



WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

A strong feminist, anti-capitalist movement, present in many countries, that builds a form of internationalism rooted in local struggles, and that puts an end to the isolation of communities suffering directly from the impacts of militarization and the advance of capitalism in all aspects of life. By strengthening international solidarity, we strengthen local struggles. We want a World March of Women where all women feel represented in the feminism we are building. This is how we see the WMW in 2015.

In order to achieve this, we will continue in the streets and the communities, raising our voices and organizing women, even if we face financial difficulties that represent further obstacles to our actions against the system. These difficulties will not, however, overpower our desire to move forward until all women are free!

INTERNATIONAL

8th International Meeting in Philippines: a success! Next destination: Brazil!



A demonstration against violence against women on the 25th of November, a public forum around our four action areas and a cultural evening closed the 8th WMW International Meeting, which was held in Quezon City, Philippines, under the slogan "Women on the March: Strengthening Collective Action, Changing the World".

The meeting brought together 80 women – including delegates, workers and guests from allied movements and partner organizations – from 34 countries: Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Galicia, Germany, Haiti, Holland, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Macedonia, Mali, Mozambique, New Caledonia, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Portugal, Quebec, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, USA, Vanuatu, Western Sahara and Zimbabwe.

After reviewing the current international context, we discussed our strategies for 2012-2013, also including actions and mobilizations at the regional and the international levels, all of which in connection with an evaluation of the results of the Third International Action and its follow-up.

We discussed and approved our new constitution and by-laws, which now further advance our anti-capitalist and anti-patriarchal nature, as well as more clearly defining the roles and rules of operation for the National Coordinating Bodies and International Committee. We also elected the new International Committee members.

Finally, we decided that the 9th WMW International Meeting will be held in Brazil in 2013 and the following one in Mali. Before that, we will be meeting in many forums for coordination and mobilization with allied social movements.

Look below for the photos and other details from the different experiences of the International Meeting.



Our actions in the face of today's context

Holding a common day of action from a feminist perspective – the 24 hours of action for peace – and linking it to our four action areas (peace and demilitarization, women's work/women's economic autonomy, violence against women, and the common good and public services); conducting a campaign against transnational mining corporations; organizing feminist training activities; and devising a self-financing policy to ensure the WMW's autonomy were the strongest ideas that came up on November 21st and 22nd, based on the discussions held in working groups addressing lessons learned, challenges faced and achievements made in recent years' actions, with consideration of the challenges, strategies and actions for 2012-2013.

Many delegates and guests from the Asia-Oceania region expressed a need to build a common strategy, including peasant, indigenous and working women, against the United States' offensive in the Pacific region. This drew our attention to our need, within the World March of Women and in other social movements, to improve our capacity for analysis and regional action, and to continue learning from one another at the international level.

The conservative offensive against women's rights is something cross-cutting throughout all the regions. In the 2000s, we saw a period of progress for women at the legal level. So we, at the WMW, drew attention to the fact that we can only celebrate advances when these have a concrete impact of the lives of all women. Today we are also experiencing a formal backlash. In Galicia, the Family Law bill does not recognize the various forms of families or the shared responsibility of the parents; in Mali, the proposed Family Code was not approved, under pressure from conservative sectors that do not recognize the rights of children born outside wedlock; and our support for the Filipinas' struggle for the approval of the Reproductive Health bill is, in fact support for all of us.



Participants from Americas



Participants from Asia-Oceania



Participants from Europe



Participants from Africa and Arab World / Middle East

Throughout 2011, we also saw that women's active participation in the Arab Spring does not necessarily translate into better conditions for consolidating or increasing women's right in the legal sphere. This is because the tremendous social mobilization has not resulted in political organizations capable of running for election to the bodies that will be developing the new constitutions. Latin America's experience of converting mobilization into political organization is a good reference, although it has its own share of contradictions: for instance, the fact that mining corporations are occupying more and more territory and that agribusiness is expanding, is worrisome. At the same time, mobilization organized by civil society –

nationally and internationally – is what allows us to stop the advance of capital in our territories.

Four Working Groups have been set-up to develop and deepen ideas and analyses with regard to: how to continue the debate around lesbian rights; Canadian

mining companies; the impact of US military presence on the lives of women; and collective self-financing initiatives. We will be sending more Working Group news soon.

