



2015 FEMINIST CARAVAN World March of Women

February 2015 Newsletter



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of the Newsletter for the IV International Action of the World March of Women in Europe. **Women in the Kurdistan region of Turkey began the Caravan in Nusaybin on March 6th along with women joining from all over the world. Join us for this historical moment of feminist gathering in Kurdistan!**

As planned, the IV International Action of the World March of Women, which in Europe will take the form of a Feminist Caravan, will pass through 21 countries for nearly eight months with the aim of meeting women and feminists in struggle. Because it takes energy these days to collectively fight neo-liberal and patriarchal forces attacking us on all fronts, women and men all around the world are building alternatives towards collective emancipation. The Feminist Caravan will meet with activists in Europe who are creating some of these concrete alternatives and help to foster discussions, meetings, analyses, policy formations, joint actions and visibility of the work being done on the local grassroots level.

In preparation for this big action 60 women from 18 countries took part in the WMW European Coordination meeting held in San Sebastian (Donosti), Bask Country from 10 to 12 October 2014. The agenda of the meeting focused on the current socio-economical-political context in the continent; the situation of the WMW and preparations of the IV WMW International Action in each country; the practical aspects of the Caravan and the writing of a common call inviting women to join the action (see page 3). More recently, some women actively working to organize the logistics and general preparatory activities for the Caravan met in Barcelona from January 30th to February 7th. Goals regarding the itinerary, communications, logistics were set, and a presentation of the Feminist Caravan idea took place with the local National Coordinating Body of the WMW Barcelona. We would like to extend our gratitude to Ca La Dona (Women's House in Barcelona existing since 1988 as a women-only space), and Forn de Teatre Pa'tothom, especially to Montse, for their generosity in offering us a space to meet.



Meeting in Barcelona and presentation of the Caravan at Ca La Dona.



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We are fighting because we want something else! We affirm that we can live differently! We are the World March of Women en route to our IV International Action in resistance, action and power. Help us build this movement of women across borders, based on action, anti-capitalism, anti-colonialism and feminist praxis! Join the Caravan of the World March of Women in 2015!

[Join us for the Opening in Turkey!](#)

MARCH 6th OPENING IN TURKEY

**Women on the March Until We are All Free!
The IV International Action of the WMW
6 March-17 October 2015**

We have been organising our IV International Action Year in a time of crisis and non-conventional warfare at the global level. However this will not constrain us from taking to the streets and strengthening our international movement.

Confronted with this capitalist, patriarchal and colonialist system, we will expose and denounce all forms of violence against women and identify the actors promoting oppression, namely fundamentalist religious groups and sectors and neoliberal, multilateral and financial institutions and governments destroying social services and rights.

We will make the resistances already existing everywhere visible and develop alternatives to today's dominant accumulation model based on appropriation of nature, control over women's bodies and lives, appropriation of rights, violence, militarisation and criminalisation of social movements. We will show the World that as women we have power to change and alternatives to share.

**Launch of the European Feminist Caravan on
6-16 March 2015 in Turkey**

Feminists from all over Europe and the world will gather on 6 March 2015 in the Kurdish territory of Turkey for the launch of the European Caravan as part

of the IV International Action of the World March of Women. The European Feminist Caravan is to launch from Turkey on 6th of March and after crossing Europe from one resistance place to another, it will reach its final point in Coimbra (Portugal) on the 17th of October 2015.

[Map of the Caravan in Turkey](#)



The launch of the European Feminist Caravan in Turkey is being organised by local coordinating bodies and participating groups of the WMW in a way that highlights different realities women live in each region. It will proceed uniting one resistance to another, adding one struggle to another, challenging borders that divide our bodies, struggles and land, from rural to urban, from beaches to mountains, from war-torn territories to ancient sites.



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POPULAR FEMINIST TRAINING

Popular feminist training, as an ongoing process which enables us to recognize our power to act and to be independently from the system, and to learn and to build a world for women, communities, and nature with others, is a part and parcel of our 4th action programme including a wide range of activities from public debates to forums, from musical and theatrical forms to reinvention of history and culture of humanity.

WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU

You may bring feminist books for the Women's Academy in Diyarbakır and preferably English books for women's libraries in Kobanê.

Do not forget to bring seeds with you!

For solidarity with women and girls in refugee camps we advise you to send your support to this bank account:

IBAN: TR 87 0001 0000 9131 5819 4050 11

TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT AND ACCOMMODATION

The International Action Program starts on 6th March 2015 Friday at 9:00 am in Nusaybin (one-hour distance from Mardin), therefore arrivals should be at Mardin Airport preferably before 6 March. There is an airport in every city where our caravan will pass through: Mardin, Diyarbakır, Antakya, Antalya, Muğla and İzmir. According to your availability, you may arrange your return from one of these cities. For international and national delegates, we arrange buses from Mardin to Thessaloniki. They will be free of charge.

Those who want to do more sightseeing should come earlier and contact with:

organisation@dunyakadinyuruyusu.org. This will be organised separately from our action programme.

In Mardin and Nusaybin we will stay in houses where hosting women cook traditional foods. But for those who ask for hotel accommodation, affordable hotel lists will be provided soon. In some places we will stay in affordable hotels, but solidarity accommodation will be available in case of need. After receiving registrations we will send you the detailed programme and practical information. Foods also will be offered by local women who host our actions.

For any inquiry, please contact:

info@dunyakadinyuruyusu.org

In feminist solidarity,

World March of Women National Coordination, Turkey



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GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION FOR 2015

WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN EUROPEAN CARAVAN

MARCH-OCTOBER 2015

BODY AND TERRITORY

We, the women of the WMW in Europe, will be on the march from March 6 to October 17, 2015, in a caravan starting from Turkey and travelling to Portugal, to bring visibility to our various sexual, political and economic realities, as part of our IV Global Action.

As we have been doing since 1998, we continue to work to build another possible world, based on our strategies, discussions and international alliances, reaffirming ourselves through resistance, confrontation and the construction of alternatives to the patriarchal, capitalist, racist, lesbophobic and colonial model.

The WMW's European Women's Caravan will use our reality as a starting point for advocating for and building women's alternatives, with international solidarity as the central theme. Our experience consolidated into a global force, one that brings feminism up-to-date, as a project guaranteeing equality between all women, in a society of free and equal women and men, with no ethnic or religious oppression and with free expression of our sexuality.

At the present time, with its significant restructuring of capitalism in an attempt to maintain its maximum exploitative and oppressive powers, reinforced by the privatization of public services, spaces and goods, selling off anything that can be put on the market, the hegemonic system in which we live – based on an impossible, unjust and unsustainable growth model – has again come to the forefront.

The exploitation of nature, attacks on the peoples' rights and sovereignty, control over women's bodies and lives, and increased militarization, criminalization



and violence are all mechanisms that support accumulation through dispossession, based on the expanding commodification of every aspect of human life. This is especially true when it comes to the exploitation of women's bodies, which are controlled and

regulated by moralizing patterns of sexuality (that are heteronormative, lesbophobic, phallus-centric and focused on male pleasure) and by the expectation of motherhood and a standardized image of female beauty.

Patriarchal violence, often seen as natural and legitimate, is a part of each woman's everyday life and is further aggravated by inequalities of class and race, which also serve to reveal the lack of recognition of women as autonomous actors.

We are working to build a feminist, solidarity-based economy, one that alters existing patterns of production and reproduction, distribution and consumption, in addition to recognizing and appreciating domestic and care work, as something that is crucial to the sustainability of human life. We are struggling for the institution of liberating policies built on food sovereignty and sovereignty for the people.

We declare that women's self-organization is our strategy for strengthening women as political actors and that we are building a global force in alliance with social movements that share our anti-capitalist fight for a society based on the values of freedom, equality, justice, peace and solidarity.

World March of Women, Europe

Donosti, October 2014



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WHAT IS THE FEMINIST CARAVAN?

