

WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER



INDEX

1. Editorial.....	1
2. First WMW Regional Meeting for Africa: a great success!.....	2
3. 2009: The Year of WMW Regional Meetings.....	4
4. IC Meeting: Preparation for the 2010 Action and mobilisation.....	5
5. Heading towards our 2010 International Action: Quebec, Brazil, Support materials.....	6
6. Theoretical analyses and practical demands: another step taken in the preparation of our 2010 International Action.....	7
7. The struggles of Arab women.....	8
8. Building Solidarity between Iraqi Civil Society and the Global Movement.....	9
9. Worldwide protest against the arbitrary imprisonment of activists in Turkey.....	10
10. Summits strengthen the organisation of the indigenous struggle.....	11
11. WMW Activists Taking the Initiative in Nepal.....	12
12. The Palestinian women, the Israeli women and their struggle	12
13. WMW taking part in the global mobilisations for 2009!	14
14. Agenda / Next Edition.....	16
15. Contact Us.....	17

EDITORIAL

Dear sisters,

For the last few years we have been in agreement that our movement should aim to act as a rapid response network, showing and acting out our solidarity with women and men around the world in emergency situations, sharing information between our NCBs, Participating Groups and allies, and mobilising for demonstrations and other actions (petitions, vigils in front of embassies in our countries, boycotting of transnational companies, etc) that aim to pressurise governments or companies that threaten the rights of those who organise themselves and who live in dignity.

In the last month we've unfortunately had to put our aspiration for such a network into practice several times: to demand the release of Turkish activists, the majority of whom are trade-unionists, illegally arrested at the end of May (22 of whom remain in prison, including 4 World March of Women sisters, see article below); to protest against the extreme violence and repression perpetrated by Alan García's government against Indigenous peoples in the Peruvian Amazon (see article below); and to support the Haitian people's struggle for a fair minimum wage and against the violence perpetrated by the

UN 'peacekeeping' forces in their country.

In addition to these periods in which we need to express our solidarity in an agile and pertinent way, we also recognise the need to struggle alongside our allies against the criminalisation and violent repression of social movements. During our 2010 actions, as well as affirming our demands and commitments assumed at international and national levels, we can also express our solidarity by denouncing concrete cases of women's and people's rights violations, and by demanding that the governments and parliaments in our

countries and regions are held responsible.

We have also been closely following the situation in Iran and Honduras, via the reports we have been receiving from activists and friends of the World March of Women. As a consequence of different factors and political processes, our sisters are living through critical moments in their countries, moments in which our solidarity and our capacity to disseminate the information and analyses of those who are struggling for justice and freedom, is crucial.

Women on the March until we are All Free!

FIRST WMW REGIONAL MEETING FOR AFRICA: A GREAT SUCCESS!

The 1st African Meeting of the World March of Women held in Bamako, Mali, from the 28th to the 30th of May 2009, brought together 59 women from 20 countries: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Republic Central Africa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Western Sahara, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe. A measure of success of this first regional meeting was the significant number of young women delegates.

We benefited from the presence of sisters from Belgium, Brazil, France and Portugal, as guests and interpreters, which permitted the exchanges between delegates to take place in three languages - French, English and Portuguese. The media coverage, in French, was organised with the support of the IFO (International Francophony Organisation) and the mobilisation of volunteers from Mali, France and Burkina Faso (the young journalism student who received a study scholarship as part of our 2005 International Action).

The meeting was opened with interventions from the organisers and national authorities, followed by cultural presentations. The work then continued with a discussion of the current socio-political context (financial crisis, global economy, the alternatives for Africa). In terms of alternatives, it is clear that Africa must have confidence in itself and in its values, for example to consume



Women from over 20 African countries participated in the 1st African Regional Meeting of the World March of Women.

what we produce and strive for a leadership that takes into account the needs of women. The afternoon was dedicated to Action Area Working Groups (see below).

The second day was devoted to the organisation of the 2010 International Action, to alliances and to joint work in the region. Three countries are already preparing their marches for March 2010: Mali, Mozambique and Western Sahara. Other countries will carry out debates around this issue shortly. In addition, the WMW organisations in the Democratic Republic of Congo are sharing information in their country about the mobilisation in October 2010 and preparing a national WMW meeting. Furthermore, the activists of Kenya are

preparing a caravan that will start in Nairobi and end in Bukavu, Sud Kivu, DRC.

To monitor the construction of the WMW in Africa - starting with the 2010 Action - a regional coordination committee was set up; it is composed of regional representatives of the International Committee (Nana Aicha Cissé and Wilhelmina Trout), a representative of East Africa - Diane Waituika Wanjiru of Kenya; a representative of West Africa - Dabire Awa Ouedraogo of Burkina Faso; a representative of South Africa - Emanuela Sidumo Paulo Mondlane of Mozambique; a representative of Central Africa - Cameroon Martha King; and a representative of North Africa - Ourida Chouaki of Algeria.