Approval of the new constitution and by-laws

With every action, the WMW transforms itself, gains strength and faces new challenges. As a result, our constitution and by-laws also require changes to reflect the current identity of our movement. That was the item on the agenda for November 23rd, which enabled an in-depth political debate about the WMW's identity, objectives, values and principles. The process was led from a perspective of consensus building, and when that was not possible, we took a vote. To be implemented, each proposal had to be approved by at least two-thirds of the National Coordinating Bodies present at the meeting. Among the changes made, there is now an explicit mention to the feminist, anti-capitalist and anti-patriarchal nature of the WMW. Another important change is the more precise

definition of the role of National Coordinating Bodies and the creation of the position of International Committee substitutes.



Delegates decide on the constitution and by-laws

The new version of the WMW constitution and by-laws will be soon available on our website, at: www.marchmondiale.org

WMW Philippines ensures participants' immersion in local culture

From the welcome dinner on November 20th to the cultural evening on the 25th, the Filipina women gave all of the participants the opportunity to continuously experience their practical alternatives for change.

All of the meetings were managed by women activists from WMW member organizations and from cooperatives of women survivors of prostitution and sexual violence, including the preparation and distribution of meals, which used only ecological, non-industrialized, chemical-free products.

Fish, vegetables and rice are the foundations of the Filipino diet.

During the presentation of the feminist movement in the Philippines, on the night of November 23rd, they gave us another sample of their creativity: through a play created by the militants, they narrated their

country's history of colonization and foreign occupation, and the continuous resistance of women against these different forms of violence.

Independence was finally achieved in the 1970s, in a fight that would cost the lives of many women and men. Today, feminism is struggling for deeper changes in the country and in women's lives. Yesterday's battles against imperialism and patriarchy

are embodied today in the struggle for equality, against prostitution and the commodification of women's bodies, for peace and demilitarization, for food sovereignty and against the agribusiness that is being set up in the country.



Open ceremony, the 21st



Presentation of the feminist movement in the Philippines, the 23rd



Lunch time!



Tribute to the local International Meeting support team

International Secretariat (IS) transfer

After a presentation of the IS's activities between 2008 and 2012, as well as its financial report and budget, on the afternoon of November 22nd, we began to discuss the process for transferring the IS. We reviewed the history of the first transfer (from Quebec to Brazil), approved in 2003 in India, and finalized in 2006 in Peru. We also reminded the delegates of all of the activities performed by the IS, in order to keep the WMW up and running at the international level, including, among other tasks, monitoring of the organization of ongoing WMW actions (including the alert network), maintenance of a flow of information in the three working languages (via the website, newsletters and messages), the



Miriam Nobre, today's International Secretariat coordinator

organization of international meetings and financial management (to maintain our minimum operating structure).

The transition plan provides that, after the determination of the new IS country, we will start the concrete transfer process, which includes exchanges with the current IS, as well as discussions on the relationship between the NCB hosting the IS and the IS itself, financial administration of the IS budget, etc.

The IS transfer will follow the below timeline:	
Now to July 2012	Deadline for NCBs to submit their application to host the IS
August 2012-early 2013	Visits of an IC or IS member to meet with the NCBs that have applied to host and coordinate the IS
3 months before the next International Meeting (in 2013)	We will send a full list of all the candidates to host the IS, to each NCB
2013 – 9th International Meeting (in Brazil)	Selection of the new IS location and election of the new IS Coordinator

2010 International Action videos!



Presented during the 8th International Meeting, two videos have been compiled to display the lessons learned and images of the actions carried out around the world during 2010. The first video – *The Third International Action of the World March of Women – 2010* – provides a 9-minute summary of the various actions carried out at the national, regional and international levels around our four action areas, which also paid homage to women's historical participation in liberation struggles all over the world. Please, click to watch the video, available in: [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

The second video – *Feminist International Solidarity in Action* (around 12 min) – produced by the WMW in Africa, not only summarizes the 2010 actions in Africa, especially the closing event of the Third International Action in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also relates the historical participation of African women in the international construction of our movement. The video is available in [English](#) with French subtitles. There is also a version in [Portuguese](#) with subtitles in Spanish available online.



In the Philippines, the delegates from the WMW in Brazil also presented a 15-minute version of the documentary *Seguiremos en marcha até que todas seamos livres!* (“Women on the March until We are All Free!”), available in Portuguese, with English, French and Spanish subtitles. It shows daily life during the long march that drew more than 2,000 activists from the 27 Brazilian states from March 8th to 18th, 2010. In addition to testimonials from the participants, the video also shows images of the march: training activities, debates, public events and cultural activities. Click on the links to watch the video in: [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

We understand that all these videos are useful tools for the construction of the WMW as permanent movement in our different countries. In the Philippines, we delivered a copy of them to each participant (on a USB flash drive and DVD). We ask all the WMW groups to let the IS know how you are using the videos in your different activities and to share your reactions (comments, criticism and suggestions), by email to: info@marchemondiale.org

International Committee (IC) election

In the afternoon of November 24th, based on the new constitution and by-laws approved the previous day, delegates for each region elected their new IC members, plus one substitute, per region.



