

# WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER



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## EDITORIAL

Dear sisters,

As we are putting the finishing touches to the first edition of our International Newsletter for 2009, many of you will be busy with the final preparations for the mobilisations of the 8th March, International Women’s Day and symbol of women’s continued struggle for an end to inequalities, exploitation and discrimination.

In the global context of the capitalist crisis – embodied in financial, food, environmental and ethical crises – activists from the WMW around the world will have raised their voices once more against the patriarchal and capitalist systems that oppress, and discriminate against, women of all nationalities, cultures, religions and classes. We affirm that we won’t allow our governments to socialise the losses and privatise the gains, under the guise of ‘saving the economy from the financial crisis’, nor

continue their policies of economic growth at all costs – to the environment, to labour rights, to essential public services, to women’s rights. We demand the reorganisation of production and consumption based on the sustainability of human life, as stated in the first two articles of this special edition of the Newsletter “A Feminist Response to the Financial Crisis”.

As well as being channelled into overcoming the challenges that face us currently, our activist energies are also being consolidated for the year ahead, leading up to the launching of our International Action 2010 on the 8th March 2010. We understand how crucial the next twelve months will be to the impact and scope that this International Action will have, while the preparation process itself is an opportunity to strengthen our identity as the World March of Women, a collective identity founded on our struggle to

overcome the systemic causes of poverty and violence against women.

In 2010, the debates we provoke in our communities, countries and regions, and the demands we make at all levels, will be founded on our four Action Areas: Violence against women as a tool of control of our lives, bodies and sexuality, the Common good and public services, Women's work and Peace and demilitarisation. Now is the time to begin spreading the word, mobilising our grassroots sisters, inviting other women's groups to join us, talking with allied movements, debating our Action Areas,

planning our marches of all colours and forms for the 8th – 18th March and October 2010. Strong and visible marches, actions, activities and campaigns in our countries throughout 2010 will help us to concretise our solidarity with the women suffering such extreme violence in Sud Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo.

We demand that our voices and demands are heard and acted upon!  
We will not be silenced!  
Women on the March until we are All Free!

## WE WILL NOT PAY FOR ANOTHER CRISIS

With the failure of insurance and credit agencies in the United States in September 2008, the financial crisis became apparent. This crisis is a reflection of a larger crisis of the capitalist system that combines environmental, ethical, economic, and political dimensions.

World economic growth had been maintained through the consumption of families, above all in countries of the north, especially in the United States. Growth in consumption was not due to higher salaries but rather to deeper levels of debt. Families mortgaged their homes – which were priced artificially high – to maintain their high level of consumption, not only of luxury items, but also of services like health care, in countries where the State does not guarantee them through public policies. When real estate prices began to adjust to real prices, diverse financial institutions declared bankruptcy due to, on one hand, the fact that families were no longer able to pay their loans and, on the other hand, the value of their houses was below the value loaned to them in the first place.

The governments of the United States, England, and France began injecting millions into the private banks in an enormous operation to socialise the losses of the crisis. The banks were not totally nationalised, controls imposed were minimal, and families who lost their mortgaged homes were not taken into consideration. In other words, profit has continued to be privatised and concentrated in the hands of the few. Lack of credit and so-called “consumer confidence”

began to attack the real economy. Stockpiles are high and companies have given workers collective holidays or have laid them off in large numbers. Governments have injected resources into the automobile industry without demanding concessions in return. The lay-offs and proposals to undermine workers' rights continue.

Attempts to make the poor pay for the crisis will be met with resistance. However, the crisis is situated in a world marked by the criminalisation of poverty and of protest, and violent, armed attacks of the strong against the weak; to say nothing of the ever useful solution of dividing the workers, which is expressed in the growth of xenophobia, violence against immigrants, and land disputes characterised as ethnic conflicts.

From an economic standpoint, governments and companies outline efforts to encourage investment and growth through the use of green technologies (substitution of vehicle fleets, construction of infrastructure to capture non-fossil energy sources, etc) and the commodification of nature (such as the sale of carbon credits).

From a political standpoint, the G8, the group composed of the seven most industrialised nations in the world plus Russia, has expanded to form the G20, incorporating countries considered to be emergent, such as Brazil, India, and China. The meeting of the G20 that took place in Washington in December 2008 did not yield encouraging results. The group continues to

prescribe the same remedies that caused the current illness in the first place: more free trade, more de-regulation. For this reason, social movements have called for a day of protest against the measures proposed by the G20 to take place on 28th March, on the eve of the next G20 meeting in London.