Everywhere women are struggling against injustice, against violence and against poverty, racism, individualism, sexual division of work, patriarchy and heteronormativity. Everywhere women organise struggles and are on the frontline of collective fights.

The Feminist Caravan plans to make links between these struggles, affirming the collective value of women resistances. We hope the Feminist Caravan will allow space for exchanges, meetings, new friendships and struggles amongst feminist in Europe and in the world. We hope the Feminist Caravan will make easier the circulation of ideas and practices, of demands and analyses, and creation of alternatives. We affirm that a better world is possible!

The Feminist Caravan will take the road from 8th of March until the 17th of October 2015. Our 8 month trip will begin in the Kurdish region of Eastern Turkey, with a big **Opening Event** organised by the **Kurdish women movement** and the **Turkish Coordination of the WMW** for 8th of March. Just after, we'll take the road through Greece (Thessaloniki) at the end of March, to the Balkans (in April), and to Austria, Italy and Switzerland (in May).

In the summer we will cross north of France (June), Belgium and Germany (July) and stop in Poland for an **International Feminist Camp** (July-August). We will return south through Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and to Roma, Italy (August), then

cross south of France and go to Catalunya, the Basque Country and Galicia (September), to arrive in **Portugal** for another big **Closing Event** on the 17th of October.

During the Action, a high number of feminist events will be organized at the local, national and regional level. In the places where national coordinations of the WMW exist, the activities around the caravan will be organized by them or with their support. We are working in alliances with various women groups, progressive organisations, collectives and networks. The Caravan will make links between these women and these struggles, collecting memories, priorities and strategies, spreading info about Women's resistances. The events will be diverse and multiple, as are our alternatives, and as are women in Europe.

The caravan will consist in several vans/cars, but we plan to complete some stretches on bicycles or walking, depending on the number of women participating at each stage, on the local organization and on our energies. We hope to meet a lot of women on the road, a lot of resisting people who will host us for an evening and/or join us for a few stop-overs. Together we will share our realities, our utopias and our strategies of resistance.

To know how to participate, to propose your ideas, to offer your support, write to us:
femvan@marchemondiale.org



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How to Join Us!

If you are living in Europe, chances are the Feminist Caravan will come to a city or a town near you. If you are interested to join the Caravan here are some ways to do so:

1. **Participate in your local action/event:** join the World March of Women group's preparatory events and planned actions. If there is no WMW National Coordination Body in your country, write to us and we will put you in contact with our participating groups.
2. **Support our Action:** Spread the information about the Feminist Caravan events! Encourage and inform activist collectives around you by sharing the news of the Feminist Caravan.
3. If you are located somewhere in the itinerary of the Feminist Caravan you can **support us materially** by contributing: solidarity accommodation or help us find a camping spot for our local stop-overs; camping materials; food support and research into local women food producers and distributors; provide us with help getting information on the local reality in case of need. Another possibility: send us in advance some basic and useful information about the local context, such as weather, legislation in terms of health, traffic, security or anything relevant for this kind of event.
4. **Participate in one of the 3 big moments of the International Action:** The Opening for the 8th of March in Kurdistan, Turkey, the International Feminist Camp in Poland at the beginning of August, the Closing event in Portugal starting on the 12th until the 17th of October 2015
5. **Join the living Caravan:** You can join us in on the road for a few days or weeks, but you will have to be autonomous in your means of transport. We suggest getting organised with other feminists to come by car. We are also organizing a ['blabla car' group](#) in order to help women who wish to join the Caravan. Write to us if you are interested in helping organize this.

Following are the different activities we plan to develop during the route! We hope that each thematic will be enriched along the way! We are open to your ideas, so please write to us with your suggestions, proposals and creations!

- 1) **Music Group: creation and transmission of music between women.** We wish to gather local women's music, as well as to create our own music group. The goal is learn and spread local women's songs of resistance in each country/stop-over we'll pass through. This way, songs will circulate with the

Caravan all over Europe and will reach women in different places.