On the 30th May, activists from the March in Africa joined more than 200 women from the 6 communes of Bamako in a very colourful event accompanied by tam-tams. There were peulh, sonrai, touareg, bamanan, manding, khassonké, dogon, and soninké women, among others. The demonstration began at the Aoua Keita Centre, and finished at the Labour Exchange, two symbolic places for Malian women: Aoua Keita was the first woman deputy in Mali, a pioneer in the struggle for the advancement of women in the 1960s. During the riots of 1991, the people, the striking workers, students and women, gathered in front of the Labour Exchange, where the new president - having overthrown the former dictator- met with them.

The Action Areas as perceived by African women

Economic Autonomy: a Strategic Issue

The women shared their experiences: income-generating activities, women's participation in land reform, the promotion of the solidarity economy, capacity building, development and popularisation of the Family Code, the demand for rights to inheritance, education for women and girls, literacy, promotion of free childbirth services, and mutual health funds are seen as opportunities for African women to free themselves from financial dependency. These requirements relate to the right of all workers to employment and fair remuneration, as well as women's access to land and inputs.



A demonstration in the streets of Bamako ended the meeting.

The Common Good and Public Services: the Struggle against Privatisation and for Changes in Behaviour.

Proposed actions: demand access to basic social services; development or integration in committees to fight corruption; conducting information campaigns, education and communication; the struggle against privatisation and exploitation of natural resources. Our priority demands are universal access to drinking water and basic sanitation, land reform and the promotion of agro-ecology. Commitments were also made by women to create and strengthen links between women in urban and rural areas through direct sales initiatives, markets of producers; collective preparation and distribution of food, reaffirmation of the principles and the strengthening of the struggle for food sovereignty; the denunciation of the peoples of the north as debtors of their consumption and lifestyle; and the struggle for changes in patterns of consumption and production.

Violence against Women: Focusing Actions on Awareness-raising and the Struggle against Impunity.

A number of activities were mentioned: awareness-raising with regards to the transmission of HIV AIDS; awareness-raising among parents about early and forced marriages; awareness-raising about the practice of female circumcision; education regarding the law on sexual harassment.

The following priorities were mentioned: the creation of a law against female



Members of the African Coordinating Body, elected during the meeting: Wilhelmina, Emanuela, Diana, Ourida, Awa, Marthe and Aicha.

circumcision in countries where it doesn't exist and the monitoring of its implementation; and the implementation of severe punishment for perpetrators of violence against women in situations of war. Participants were equally committed to strengthening cohesion and solidarity among African women and to preventing the cooptation of political movements by governments.

Peace and Demilitarisation: Avoiding Instrumentalisation.

Several activities were recorded, such as the awareness-raising of the dangers of small arms, the recovery and destruction of weapons of war, repudiation against the proliferation of light weapons and small arms; the carrying out of a project to support the reconciliation and socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants, survivors of genocide and genocidal prisoners.

Issues identified as priorities were the implementation of effective and severe punishments for perpetrators of violence against women in situations of conflict (armed forces, paramilitary forces, guerrillas, the United Nations "blue berets", as well as spouses or parents); women's participation in the processes of prevention and conflict management, and in the process of peacekeeping and post conflict reconstruction; and the withdrawal of foreign military in countries where conflicts have ended and where military agreements have expired.

Finally, participants also recommended creating 'alert committees' made up of civil society organisations.

2009: THE YEAR OF WMW REGIONAL MEETINGS

In the past, it has been Europe as a region who has managed to hold regular coordination meetings, with delegates from the various National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) coming together every 6 to 8 months. In other regions, WMW activists from different countries have made the most of other opportunities - social forums, events organised by allies, International Meetings, etc - to get together and discuss the WMW beyond national borders, but have never had the opportunity to meet within their regions as a movement.

2009 has changed that scenario... As you will have read above, our first regional meeting - in Africa - took place in Bamako, Mali from the 28th - 30th May, organised jointly by Aicha and Wilhelmina, as representatives of the continent on the International Committee,

and CAFO (Coordination of Malian Women's Associations and NGOs), one of the organisations that coordinates the NCB in Mali. In August it will be the turn of our Americas region to hold their regional meeting, in Cochabamba, Bolivia, from the 10th - 12th. Delegates from around 15 NCBs (from both South and North America) will meet to debate the regional politico-socio-economic situation, discuss our four Action Areas, strengthen and consolidate the WMW in the Americas, construct a regional work plan and plan the Americas' actions and mobilisations in the framework of our 2010 International Action.

