue will this time become truly international. I shall prepare a new (but shorter) “Letter of Concern” on this matter, in time for Porto Alegre. As soon as it is ready, I shall send it on the “radpart” list.

3. As many of you already know, I shall leave my work at the European Parliament in February, after Porto Alegre. I shall then re-settle in France, in a more stable way. In the future, I won’t have the same facilities to travel often. But I hope to be able to stay longer in country, when I will travel.

I shall continue to be active in the anti-globalization and anti-war struggles, in the social forum processes, and to link with (parts of) Asia.

If you agree, I am ready to continue to follow up the RadPart network. I hope to be able to do it more regularly than during the past, being freed from the load of work I had in the European Parliament and the constant, weekly, travels attached to it (between Paris, Brussels and Strasbourg).

4. There has been a change in the Porto Alegre agenda. The Assembly of Movements will meet Sunday afternoon (January 30) AND Monday morning (January 31). Which means that the RadPart meeting will have to take place Monday afternoon and if possible evening, and not the whole day as planned.

I shall arrive in PoA early: January 21. I think that we’ll have to prepare the RadPart meeting on the spot. Also, if some of you will stay Tuesday February first, we can work on the follow up of the meeting.

We should use this list to inform one another of our hotels or places of stay and mobile phone numbers when we have one there.

That’s all for the time being,

Hoping the best for all of you,

In solidarity,

Pierre