Our challenge, as social movements, is to propose solutions to the crisis that respond to the concrete needs of those who have lost their jobs or homes, or have less access to food, and at the same time, point to a new world order. Of these proposals, the following can be highlighted:

- Redistribution of wealth among social classes, women and men, ethnic groups and societies. Increases in the salaries and earnings of working men and women will allow popular consumption to act as an engine for growth and substitute over-indebtedness. We also propose a world minimum salary and a cap on earnings in order to decrease the enormous inequalities in income.

- Deflation of financial capital: nationalise banks; promote credit cooperatives; conduct audits and renegotiations of public debts; close fiscal paradises.

- Democratisation of the State and of companies, with people led participation and control, and guaranteed public policies. Freedom to organise, equality, and solidarity.

In addition, we believe it is urgently necessary to stop the environmental destruction caused by the production and distribution model and by wars. Our proposals are aligned with the affirmation of Food and Energy Sovereignty, and with strengthening of family farming, artisan fishing, local markets, and the questioning of consumption patterns, which entails decreasing the consumption of the wealthy and improving living conditions for the poor.

### Women and the crisis

Neoliberalism imposed itself as an ideology in response to the crisis of capitalism growth in the 1970s and 1980s. And it was through the recommendations (or rather, impositions) of the Washington Consensus – which included cuts in public spending, deregulation and the opening of markets –

that neoliberalism was transformed itself into a concrete reality.

Public services, such as health, education, and water supply, were privatised, though the fact that these expenses disappeared from government budgets did not mean that people needed them any less. It only meant that they were to be purchased or provided through the over-work of women.

Innumerable women's groups have reported how structural adjustment policies were only possible because they, individually in their families or collectively in their communities, assumed responsibility for care-giving under worse conditions. At the same time as women were gaining access to paid work, thus giving them relative economic freedom, most of them were working in jobs that were precarious, informal, part time, and with little guarantee of rights.

Women go to sleep later and wake up earlier to fit in all they have to do to take care of their houses, jobs, and families. And while they work in their own homes, they carry out various activities simultaneously, such as cooking or looking after children and sewing at the same time. These are examples of how women have paid the bill for neoliberal adjustments.

And what about this time around? In recent years, women have been drawing attention to a crisis in the social reproduction model. Women's time is the adjustable variable that allows incompatible dimensions to function in parallel: the maximisation of business' profit and people's well being. Society does not organise itself so that women and men share care-giving tasks and the State guarantees public policies such as collective day care centres, restaurants, and laundries. Instead the market offers false solutions: industrialised foods, the work of domestic maids...

In January of this year, supermarkets in Great Britain pointed to a 50% decrease in sales of pre-prepared foods and an equal increase in sales of basic ingredients. We can celebrate the consumption of less plastic packaging and chemical additives, but does this new habit imply new family negotiations that result in all members becoming involved in meal preparation?

Up until now, the news of mass layoffs has focused on the industrial and civil

construction sectors, where the majority of workers are men. In Spain, lay-offs in the commerce and hotel sectors have intensified. Will women's unemployment be considered with the same relevance? Will there be incentives for women's cooperatives to provide services? In countries that already have unemployment insurance policies, such as Canada, will they begin providing coverage to intermittent or part time women workers?

We must also be attentive to how responses to the crisis will join hands with the conservative moral offensive against women's

autonomy, the persistence of violence against women, and the utilisation of women's bodies as spoils of war.

We women will not pay for another crisis. We affirm our struggle to guarantee employment, real increases in salaries, public education and health services, and support for social reproduction. We want access to cheap credit, support for the solidarity economy, and small-scale production. We demand policies for the prevention of, and combat against, domestic violence, cuts in military spending, and other urgent measures.

## A FEMINIST LOOK AT THE FINANCIAL CRISIS: ANOTHER ECONOMY FOR ANOTHER WORLD

Globalisation of the economy analysed by the World March of Women and other feminist groups

The World March of Women (*Letter to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank: 2000 Good Reasons to Change Course, 2000*), affirming feminist critiques of globalisation, has dedicated itself to analysing how this process, which was a result of the dominant economic system – neoliberal capitalism – has not affected women and men equally (Wichterich, 1999). Through this analysis, attention has also been drawn to the paradoxical effects of globalisation: greater participation of women in the work force, but with a growing gap between a minority of women known as “winners” and a majority who are the “losers” (*The economy at issue from women's point of view, 2004*). The WMW has also showed how women are increasingly relegated to jobs that are precarious, atypical, flexible, at home, or informal; how women everywhere are transformed into “service women”; how they are confined to job ghettos, i.e. sectors that are traditionally attributed to women and are poorly paid; and how their work conditions and salaries have failed to achieve the same level as men's. The current economic crisis has only served to aggravate this situation.