The Asia-Oceania regional meeting will take place from the 10th - 12th September, in Quezon City, the Philippines. It will be a chance for NCBs in the region (which includes South Asia, Southeast Asia

and the Pacific) to meet for the first time outside of WMW International Meeting spaces, and to invite sisters from countries in which the WMW is present but not yet organised as an NCB to join them to debate the consolidation and expansion of their region and to share plans for 2010. In the following month, on the 24th and 25th October, the European coordination will meet for the second time this year (see

the March edition of this newsletter for news from the first meeting), this time in Thessalonica, Greece. As well as a political debate around peace and demilitarisation, the European sisters aim to strengthen the WMW's presence in Eastern and Northern Europe by inviting women from these countries to participate, and finalise their regional plans for the 2010 International Action.

IC MEETING: PREPARATION FOR THE 2010 ACTION AND MOBILISATION

Finalisation of the texts referring to the four WMW Action Areas for 2010, and discussion about Regional Meeting preparations (in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Oceania, and Europe) were the main themes addressed in the meeting of our International Committee (IC), held from the 1st – 4th April in São Paulo, Brazil. This was the first meeting following Galicia, and all members were present except Gladys Alfaro (Mexico) who was unable to participate due to health problems. Members also participated the previous day, the 30th March, in a demonstration held as part of the Global Week of Action Against Capitalism and War.

The meeting also included a debate about the current financial crisis, free trade agreements in Africa, and regional integration as an alternative response to the crisis, as well as issues related to the day-to-day life of the WMW: evaluation of the International Meeting in Galicia and finalisation of the report; planning of the evaluation of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan; IC and International Secretariat (IS) financial reports; and information about alliances (World Social Forum, global actions, and participation in other events).

With an eye toward the 2010 International Action, as well as the Action Area texts, suggestions were made regarding the proposed logo presented by the IS, which was finalised following modifications (see article below). The IS, together with the IC, will also work on communication strategies to make



The first IC meeting of 2009 debated the crisis and concluded the Action Area texts for the 2010 action.

collective stories of women's struggles visible.

With respect to the proposal to use an item of clothing as the object that unifies and symbolises the 2010 Action, we are awaiting more details from Quebec regarding how this would work in practice, as it is still not clear in what countries and at what time of the year (March or October) actions will take place. It is known that actions are planned to take place in March in Brazil, the Philippines, Mali, and Pakistan, and in October in Quebec and Europe, but National Coordinating Bodies are still meeting to make these decisions and have not yet provided more details.

Finally, an exchange took place regarding the format of the action in Sud Kivu (Democratic

Republic of Congo) in which it was emphasised that before any decision is made, it is important to wait for the regional African meeting and organise a visit to the region to evaluate the situation and logistic possibilities. The

importance of ensuring the massive presence of African women in this mobilisation was also emphasised, particularly from the Great Lakes region, as well as international representation from every region of the WMW.

HEADING TOWARDS OUR 2010 INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Quebec:

The Quebec WMW National Coordinating Body has begun preparations for the 2010 International Action. They will march from the 12th – 17th October with a large national meeting in Rimouski on the Bas Saint-Laurent.

There are important spaces for the regions of Quebec in the WMW. Activists are working in all these regions to organise regional marches that will culminate on the 17th October 2010, in the city of Rimouski. In addition, they are elaborating the demands they will make as the WMW in the country. The member groups of the Quebec National Coordinating Body will be consulted regarding the demands, before they are adopted.

A work commission was created to concretise the solidarity-dress project in order to make a contribution at the international level.

Brazil:

A national seminar, with WMW participants from 12 Brazilian states, along with representatives of partner movements, took place in São Paulo from the 15th – 17th May. Three days of experience sharing and debate around the history of the WMW in Brazil, the current socio-politico-economic situation, our Action Areas and demands related to them, and the 2010 International Action.

Building on a decision already made to organise a 10-day march (from the 8th – 18th March 2010), as part of the 3rd International Action, participants discussed both the political and logistical characteristics of the of march they will carry out. Some of the aims agreed on are to:

- Organise a march from the city of Campinas to the city of São Paulo, a distance of around 100km, with the participation of 3000 women;



Working commissions and a timetable of preparation were decided on by the Brazilian women, as the WMW heads towards the 2010 march.

- Guarantee that the march is national in character, despite the fact it will take place within the state of São Paulo;
- Dialogue with society (media, city populations where the march will pass, etc), making visible the WMW's anti-capitalist, anti-patriarchal, anti-racist struggles;
- Organise a process of capacity building and awareness raising before and during the march, the idea being that during the march participants walk in the morning and take part in activities in the afternoon;
- Show Brazilian women's solidarity with women in other countries (to demonstrate international solidarity);
- Denounce, demand and propose alternatives;
- Negotiate with local and federal governments for concrete changes in the lives of Brazilian women.