- 2) **Mute Movies Collection.** We plan to collect feminist mute short movies, organizing movie screenings in different stop-overs, as a mode of communication without speaking in countries where we don't share a common language. Are you a woman making movies, whether a beginner or professional? Do you want to share your creations and hopes with women across Europe? Join the

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action of the World March of Women and send your movies to femvan@marchemondiale.org.

- 3) **Radio Show: the Chronicles of the Feminist Caravan.** This is one of the projects currently being developed. We want to broadcast via radio and internet podcasts news of the Caravan and information gathered by the women of the Caravan as it passes through different localities. Included in these broadcasts will be the diary of the caravan, interviews with activists and local women, local music, etc. We are creating a website with local radios from different countries and regions of Europe to support this goal. If you are a radio technician and/or are involved in radio and would be interested to work with us, please get in touch!
- 4) **Exhibition.** The idea is to show women's struggles through pictures and other formats in a travelling and evolving exhibition. Some of our thoughts for content include: a presentation of the WMW in photos, including women in struggle in the world and within the Caravan project; the struggles of women we meet during our trip (one panel per country or per stop-over); and a final part left open for local organizations to show local/national struggles and realities.
- 5) **Theatre of the oppressed.** Based on the belief that anyone can perform regardless of professional background in theatre we aim to use theatre as a liberation tool to transform social reality. The idea is to identify oppressions and most of all to share struggle strategies, using creativity to find collective solutions to resist! This is also an excellent tool to show women's oppressions and propose forms of resistance in a universal language, surpassing language barriers. Some of the activists in the Caravan already have knowledge of techniques to realize this goal, others will be trained as *Coringas* so that they can train other girls during the caravan, in an attempt to share practices and knowledge along the way.

6) **Abortion: Study on the real access to abortion in Europe.** To take action, resist and struggle for abortion rights, the Feminist Caravan will carry out a study on the conditions of access to abortion experienced by women in Europe. With that purpose, we'll apply a questionnaire previously prepared by Planning Familial in Paris to be distributed among women from the different countries that compose the Caravan's journey. The activists will gather data during the travel, and the analysis of the results will be published under the form of a report and shared on the Caravan's website.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY!

One of our struggles, framed in the main goals of the IV WMW's international action, is FOOD SOVEREIGNTY and AUTONOMY. SEEDS are the common symbol for action. Seeds are evocative for our struggle for food but have also the symbolic meaning of planting seeds to build feminist alternatives.

It was discussed in our latest European Meeting that our common symbolic action around seeds could be planting seeds on the 8th of March together in our local group or during our national action and harvesting this around the 17th of October at the end of the action.

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecological and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. This principle allows communities and women to decide and organize distribution, exchange and consumption of food in quantity and quality, according to their needs, putting solidarity, social, cultural and health principles first.

The principle of Food Sovereignty increasingly recognizes women's contribution in food production: from agriculture to preparing and distributing food. It is also the women who mostly take care of the food within their families. Due to the economic and social inequalities, many of them have no access to healthy and quality food.



In the strategies of the capitalist and patriarchal system, we can see a parallel between the exploitation of nature and exploitation of women's time, one like the other are treated as inexhaustible and flexible resources, used as a variable adjustment. Food sovereignty questions this idea and puts the spotlight on the need to redistribute the work done by women to take care of the family and others.

We want to evocate our struggle for food sovereignty, which means standing for our right to access the most basic common good of all – **land vital resources** – and to decide what we plant and what we eat! Among many others, we want to denounce the harmful consequences of land privatization, agricultural monoculture and the irresponsible and unbridled exploitation of energy resources lead by big corporations that are destroying our health and our well-being, which are so crucial for a dignified life!



THE IV INTERNATIONAL ACTION GLOBALLY

In SOUTH AMERICA: National Coordinating Bodies in South America are preparing their action around 8th of March; a Mesoamerican Caravan is being planned for 17-22 October, in alliance with a regional movement, towards the IV Regional Meeting of the Americas in Panama, which will take place from 23-25th October.