Some feminists have proposed a deeper analysis of globalisation, saying that it is a phenomenon that cannot be understood through a critique of neoliberal capitalism alone, instead it must equally be analysed from a patriarchal perspective. The latter

is understood as an autonomous system – political, economic, social, and cultural – of women's oppression; a system that existed prior to capitalism and is characterised by:

- **Assignment** of certain roles, tasks, and societal status to women;
- **Appropriation** of women's bodies, sex, and time, and their productive and reproductive work;
- **Exclusion** of women from property ownership, political power, economic power, etc;
- **Discrimination** in the recognition of women's work and existence, as well as their access to and use of resources.

Taking the analysis even further, various women's groups have dedicated themselves to showing how the economic system is characterised by interlinked class, gender, and race discriminations, obscured by the – restricted – label “neoliberal capitalism”. Indigenous, black and Arab women, and women from the south, etc, suffer particular discriminations in the current system, – as exploited workers (poorly paid or not paid at all) in their countries and territories, as emigrants or immigrants, or as victims of all types of institutional violence. Capitalism benefits from racism and patriarchy, and vice versa. Examples include the feminisation of poverty and disease, and particularly of migration. The legal and illegal migration of women constitutes half of total migrations today. Every year, for example, thousands of domestic helpers and maids migrate to

countries of the North and the East to work in slavery-like conditions. The treatment and trafficking of women and teenagers for sexual exploitation is growing around the world.

Finally, the eco-feminists critically analyse the economic system from the perspective of its impact on the environment, on social relations, and on the future of the planet: production for the sake of production, pathological addiction to consumption, short term individualism based on “having everything quickly and always”, militaristic culture that is dependent on the arms industry, spirit of competition and greed that pushes the concentration of wealth to the limit and leads to dangerous changes in nature itself (climate change, contamination of the water, air, and land, etc).

### Operation to “rescue” the current system: a dead-end street?

We must also be attentive to plans to rescue the economy. We know that the leaders of the G20 have moved swiftly to respond to the urgency of this crisis and proposed immediate, short term measures, such as: adjustment of controls of national and international speculation, of investments in infrastructure, demands for transparency, etc. However the preamble to their work already reveals that everything is going to change so that, in the end, nothing changes.

In fact, the leaders of the G20 countries propose corrections to the diversions in the system – which are not negligible, above all from the perspective of vulnerable populations – however they fail to question what is at the heart of the economic crisis: the aims and functioning of the system itself. Once the storm has passed, everything goes back to normal! In reality, nothing will be done to democratise the financial sectors, to eliminate fiscal paradises, and fiscal evasion in general; nothing will be done about the re-establishment of the international financial institutions (FMI, World Bank, WTO, etc.), the stock markets, access to credit, the individual and corporate appropriation of natural resources; and no one questions the non-egalitarian policies, the promotion of consumption and debt, the run-

away production that has placed the planet in danger.

World leaders totally ignore the existence of sexism and racism as structural causes of the economic crisis, and therefore we must question their rescue plans:

- How do they affect women specifically?
- What measures are aimed at women?

For example, is equal pay part of their plans? Are brakes being put on the privatisation of health and education services?

- To what are governments referring when they speak of investing in infrastructure? Roads, bridges... but are they addressing goods and services that meet basic individual and collective needs, such as day care centres, women’s centres, legal rights defence groups, farming cooperatives, etc?

### On what principles and values should the economy be re-founded?

The Women’s Global Charter for Humanity proposed building another world based on the values of equality, freedom, solidarity, justice, and peace.

Each of these values implies the emergence of “another” economy based on the following principles:

- The primacy of policy over economism, prioritising “living together”, concern for the collective interests, the common good, and equal sharing of public goods and common world patrimony (natural resources, water, air, etc.)
- Democracy as an end and as a means of transforming the economy. The economy continues to be an enormous space still to be democratised.
- A conception of the economy that is firmly based on solidarity, in contrast to the chauvinist, militaristic economy that currently dominates and produces a small number of winners and a large number of losers, men and women. A new economy that socialises the gains of productivity instead of privatising them.
- Equal rights in law and practice between men and women and a transformation in social relations that imply, among other things:
  - Questioning social hierarchy and, consequently, individual and collective privileges associated with this hierarchy;

- Commitment on the part of various social actors to demand respect for women's rights.
  - Recognition for the invisible work of social reproduction, for which women are largely responsible, ignored in the accounting of wealth.
  - Rights, particularly economic, social, and cultural rights, related to all types of security we strive for (food, energy, health, education, housing, etc.).
  - Respect for the environment and questioning of economic growth at any price (production for production's sake that destroys social relations and the environment).