On the final day of the seminar, participants discussed the fundamental role of the WMW in each Brazilian state in the preparation of the march, in order for it to be a success. Activists committed themselves to returning to their states to debate the results of the national seminar, strategies for fund-raising (each state will be responsible for their journey to Campinas – transport and food), the number of participants who will take part in the march, and a calendar of training and capacity building activities. Furthermore, three national commissions were formed – finances, political networking (with trade unions, allies, local authorities, etc), and methodology – in order to facilitate the preparation of the march.

Support Materials for the 2010 action:

We encourage you to regularly visit the section on the website in relation to the 2010

Action to look at the texts, logos, and other materials that can be used to prepare for the action:

 <http://www.marchemonddiale.org/actions/2010action/en>

Folder

Versions of the 2010 pamphlet are now available on the WMW website in German, Arabic, and Kiswahili, meaning that the folder is now available in seven languages. They are available for download at:

 <http://www.marchemonddiale.org/actions/2010action/en>

National Coordinating Bodies who have translated the pamphlet into their local languages can send the translations to the following e-mail address for inclusion on the website: communication@marchemonddiale.org

Logo

The 2010 International Action logo is also ready (see image)! Along with the logo, the International Secretariat has also prepared a set of mobilisation materials (posters, stickers, and letterhead). Download the models of these materials at the WMW website address given above.



THEORETICAL ANALYSES AND PRACTICAL DEMANDS: ANOTHER STEP TAKEN IN THE PREPARATION OF OUR 2010 INTERNATIONAL ACTION

In May, we were very pleased to send you the final versions of our four Action Area texts (Violence against women, Peace and Demilitarisation, Women' work and the Common good and public services), the result

of a long, fruitful and very democratic process of collective construction involving activists from the WMW at all levels. The aim of these texts is to mobilise women and groups of women in our countries, to debate our Action

Areas within the WMW and with our allies, prepare ourselves theoretically for the 2010 International Action and plan our national and regional activities in 2010.

The texts include not only theoretical analyses in relation to each Action Area (including our feminist position), but WMW international demands for 2010, and our commitments (actions, campaigns, etc) as a movement. The demands and commitments laid out in them have been carefully thought through and heavily debated and have been left general, rather than specific, on purpose. The idea being that they are adapted at

regional and national levels, in accordance with local realities and contexts. The regional WMW meetings that have taken / will take place this year will be one opportunity for NCBs to discuss how these demands and commitments can become a reality in each of the countries in your region. We encourage you to debate them in your countries beforehand, so that your delegate(s) in these meetings is(are) able to represent the ideas of your NCB.

The Action Area texts are available for download in word and pdf formats on our website: <http://www.marchemondiale.org/actions/2010action/text/en/>

THE STRUGGLES OF ARAB WOMEN



Resistance against foreign occupation and religious, patriarchal conservatism are debated at the Rabat seminar.

The World March of Women participated in a Maghreb Mashreq Forum preparation seminar on the 4th and 5th May, in Rabat (Morocco), just before the World Social Forum International Council meeting (from 6th to 9th May). One of the workshops was dedicated to discuss the situation of women in this region inhabited by Arabs, Amazigh, Berber, among many others. Around 30 women from various countries exchanged experiences in relation to the history of feminist struggles and everyday life of women in their countries. Up to the present day, women's struggles are related to both national liberation struggles (especially during the 60s and 70s) and resistance against foreign occupation.

A number of women are now more present in public spaces, but the majority are still

financially dependent on their fathers, husbands or brothers. Many women are in precarious employment or are unemployed. The situation has worsened with the privatisation of public services, a product of structural adjustment policies and "free" trade agreements.

Women are active in the trade union movement, and in struggles against neoliberal politics. They have participated in diverse initiatives in favour of schooling of women and girls, for their access to health services, and against violence against women. They mobilise against the trafficking of women and against the use of sexual violence in conflict situations and as part of the criminalization of social movements, as a way to humiliate and spread terror.

Several campaigns have been conducted to change the laws and legal dependence of women on the men in their families. Large-scale mobilisations to change the Family Code in 2000 in Morocco, within the framework of the World March of Women, ended in victory. Since then, feminist organisations have been working to ensure that this victory is put into practice in the daily lives of women. In Iraq women denounce the 41st Article of the Constitution that allows civil status to be based on ethnic identity and thereby opens the door for *Shari'ah* law in some parts of the country (see article below on the meeting of Iraqi Civil Society). In Algeria, women condemn the Family Code approved in 1984, which

institutionalised the inferiority of women. But the correlation of forces restricts them from proposing amendments to the worst articles. There is also a campaign involving Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt to guarantee the right of mothers to transmit their nationality to their children.

