

Marking WSF Global Day of Action in the Netherlands

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STOP-ETI Action in The Hague

Responding to the WSF Global Day of Action Call, organisations in The Netherlands [1] marked this with a demonstration on January 25th at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The demonstration demanded the Dutch government to respect the Bolivian government's decision to pull out of the ICSID (World Bank Dispute mechanism on Investments) and to 'Stop the European Telecom International (ETI)' from using the Netherlands-Bolivia Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to pursue a case against the Bolivian government.

Bolivia is being sued by Telecom Italia at the ICSID, even though the Bolivian government withdrew from the tribunal in May 2007. Citizen groups from more than 59 countries with almost 1,000 signatures have called on World Bank President Zoellick to respect Bolivia's withdrawal and not to accept the case of ETI.

In The Hague, a letter, signed by a number of organisations was handed to the Ministry spokesperson and the issue has been raised in the Dutch Parliament. Similar campaigns are being pursued in Italy, Spain and in the US.

Photos from the action can be seen at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/cecilia.olivet/STOPETIAction25Jan08/>

Debate Forum at Institute of Social Studies (ISS)

Also on January 25, the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and X minus Y co-organised a debate on both the World Social Forum (WSF) and the Netherlands Social Forum (NFS).

Topics for the debate focused on:

- Another World is Possible: The relation between common resistance and consensus about alternatives; work together in unity to strengthen resistance or are the alternatives too diverse to be the base of co-operation?
- North/South Link: In which way can organizations effectively create international networks between the "North" and the "South" exploring critical notes around concepts of empowerment and participation?
- NSF and WSF: the current dilemmas of the Dutch Social Forum and the World Social Forum: what are the potentials and obstacles?

A refreshing combination of Dutch social movements, ISS students and academic experts took part in the debate - which included: Kees Biekert ISS, Rosalba Icaza (ISS), Brid Brennan (TNI), Raphael Hoertmer (Lima) Willem Bos (NL Social Forum) and Kees Stad (XminY).

The Students convening the Forum also organised themselves to travel on January 26th to participate in the big 'alternative visit' to Brussels marking the Global Day of Action. In 15 typical sites, events

were organised to give information to the public.and all these local events culminated in a common activity in the center of Brussels which was organised by the Belgium Social Forum.

[1] Stichting AYNi Bolivia Nederland; St. voor Latijns Amerikaans sociaal en economisch onderzoek (LASO);Ojalá - Autonome Jongeren Organisatie voor Latijns Amerika; Noticias; Organisatie Latijns Amerika Activiteiten (OLAA); Solidaire Diaspora; Stichting; XminY Solidariteitsfonds; Transnational Institute (TNI); Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO); Humanistische Beweging De Gemeenschap voor Menselijke Ontwikkeling; Stichting Tamsarya; ASEED; ASKV / Steunpunt Vluchtelingen -Amsterdam; Internationale Socialisten