#### Examples of immediate measure to be adopted

- Government investments in all types of infrastructure ("concrete" and social) except for those associated with public-private enterprises;
- Re-orientation of industrial policy to base it on projects that are innovative and ecological, and that generate jobs in small and medium-sized businesses and industries, reserving the right of the State to oversee the re-launch of industry (Le Monde, January 21, 2009);
  - Measures to facilitate access to credit;
  - Measures to create and protect jobs;

- Measures to project the most vulnerable in society (unemployment insurance, income guarantees, etc.), among them women, and particularly women who are poor, single mothers, elderly, black, indigenous, etc. ;
  - Measures to distribute income from productivity in favour of workers, against world unemployment, and for decent work protected by the norms of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article2703&lang=fr>);
  - Measures to establish equality and equity of salaries for men and women;
  - Promotion of the local economy, including social economy;
  - Recognition and increased visibility in the formal public sector of the "invisible" work of women, including recognition of their traditional knowledge and knowledge acquired through experience outside the sphere of the dominant economy. This knowledge contributes to the well-being of people and groups. It is fundamental that it is appreciated and recognised for its "social profitability" as well as "economic profitability" (<http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article2703&lang=fr>);
  - Equal distribution between women and men of time dedicated to domestic work and child education in the private sphere.

## WSF 2009:

### SHARING EXPERIENCES TO MAKE ANOTHER WORLD POSSIBLE

Close to 100 thousand people gathered together for the World Social Forum for six days of debates and mobilizations. Half were from the state of Pará in northern Brazil, most of them young people who took advantage of the event as though it were an immense popular university making denouncements and providing alternatives in the face of the model in crisis. This Forum was held in Belém de Pará, in the Amazon region, raising great expectations that socio-biodiversity and the struggles of local peoples in the region would influence the

alternatives being discussed and constructed by organisations participating in the WSF. Men and women from more than 120 indigenous groups were present and shared their experiences, such as the return of some indigenous peoples and the States of Bolivia and Ecuador to the principle of "living well" (*sumak kawsay* in Aymara) as an expression of another way to organise everyday life and society in contrast to the commodified relationships inherent in patriarchal, colonialist capitalism. The aim of this Forum was to learn with/from indigenous men and

women. Whether this goal was achieved or not is open to debate.

### Our activities

We, of the World March of Women, organised a series of activities, most of them together with other networks and allied movements. Feminist critique of the construction of our analyses and of social movement alliances was the theme of three activities. We continue to contribute a feminist perspective to the debates around diverse themes, such as political reform, climate change, national debt, and agro-ecology.

Our presence was also marked by the feminist *batucada* (drumming group). In the opening march, in the pouring rain, we made strategic stops where we sang slogans criticising fast food, communications and mining companies, and in places that symbolise male power.

“Women on the march! Building the 2010 International Action”, our first activity, took place on the first day (which was dedicated to the Pan-Amazon region), in the “Stateless peoples and nations” tent marquee. We began by acknowledging the hospitality of our hosts, and committed ourselves to the struggles of Kurdish, Saharan, Palestinian, and Guyanan women. Our sisters who live in the Peruvian and Brazilian Amazon told of how prejudice with respect to Amazonian women’s sexuality functions in parallel to an exportation model of extraction that sees the forest and the people who live there as resources to be manipulated by the colonisers, who today take the form of multinational oil, mining, and agricultural companies. The Amazon is a point of origin for trafficking in women, and prostitution of women and girls is naturalised and follows the routes of large projects. The political and economic context in Turkey and Nepal and the experiences of building the March in South Africa and Brazil laid the ground for presenting the contents of our 2010 International Action demands and forms of expression.