Feminist groups in most countries in the region perform services such as the taking in of women in situations of violence, and the support of women's more urgent needs in wartime. They dare to talk of subjects considered taboo. But the

challenge is how to bring these activists closer to grass-roots women, the poorest women and those who live in rural zones, where the influence of religious conservatives continues to increase. The actions and demands for women's rights coincide with the growing presence of Islamic conservatives who are extremely conservative in their insistence of the maintenance of the patriarchal family.

Within the framework of the Maghreb Machrek Social Forum, several thematic forums have been suggested, such as a Women's Forum in Jordan.

BUILDING SOLIDARITY BETWEEN IRAQI CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Invited by the Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative (ICSSI) to participate in a meeting of Iraqi Civil Society organisations (36) and international social movements and NGOs (Non-governmental organisations), two World March of Women activists from Italy and Pakistan spent three days – from the 28th – 30th March (close to Rome, Italy) – debating and sharing strategies for the strengthening of links and solidarity between Iraq and the world.

As part of the programme, Iraqi and international participants discussed the challenges (socio-economic, political, human rights, legislation and capacity-building) facing Iraqi civil society, and highlighted the following priorities for international awareness-raising campaigns (from the official meeting report, not a complete list):

- A campaign for the abolition of law 150 that limits workers rights to establish trade unions;
- A campaign to improve women's position in society and for the abolition of Article 41 in order to eliminate legislative obstacles to gender equality;
- Support for the capacity building of Iraqi Civil Society;
- Development of projects and networks for peace-building, non-violence and internal reconciliation processes;
- Promotion of youth participation in decision-making.

Five working groups (WG) were also



Participants debated challenges facing Iraqi civil society.

organised as part of the meeting programme, including one on Women's Rights in which the WMW participated (as the only international, feminist movement present). The main problems facing women in Iraq today, as identified by the eight Iraqi women's groups that took part in this WG, are violence against women, illiteracy, access to health services, unemployment (lack of economic empowerment) and legislation. With regards to legislation, the current challenge in the struggle for an end to women's oppression in the country is the abolition of Article 41 of the new Constitution which opens space for religious extremist interpretations of Islamic law (such as *Shari'ah*) that "could sanction the stoning of adulterous women, allow underage girls to be forced into marriage and permit men to abandon their wives by declaring, "I divorce you," three

times (<http://articles.latimes.com/2007/oct/09/world/fg-constitution9>)”.

Since the meeting, we have been in email contact with 4 of the 8 women’s groups who were present, sharing WMW documents and information with them and encouraging

them to share with us how we might be able to support their struggles, particularly with regard to the abolishment of Article 41. We hope to strengthen our links to these women’s groups as they continue the struggle against the extreme patriarchal oppression of women in their country.

WORLDWIDE PROTEST AGAINST THE ARBITRARY IMPRISONMENT OF ACTIVISTS IN TURKEY

35 Turkish trade union members and women’s movement activists were illegally detained at the end of May by Turkish police forces who invaded the offices of the Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (KESK) and the Egitim Sem Teachers’ Union (KESK member). Items apprehended in the operation include computers, CDs, and work-related documents of the union and the feminist movement, such as those related to maternity leave, violence against women, and sexual violence.

No formal accusations were filed against the men and women arrested, nor were they informed of the reasons for their detention, as it was alleged that the legal process was confidential.

We began a worldwide solidarity and protest campaign that included the sending of letters of repudiation to the Turkish authorities and actions in front of Turkish embassies and consulates. In Turkey the trade unions affiliated to KESK carried out strong demonstrations and their lawyers disputed the Court decision to arrest these women and men. Following these actions, 21 activists were released in the first week of June, while 14 have remained in prison ever since (including two members of the World March of Women: Elif Akgul, former women’s secretary for the Teachers Union, and Yuskel Mutlu, retired teacher and member of the Human Rights Association and the Turkish Peace Assembly).

Since then, however, some of those originally arrested and then released have



Protests in front of Turkish diplomatic representations were held in Switzerland, and in Brasilia and Sao Paulo (photo) in Brazil.

been re-arrested. One of the KESK members was detained on 8th June while visiting her friends in prison and was released on the same day. Then on the 16th June, 8 others were re-arrested. There are currently 22 activists in prison arrested in Turkey.