In CANADA: The WMW Quebec will launch the IV International Action in Montréal on 8 March, with a march called "Let's build the world that we want", in opposition to the current social and environmental destruction in Quebec and Canada. Between the end of September and 17th of October, a feminist caravan will go around the different regions in Quebec, gathering resistances and struggles on the way and showing feminist solidarity. In preparation for the actions that

We demand a change on the assumption of the land as property to be exploited, but we also want to build alternatives ourselves and take responsibility and action! We want to PLANT sustainable solutions to face this problem!

During our travel in the Caravan we want to claim seeds as a common good through an action of planting traditional seeds in visible and critical public spaces promoting the debate around this thematic. We had the idea of drawing a map of what and where will be planted during the caravan. We intend to motivate people to exchange seeds and create their own seed-banks promoting this practice at the local level. We can also serve as a transport to change seeds between different groups. For that purpose we are organizing a seed-bank in the Caravan that will collect and share traditional and peasant seeds all over Europe. We also intend to share knowledge and to extend the space of discussion about food sovereignty resistances that some networks have already started. We invite you to be a part of this project and reinforce links between organizations and groups fighting for food sovereignty and justice. **If you plan to join the Caravan or take part in events organized around the Caravan, bring seeds to exchange!**

will take place in autumn, the WMW Quebec & Canada will organize popular trainings under the theme "our bodies are occupied territories and territories in resistance".

In AFRICA: Several subregional feminist political training camps will be organized in August (one in the SADC, one in the Eastern region); launch of the IV International Action on 8th of March; 24th of April: solidarity with Rana plaza workers; subregional meeting in Nairobi (Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Burundi, Tanzania & Rwanda) in June; the closing event of the IV International Action will be in Nairobi, Kenya, between 12-17 October.

In BANGLADESH: On 24th of April a human chain will be made in front of Rana Plaza and a meeting with trade unions to discuss garment workers' rights will take place.



FUNDRAISING GOAL REACHED!



On February 7th, the final date for our VERKAMI crowd-sourcing fundraiser, we reached our goal of 12,000 Euros in order to kick-start the Feminist Caravan! We are grateful to all the people who donated and spread the news of the fundraiser to help us reach our goal. This money will help us increase the reach of the Caravan and make it more inclusive and powerful. If you want to keep supporting us materially, you can keep sending contributions directly to our bank account:

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THANK YOU!

We would like to extend a big 'Thank You!' to the following people who donated to the Feminist Caravan online fundraiser on Verkami:

World March of Women. Allegreta . Muchy . xulia . Annix . Galamaia . Begoña . Ofelia . Merchi . Sara Leao . Andrea Inocencio. Sandra. Mechthild . Ellie Casira . Laura Lgrnd . LPV Reggae . Cocolariko . Monste . Ruiz . Beatriz Tato Salgado. Isabelle Attia . Danielle Villegas . Fadi Simone Almeida . Laranjeira Pires. Jorge Fernández. Mariana Leila

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Mili. Rousa. Nicavero. Heikel Aitzi

Bergoitia. Ennamaria Therese. Brune.

Sabine G. Mandl. VWhooh. Carmen Beer. Helen
Carolina. Aurora S. Perello. Nicole Thuet.

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Giner. Masel



Preparatory meeting in Barcelona, February 2015

We would also like to say a special THANK YOU to **Association Céramistes et Artistes de Lilith**, who offered us handcrafts to sell on the way, as well as to **Marcha Mundial Mulleres Galiza**, who donated 2000 necklaces to help finance the Caravan.

The **Feminist Caravan Newsletter** is created and edited by Carolina Moreira, Milena Abrahamyan, Sara Leao, Sarah Gerard, Clara Carbanar, Marion Luciole, Vera Silva, Mina Damjanovic. Myriam Fougere, Natalija Laptosevic, Natahlia Capellini, Ioana Pop, Laura Restrepo. **Contact** femvan@marchemondial.org for any inquiries.

• E-mail: femvan@marchemondiale.org