The WMW’s Feminist Batucada livens up the Opening March of the World Social Forum

In alliance with other social movements, we organised a dialogue with presidents Evo Morales, of Bolivia; Hugo Chaves, of Venezuela; Rafael Correa, of Ecuador; and Fernando Lugo, of Paraguay. Representatives of movements initiated the dialogue and urged the presidents to support the demands of the peoples’ movements, asking them to remain faithful to the promises of their programmes and the hopes placed in them by the people. Magdalena León, our sister from REMTE in Ecuador, remembered the importance of women’s struggles and their contributions to current changes. In the commitments assumed by the presidents, the values of socialism in the 21st Century were brought to the table, including equality between women and men, and structural changes such as the creation of a South American currency, land reform, and democratisation of the means of communication. We also organised the Social Movements’ Assembly where a common agenda of struggles was agreed upon for 2009 (see the declaration at: [http://www.marchemondialesdesfemmes.org/alliances\\_mondialisation/asamblea-movimientos-sociales/declaration2009/en?set\\_language=en&cl=en](http://www.marchemondialesdesfemmes.org/alliances_mondialisation/asamblea-movimientos-sociales/declaration2009/en?set_language=en&cl=en)). This includes the strengthening of historical dates (like International Women’s Day on 8th March and the Global Mobilisation of Struggle for Mother Earth, against colonisation and the commodification of life, on 12th October). It was also decided to launch a Global Week of Action against Capitalism and War from 28th March to 4th April 2009 (anti-G20 mobilisation on 28th



Participants of the WMW's first activity during the WSF: "Women on the March! Preparing the 2010 International Action"

Palestine in the face of Israeli aggression in the Gaza Strip.

The world being built by the women is based on equality for all and the conquest of self-determination regarding their bodies and sexuality. Particular emphasis was given to the struggle against the criminalisation of women who have abortions, the reasons for defending this right, and the need to guarantee the right to safe, legal abortions.

March; a Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 30th March; mobilisation against NATO on its 60th Anniversary on 4th April).

In alliance with other feminist groups and networks, we organised debates and actions to promote the legalisation of abortion in Brazil and held the Women's Assembly on the sixth day of the WSF (see the English version of the document at: [http://www.marchemondialesdesfemmes.org/alliances\\_mondialisation/fsm2009/womensassembly/en/](http://www.marchemondialesdesfemmes.org/alliances_mondialisation/fsm2009/womensassembly/en/)). More than 350 women from different parts of the world were gathered in the Assembly representing many expressions of feminism - lesbian, indigenous, peasant, urban, Western, Eastern - united in their questioning of the patriarchal and racist capitalist system. The over-exploitation of women's work in times of crisis was discussed by participants, as they denounced the false solutions for the crisis presented by rich countries and the markets, such as the application of public funds to save businesses and banks.

The women presented their struggles against the development model established in the Pan-Amazon region, which destroys nature and condemns many girls and women to prostitution. Women's struggles against armed conflict and for peace in Colombia, and against patriarchal domination in India, were also shared. In addition, the participants affirmed their feminist solidarity with the women of

### The future of the WSF

Expectations surrounding the WSF in Belém were very influenced by the financial crisis. There were many initiatives at the WSF for common debates regarding ways out of the crisis, however none had the binding force needed to bring all together international social movements, small local organisations, or young people participating for the first time.

Texts assessing the Belém Forum are already circulating that point to guidelines for the future. There are texts that speak of a certain fatigue surrounding the process; the large quantity of scattered debates expresses the richness of popular resistance but does not promote the networking of efforts, which is ever more important in this moment in crisis. Others, more optimistic, pointed out that a greater diffusion of analyses coming from the environmentalist and indigenous movements and stateless peoples and nations creates a common framework for overcoming capitalism.

In terms of the Forum process, further, thematic editions have been proposed, with a focus on debating alternatives; for example, forums on a new civilizing paradigm, ways out of the crisis, among others, as well as the idea to hold the next world edition in Africa in 2011 (in a country yet to be defined). The World Social Forum remains on our agenda as a concrete event in which we strengthen processes of alliance. We share with other social movements





International WMW Activists at the WSF:  
Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, Peru, South Africa, Turkey

the evaluation that we need more consistent alliances in terms of analyses, demands, and forms of action that change the power relations that support the current world order. At the same time, we feel the urgent need to go further in our contributions to these spaces of alliance. In addition to our strength as a movement, we need to develop alternatives and systematise and reflect on them, based on feminist theory and practice.

We returned from Belém stronger, with more organisational experience, having created new bonds and strengthened old ones, but also conscious of the responsibilities and tasks that lie ahead.

## THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING PALESTINIAN WOMEN

In the current moment of struggle, new challenges face us – the Palestinian people and women:

1. Unification of the Palestinian political leadership and ending political divisions: for this to happen we need to put more and more pressure on the political parties, to make the internal comprehensive discussion a success.
2. To solve the humanitarian problems that were caused by the Israeli war against Gaza and the continued oppression policy in the whole of occupied Palestine, as we know women and children are the first victims of this situation.

An emergency programme must be submitted with regards to financial, social and health issues, besides middle term and long term plans to guarantee basic humanitarian rights to the Palestinian population.

3. The continued Israeli oppression through daily military attacks, stealing of lands, building of Israeli settlements, the apartheid wall and the operation to turn Jerusalem into a solely Jewish city; this occupation strategy is going to triumph after the latest elections in Israel, we expect that their new government will be more aggressive towards our people.
4. As women, our burden is becoming bigger and bigger: while we are sharing our nation's

struggle against the occupation, we also have to work for the women's cause, and in this way women are being asked to make heavy sacrifices.

Sharing in the whole national struggle, Palestinian women are focusing on raising women's presence in decision-making roles, which means more work at the grassroots level:

- Firstly, in the women's movement itself, to be more recognised and motivated.
- Secondly, at the decision-making level in order to gain more changes in the legal situation of women in Palestinian laws, with regard to women's work, family, punishment laws and, of course, to raise women's participation in political life.

From this perspective we are working to strengthen our movement as a secular movement aiming to end all kinds of discrimination against women, and of course this must take place in an independent society without foreign occupation.

### About the BDS campaign

BDS is an international campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israeli. It works at national and international levels with solidarity actions and positions from



"Palestine – Free and Sovereign!" The WMW Expresses its Solidarity with the Palestinian People during the Opening March of the WSF

trade unions, the women's movement and universities, and campaigns all over the world.

First, let us say that we think that boycott is a successful strategy in the struggle against the occupation in general; it influences the occupation's financial and social strategies, strategies that are based on stealing occupied land and using it to serve the interests of Israelis. It's a tool of struggle against occupation.

In our particular situation, we as Palestinians use this tool because we know that West Bank and Gaza strip is the second market for Israeli production of weapons, though the Israeli media presents Israel as a democratic

free modern state at the same time as it was occupying Palestine, killing its people and stealing its natural resources.

The BDS campaign is very important in the Palestinian cause as a tool to strengthen the Palestinian position in our continuous struggle, because it can potentially lead to the Israeli government finding it hard for Israeli academics, companies and investment to continue while occupation and crimes are continuing.

Boycott was successful in many similar cases such as South Africa, we think the BDS campaign must be strengthened and widened to maximise the pressure against Israeli.

## EUROPEAN COORDINATING BODY MEETING

From 20th – 22nd February, delegates from thirteen countries gathered in Barcelona for the meeting of the WMW European Coordinating Body. The participation of young women was very warmly welcomed, as well as the participation of a network of migrant women. In addition, women from England and Denmark participated in the European Coordinating Body for the first time. Items on the agenda included planning of the 2010

Actions, participation in European Social Forum preparation processes, and the election of International Committee delegates from the region.

The European Coordinating Body decided to organise a European action in 2010 in the form of a manifestation in some large European city. This manifestation will take place at the beginning of October and will serve as a springboard to send off the



Delegates of the European Coordination Meeting, United!

delegates who will be participating in the International Action in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The city in which the event will be carried out will be decided in April. With respect to the Social Forums, representatives of the WMW, especially the European Secretariat, have invested considerable effort in their preparation processes in recent years, with moderate

results. The European Coordinating Body continues to follow the preparations and participate, as do the National Coordinating Bodies, as much as possible.

During the meeting in Barcelona, the delegates elected Tereixa Otero Dacosta of the Galician National Coordinating Body (NCB) and Michèle Spieler of the Swiss NCB to be the European representatives on the International Committee.

## TRAINING IN COMMUNICATIONS AND GENDER IS THEME OF MEETING IN QUITO

The World March of Women participated in a meeting in Quito, Ecuador, from 14th - 15th February focused on the evaluation of the communication and gender training process that began in 2008 with women communicators and leaders of other social organisations and networks in Latin America. The activity was organised by *Minga Informativa de Movimientos Sociales*, a communication initiative of various Latin American and Caribbean social movements that emerged from the convergence of efforts to resist the exclusionary social and economic model.