Social movements around the world, including the international women’s movement and the trade union confederations, see this action of the Turkish government as a violation of the democratic right to organise and an obvious attempt to criminalise social movements. Actions throughout the world continue to demand the immediate release of all detainees and an end to the repression of opposition movements in Turkey, including women, and human rights groups and trade unions, as well as the return of all the equipment and documents apprehended.

SUMMITS STRENGTHEN THE ORGANISATION OF THE INDIGENOUS STRUGGLE

Approximately 1,500 women participated in the I Summit of Indigenous Women held in Puno, Peru, at the time of the IV Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala (27th – 31st May). The meeting culminated in the adoption of a mandate and a series of resolutions that make up the indigenous women's agenda for the coming years. Altogether, the summits of women, children, youth, and the general summit gathered together 6,500 participants representing indigenous groups from 22 countries of Abya Yala as well as Africa, the United States, Canada, the Arctic Circle, and other parts of the world.

Preventing violence against women; integral agrarian reform as a way to guarantee food sovereignty; defence of, and services for, immigrant men and women that take cultural diversity into account; land and territory titles; decriminalisation of coca leaf cultivation; and the removal of foreign multinationals from indigenous territories were some of the demands agreed upon at the women's summit, as well as the demand for more political information and spaces for sharing experiences in different spheres (economic, political, social, cultural, and others).

Finally, a Continental Coordinating Body of Indigenous Organisations was created and it was decided that the next events will be organised in Bolivia in 2011 during the V Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala.

Indigenous women from WMW member groups in Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, and – in greater number – from Peru were present at the event. Two days prior, the Assembly of Femucarinap (Federation of peasant, artisan, indigenous, and salaried women of Peru), a WMW member group,



Women from Femucarinap, member of the Peruvian WMW, participated intensively in the indigenous summit, in the streets as well as in debates.

took place, and various proposals – such as land titles for women, criminalization and solidarity – were discussed to present at the Summit.

The final declaration of the Summit of Indigenous Women is available (in Spanish only) at: http://www.movimientos.org/enlacei/iv-cumbre-indigena/show_text.php?key=14473.

Reviews and additional information about the summit can be found at: <http://www.movimientos.org/enlacei/iv-cumbre-indigena/>

Criminalization and death of indigenous women

During the summit, strong denouncements were made against the persecution of social protest and the official repression of demonstrations and actions in defence of territorial rights and the lives of indigenous peoples, especially those in the region of Bagua (Peru), in the Amazon jungle, where the local people had been on strike for more than 50 days. A few days following the summit, on the 5th June, the



Members of WMW groups in Guatemala and Peru participated in the meeting.

violent repression of protesters resulted in more than 30 deaths (read more at: <http://www.marchemondiale.org/news/mmfnnewsitem.2009-06-11.1947480103/es>).

Following an intense International campaign of solidarity and protests, the government of Peruvian president Alan Garcia agreed to meet some of the demands of the indigenous movement (the suspension of two legislative decrees among 102) and restarted the negotiation process. Even though this decision came too late and with the loss of many lives, the movement continues to negotiate and mobilise: a National Andean, Amazonian, and Popular Strike is planned for the 7th, 8th and 9th July.

WMW ACTIVISTS TAKING THE INITIATIVE IN NEPAL

Formed in early February 2008, the Nepali National Coordinating Body has been very active in the first half of 2009 (despite their biggest challenge being fund-raising), with the organisation of the following activities:

- Production and distribution of a leaflet to raise awareness about the WMW;
- A NCB meeting, held at the Civic Concern secretariat in Kathmandu, to discuss the issues of Violence and Poverty,

Peace and Demilitarisation, Women's work and Common goods and access to resources;

- Zonal interaction meeting on the 8th March 2009;
- Rallies during the 8th March in different districts and parts of the country such as Dang, Khotang, Morang, Jhapa and Kathmandu districts;
- Solidarity-building with other organisations and participation in World Human Rights Day

THE PALESTINIAN WOMEN, THE ISRAELI WOMEN AND THEIR STRUGGLE

Palestinian women: linking feminist and national liberation struggles

For over 40 years Palestinian women have lived under occupation. Before this, they endured the *nakba* or the great catastrophe of ethnical cleansing in 1948, during the creation of the Israeli State; the memory of this massacre still lives on and is transmitted from generation to generation. For this reason, the government of Israel tries to prohibit the celebration of the *nakba*


or any reference to the term.