From left to right, above: Aicha, Miriam, Tamara, Françoise, Adèle, Yildiz y Khitam. Below: Judite, Emilia, Jean y Souad.

Composition of the new IC:	
Africa	Graça Samo (Mozambique) and Nana Aicha Cissé (Mali). Suplente: Adele Safi (DR Congo)
Americas	Emilia Castro (Quebec) and Sandra Moran (Guatemala); substitute: Tamara Columbie (Cuba)
Asia/Oceania	Jean Enriquez (Philippines) and Salima Sultana (Bangladesh); substitute: Françoise Caillard (New Caledonia)
Europe	Judite Fernandez (Portugal) and Yildiz Temurturkan (Turkey); substitute: Natasha Dokovska (Macedonia)
Arab World / Middle East	Souad Mahmoud (Tunisia); substitute: Khitam Khatib (Palestine)
International Secretariat Coordinator	Miriam Nobre (Brazil)

We salute and thank the former members for their hard work and their continued commitment to the WMW from their home countries and working groups:



Gladys Alfaro (Mexico)



Michèle Spieler (Switzerland)



Saleha Athar (Pakistan)



Tereixa Otero (Galicia)



Wilhelmina Trout (South Africa)

International coordination of young women

On the night of the 22nd, our young participants gathered to share information on how young women are organizing in their different countries. The Europeans reported on their experience with the Young Feminists' Camp, held in France in July 2011 (poster below). The Brazilians spoke of the "Batucada" (drumming) as an irreverent political tool specific to the organization of youths within the WMW. The Canadians explained the process of organizing the Rebelles meeting.



As follow-up to that discussion, we will be encouraging the presence of

international delegations at the next European Young Feminists' Camp, which will take place in 2012.

The interpreters



The interpreting team (from left to right: Clara, Ioana, Ann, Laurel, Julia and Sara) facilitated exchanges between the delegates throughout the meeting. Our most heartfelt thanks to them! For the first time, we also had interpretation into Korean and Bahasa Indonesia.

November 25th: stop violence against women!



The last day of the meeting began early: at 6:30 am, we were ready to take our “jeepneys” into the center of Manila, where the demonstration organized by the WMW, in conjunction with other Filipino social movements, marked the international day against violence against women.

The slogans used in the demonstration, which brought nearly 1,200 women and men together from around the country, included: stop the criminalization of undocumented migrants, stop domestic violence and violence carried out by American soldiers, repeal the US Army’s Visiting Forces Agreement, stop the violence against Philippine Airlines workers, trafficking of rural women and prostitution, militarization, hunger and food insecurity, homophobia and discrimination against women with disabilities.

On top of this was a demand for the immediate adoption of the reproductive health (“RH”) bill, which aims to guarantee universal access to information, contraception and maternal care. More than 10 years have passed since the first draft of the bill was submitted to Congress and, since then, there has been a strong reaction from the Catholic Church and conservative sectors of society, against its approval.

In the afternoon, a public forum at the Law School brought together Filipina and international activists, who shared their visions on the subjects of Peace, Demilitarization and Violence Against Women and Gender Justice, Access to Commons and Women’s Work, before an audience of about 200 – comprising activists from different movements, as well as students and university professors.

Alliances expand and strengthen our struggles

On the morning of November 24th, we reviewed the role of alliances in building our agendas, in strengthening women in mixed movements, and in developing solidarity and a feminist perspective, together with men from these same movements. The general assessment was that alliances were a strong component of the international action in 2010 and, in view of the current context, joint work between different movements has become even more important today.

Several of our allied movements were present in the Philippines: CADTM (Committee for the Abolition of Third World Debt), Via Campesina, Friends of the Earth, GGJ (Grassroots Global Justice Alliance), ITUC

(International Trade Union Confederation), World Rainforest Movement, Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights, AWID, Rebelles, Coalition DCF West Africa/Ceci and Focus on the Global South. A representative from Oxfam Novib, one of the entities that support the work of the WMW, was also present at the meeting.

In addition to sharing with us about what their alliance with the WMW means to them, these movements and organizations presented proposals for future work with us. Among the various points on each of their agendas, one was shared by all of the groups: the struggle to end violence against women.



This **Newsletter** is edited by the World March of Women International Secretariat (IS) and distributed by email.

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