Participants in the Quito meeting discussed and planned the follow-up to the Communication and Gender Agenda (see the Spanish version at [http://movimientos.org/fsa2008/show\\_text.php3?key=13156](http://movimientos.org/fsa2008/show_text.php3?key=13156)), the result of several workshops conducted by Minga in 2008 aiming to provoke great diffusion of women's participation and proposals in activities in the social movements' calendar. The initiative also networks with



Minga is a communication initiative shared by different urban and social movements. *In this photo:* ALAI (Latin American Information Agency), CAOI (Andean Coordination of Indigenous Organisations), CLOC (Latin American Coordination of Peasant Organisations), Via Campesina - Centro América y Conosur, Martin Luther King Centre, Jubilee South, WMW, REMTE (Network of Women Transforming the Economy)

popular media in the processes of ALBA (Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America and the Caribbean) integration in the framework of the social movements and of ALBA.

In addition to building a common

information agenda, the discussions in Quito concentrated on collectively re-thinking the communication and gender training process for social movements, based on the understanding that the women's movement is diverse and complex in its proposals and levels of action. Therein lies the need to continue building a discourse that will permit, little by little, the networking and increasing visibility of women.

This coincides with the need to strengthen the capacity and skills of women who are

responsible for social movements' communication, prioritising the training of trainers with the aim of multiplying knowledge. Various topics were worked on collectively; criteria, mechanisms, and tools were constructed collectively to facilitate women's daily work as communicators without losing sight of the strategic and political significance of communication for the organisations that make up the social movements. More information:


 <http://www.movimientos.org/mujeres>

## BUILDING THE WMW AND THE 2010 INTERNATIONAL ACTION IN KENYA

The WMW in Kenya is holding monthly meetings to discuss their organisation and planning for the 2010 International Action. After the VII International Meeting, they organised two main actions in December – one on the 10th, to celebrate the end of the “16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women” and the 60th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, and the other on the 12th. The first activity was held in Huruma slums; women from different cultures organised cultural events denouncing traditions and norms that violate women's rights, such as female genital mutilation, wife inheritance, early and forced marriages, wife beating as a sign of “love” from husbands, among others. “We went on a truck, as a road show, from which we raised awareness on the day, and our activities and roles as women in an active movement”, reports Sophie Dola. Two days afterwards, on Independence Day, the Kenyan WMW participated in the parades wearing t-shirts denouncing food insecurity in the country and

cabinet ministers accused of being involved in corrupt deals where they export staple food and leave poor Kenyans dying.

Actions were also carried out on the 3rd, 8th and 28th March focusing on women's work, the common good, food security, domestic violence and peace, also relating these themes to the declaration of the 2009 Social Movements' Assembly held during the World Social Forum in Belém.

Read the full information about Kenya's activities on the WMW website:  <http://www.marchemondialesdesfemmes.org/structure/cn-groupes/afrique/kenya/report2008-march2009/en>



Kenyan WMW sisters march in Nairobi on the 3rd March, Mothers' Day, to demand stability in their country, and in solidarity with Palestinian and Congolese women and with the many women and children who lost their lives in the recent Nakumatt supermarket fire in the city.

## WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN IN MEXICO: NO MORE IMPUNITY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



The local population of San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, welcomes the WMW Chihuahua-Chiapas Caravan on the 1st December

The third stage of the “One million signatures to demand quality of life, free from violence” campaign, that began in September 2008, took the form of a Caravan March. The March – which left Juárez City, Chihuahua, on the 24th November 2008 – carried out activities in the Federal District and in Oaxaca, before arriving in Chiapas on the 1st December.

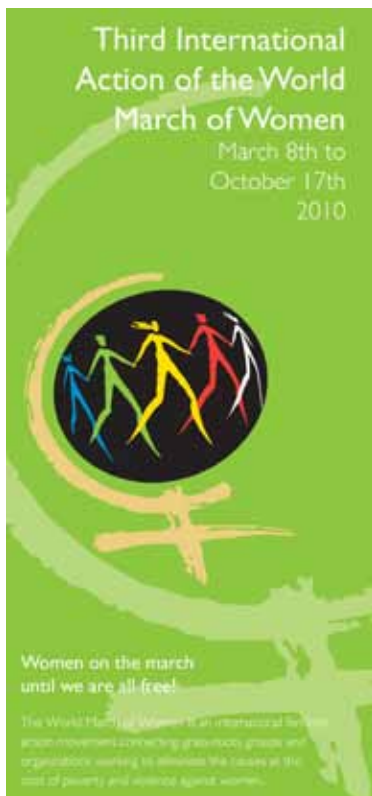
From the north to the south, the March demanded an end to feminicides, to the militarisation of the country and to the repression of social movements, freedom for political prisoners, and that the federal law that protects women from violence is respected and put into practice in each state.