The Palestinian women live under the oppression of colonisation, of "judaisation", the constant appropriation of the Palestinian territory – both physically and psychologically – a living and mental space occupied by the oppressor. The Palestinian women live in a daily prison, their "freedom" of movement is limited to the 700 check points that poison their daily life, and their sight is blocked by the


Jewish colonies that occupy the heights of their hills and invade their immediate surroundings to a greater and greater extent. *"If Gaza is an open-air prison because of these terrible blockades, all of Cisjordania is a huge concentration camp..."*

The Palestinian women participated to a greater extent in the first intifada, a pacific popular uprising, and to a lesser extent in the second intifada, dominated by armed resistance. Will there be third intifada? There's no doubt... but it is impossible to predict how. For now, the Palestinian people stubbornly refuse to disappear... and the Palestinian women continue their struggle.

The contact organisation of the World March of Women in Cisjordania

The Union of Palestinian Women's Committees ( www.upwc.org.ps) is a grass-roots organisation / movement of progressive women (4000 members in Cisjordania and Gaza) working within a democratic and secular framework, with the objective of constructing civil society based on the respect of women's rights. Ramallah, where its headquarters are based, is under the authority of the Palestinian government, of which they declare themselves independent and whom they criticise freely. The UPWC defines itself as an "integral part of the Palestinian women's movement and the Palestinian people's national struggle". This double struggle – not one or the other, but both – leads them to analyse the situation of women (violence, discrimination, poverty, etc.) in the context of oppression and colonisation and of what this situation implies for the lives of Palestinian women and men, in terms of relationships of inequality and violence, in terms of humiliations and the internalisation of the occupation.

The UPWC movement offers a huge variety of services and activities in response to women's needs: civic education; financial aid and access to jobs; continuity of studies, particularly for young women in rural areas; nurseries and summer camps for the

young; support for female breadwinners and correspondence with Palestinian families who are abroad; cultural exchange, etc (check their site). Its members insist on the importance of the political awareness of women, the appropriation of communication, leadership and negotiation skills to be able to increase their participation in all decisions and electoral process as voters and candidates. This organisation is very active in the boycott, disinvestment and sanctions campaign and its president is part of the Palestinian National Coordination Committee ( www.bdsmovement.net).

Israeli women: the fight of feminists "against" the Israeli project of occupation / colonisation / apartheid

Young and not so young Israeli feminists are those who criticise Israeli society most strongly. At the same time as the Women in Black ( <http://www.womeninblack.org/>) continue carrying out their weekly vigil against the occupation, one of its co-founders has explained the process of "colonisation" of the Israeli women's movement for peace by the liberal feminists, inspired by left wing Zionism, with whom it is impossible to work when the objective is to attack the occupation and colonisation. A new generation of young feminists – more radical and influenced by pacific activism – are now occupying the political scene. The Coalition of Women ( www.coalitionofwomen.org) obviously denounces the injustices committed to the Palestinians through a number of actions. But the organisation also acts against the impacts of the systematic violation of international and Israeli rights by the Israeli government and the army, on Israeli society, i.e. maintaining it as a heavily militarised, chauvinist and sexist society, developing a "culture of war" in all aspects of life, a sexist culture that is reproduced in social relationships and

in particular, among men and women.

The young Israeli women denounce this society, in which the State positions itself as above all laws, and does not hesitate in violating them while ignoring democracy; a society that is racist against its own citizens – primarily Jewish Arabs, but also Western Jewish and Northern Africans, who are considered “inferiors”. They organise campaigns to raise awareness in Israeli society of the cost of the occupation and colonisation (see the *Who profits?* campaign) and are willing to support an internal version of the international campaign of boycotts, disinvestments and sanctions (*Boycott from within*).

The organisational style - horizontal and collective -, the concern with giving a place and a voice to discriminated women, the philosophy and the choice of actions remind us of young rebellious women and radical feminists involved in actions of peaceful resistance all over the world.

What we can do: Our solidarity with these movements of Palestinian and Israeli women can be expressed in several ways and through a number of



A delegation from Quebec and Canada, made up of 14 civil society organisations (including the FFQ and the WMW) visited occupied Palestine and Israel from 13th to 18th May to strengthen their solidarity with the Palestinian people.

In the photo, the delegation's demonstration in the station at the Érez frontier, having not been allowed to enter Gaza. This gesture is part of the international sit-in movement to stop the Gaza siege.

actions: delegations of groups of women in occupied territories, particularly in Gaza, and invitation of Palestinian feminists to our countries; dialogue with Israeli feminists; support of resistance actions such as Bil'in (<http://www.bilin-village.org/>); and **most importantly** getting involved in the international boycott, disinvestments and sanctions campaign against Israeli politics. Let's get to work!

WMW TAKING PART IN THE 2009 GLOBAL MOBILISATIONS!

With the 8th March protests, women inaugurated the 2009 calendar of common struggles, as defined during the Social Movements Assembly held during the World Social Forum (WSF) in Belém do Pará. In addition to International Women's Day, the calendar of struggles in the first semester included the 17th April (International Day of Peasant Struggle), the 1st May (International Workers' Day), and, especially, the week of the 28th March to the 4th April (the Global Week of Action

Against Capitalism and War).