“It’s a march of denunciation. It’s a march of solidarity. It’s a march of hope.”

It’s a march of sound and noise. It’s a march that summons us to continue marching forward.”

Weblink with audio and photos: <http://Chiapas.indymedia.org>

## BOOK AND FOLDER: LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 2010 INTERNATIONAL ACTION



The front of the 2010 Action pamphlet, an important tool for mobilisation

The World Social Forum in the Amazon was an opportunity to publicise our book “World March of Women 1998 – 2008: A Decade of International Feminist Struggle” that tells part of our history through the movement’s key texts and documents. For the event, we also released a pamphlet, which, together with the book, constitutes important material to support the construction of the movement and mobilisation for the 2010 Action. The book, with versions in Spanish, French, and English, is available for National Coordinating Bodies via the e-mail [info@marchemondiale.org](mailto:info@marchemondiale.org) and can be downloaded from the WMW site via the following links:

EN – <http://www.marchemondialedesfemmes.org/publications/libro1998-2008/en/>

SP – <http://www.marchemondialedesfemmes.org/publications/libro1998-2008/es/>

FR – <http://www.marchemondialedesfemmes.org/publications/libro1998-2008/fr/>

The folder is available in Spanish, French, English, and Portuguese on our website (<http://www.marchemondialedesfemmes.org/promotion/en>) under the section “Promotional Material”.

If your NCB has already translated the pamphlet into a local language, or plans to do so, please send an electronic version to the e-mail [communication@marchemondiale.org](mailto:communication@marchemondiale.org) so we can publicise it on the WMW website.

# AGENDA

**28th – 31st March:** Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Conference, Rome, Italy.

**28th March – 4th April:** Global Week of Action against Capitalism and War:

- Anti-G20 mobilisation on 28th March;
- A Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People to promote Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions against Israel on 30th March;
- Mobilisation for the 60th Anniversary of NATO on 4th April.

**31st March – 3rd April:** WMW International Committee Meeting, São Paulo, Brazil.

**9th – 12th April:** International March against the Moroccan Wall of Shame, Western Sahara.

**15th – 18th April:** IV People's Summit, parallel to the V Summit of the Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas, Trinidad and Tobago (<http://www.cumbredelospueblos.org/?lang=en>).

**27th – 30th May:** I Summit of Women, Young women and Girls, parallel to the IV Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities, Puno, Peru.

**28th – 30th May:** 1st WMW African Regional Meeting, Bamako, Mali.

## NEXT EDITION:

8th March, International Women's Day  
Mobilisations

Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Conference

Global Week of Action against Capitalism and War

IC Meeting in São Paulo

Regional WMW Meetings

Please send us your news and photos of your NCB's activities and mobilisations by the 10th May to be included in the second newsletter of 2009.

### WMW International Committee:

Miriam Nobre (International Secretariat), Nana Aicha Cissé and Wilhelmina Trout (Africa), Emilia Castro and Gladys Alfaro (Americas), Jean Enriquez and Saleha Athar (Asia), Michèle Spieler and Tereixa Dacosta (Europe)

### WMW International Secretariat:

Rua Ministro Costa e Silva, nº 36 - Pinheiros  
São Paulo, SP - Brazil  
Post code: 05417-080  
Tel. +55 11 3032-3243  
Fax: +55 11 3032-3239  
E-mail: [info@marchemondiale.org](mailto:info@marchemondiale.org)  
Website: [www.worldmarchofwomen.org](http://www.worldmarchofwomen.org)

### IS Team:

Alessandra Ceregatti, Celia Alldridge, Julia Clímaco, Miriam Nobre

### Texts written by:

Alessandra Ceregatti, Celia Alldridge, Women and Globalisation Committee - Federation of Quebec Women, Khitam Saafin (Union of Palestinian Women's Committees), Miriam Nobre, Sophie Dola

### Translation:

Anne Kepple, Catherine Degoulet, Celina Lagrutta, Claudine Charran, Maité Llanos, Sally Burch

**Photos:** WMW Archives, Tuto Wherle, Sandra Silvestre, Tica Moreno

**Design:** Luciana Nobre

**Financial support:** Oxfam NOVIB, Global Fund for Women, Fund for Non-Violence, Oxfam GB South America, Development and Peace, E-CHANGER.

São Paulo, March 2009.