In the spirit of the Declaration of the Women's Assembly, also held during the WSF, protests on the 8th March in various countries positioned themselves this year against the capitalist model of development, which is responsible for the crisis currently affecting the entire planet, and which is sustained by the oppression of women. Among other important themes in the mobilisations were denunciations of the superficial responses to the crisis, which

only serve to concentrate wealth and reproduce the patriarchal, racist, capitalist system.

To view a list and photographs of some of the actions organised by WMW Participating Groups and NCBs on the 8th March, see the link:

 <http://www.marchemondiale.org/actions/2009/03082009/en>

The WMW also participated in the Global Week of Action Against Capitalism and War, which was marked by three events:

***28th March:** Protests related to the summit meeting of the G-20, group composed of representatives of the central banks and governments of the 20 countries representing two thirds of world trade and population and more than 90% of world GNP, as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The G-20 met in London, England, at the beginning of April.

***30th March:** Day of protest against the war and the crisis and in solidarity with the Palestinian people. This date marks Palestinian Land Day in memory of one of the Israeli massacres of Palestinians in Galilee, in 1976. It was chosen to give momentum to the campaign of boycotts, disinvestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel.

***4th April:** This date marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), a military alliance composed of European countries and the United States. NATO met on the 3rd and 4th April in Baden-Baden and Kehl, Germany, and Strasbourg, France.

Protests were held during this week in various countries around the world, including Germany, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Catalonia, Spain, the United States, France, Greece, the Netherlands, India, Italy, Norway, the Basque country,



In São Paulo, members of the WMW International Committee participate in a protest demonstration on the 30th March organised by trade unions and social movements in the country

Pakistan, Quebec, Kenya, and the United Kingdom (Scotland and England).

Mobilisations in the second semester

The next large protest event agreed upon by the Social Movements Assembly will be on the 12th October, date of mobilisations in defence of Mother Earth, against the commodification of life, environmental contamination and the criminalization of social movements. The 12th October marks the arrival of the Spaniards in the Americas and has been converted by the indigenous peoples of this continent into a day of protest against ethnocide and capitalism, destroyer of the planet. The week of demonstrations ends on the 16th October, World Food Day. Various demonstrations in cities and rural areas,



The WMW was present in Strasbourg with activists from France, Macedonia, and the United Kingdom.



A meeting of the Social Movements Assembly held in Rabat (Morocco), in May, during the WSF International Council meeting. Participants from Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, United States, Morocco and Mexico evaluated the mobilisations of the first semester of 2009 and discussed the preparations of actions to come.

sit-ins in front of United Nations offices, discussion forums, and other activities are planned for this week. The Climate Justice Tribunal is also scheduled to take place on the 16th October in Cochabamba, Bolivia, as part of this week of protest and of the strategic activities planned with regards to the Kyoto Protocol Conference in Copenhagen in December.

All the WMW NCB and Participating Groups

are invited to organise actions in alliance with other groups and social movements during this week, which will include – for us in the WMW – the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on the 17th October, with is also an important moment of mobilisation for our 2010 International Action.

AGENDA

8th - 10th July: G8 Meeting, L'Aquila, Italy

20th - 21st July: Americas Social Forum Hemispheric Council meeting, Asuncion, Paraguay

21st -22nd July: Crisis and Integration Conference, Asuncion, Paraguay

23rd July: Southern People's Summit, Asuncion, Paraguay

10th - 12th August: WMW Americas Regional Meeting, Bolivia

21st - 23rd August: Forum against Agribusiness, Asuncion, Paraguay

NEXT EDITION:

WMW Americas Regional Meeting, Cochabamba, Bolivia

Forum against Agribusiness, Asuncion, Paraguay

Continuing preparations for our 2010 International Action, 2010

Climate Change

Please send us news and photos of your NCB's activities and mobilisations by the 10th August to be included in the third 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
Website: www.worldmarchofwomen.org

IS Team:

Alessandra Ceregatti, Celia Alldridge, Júlia Clímaco, Miriam Nobre

Texts written by:

Alessandra Ceregatti, Assa Diallo, Celia Alldridge, Emilia Castro, Miriam Nobre, Narayan Niraula, Lorraine Guay, Yildez Temurturkan

Translation and Revision:

Anne Kepple, Celina Lagrutta, Claudine Charran, Daniela Martins, Martin Carbonell, Mónica Salom, Natasha Salles, Sylla Nenê Mariama

Photos: Alessandra Ceregatti, Júlia Clímaco, Ehab Lotayef, WMW Archives

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, July 2009.