



# WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER

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## Editorial

In building our movement, we are looking at ways to establish more concrete ties between our international and local dimensions. This newsletter shares some of our experiences in working toward this goal.

One strategy is to strengthen our regional dimensions, based on debates and coordination, as was the case with the Young Feminists of Europe Camp and the Americas Meeting. Another is to build regional spaces for the coordination of social movements and, at the same time, to express the WMW's positions there and establish relationships with new groups and countries. This is the case of the WMW's participation in the Southern Africa People's Summit and the World Social Forum Council in Tunis, involving a strong representation of the Arab World.

We are also looking to create connections between countries in different regions, based on solidarity and shared struggles. For example, WMW resistance is taking place in Galicia and the Philippines, against attacks on reproductive rights. The denunciation of nuclear energy, for its risks to the environment and to people's health, has mobilized our sisters in Japan. During Rio+20, alongside denunciations of false solutions to the climate crisis, one of the WMW's slogans was "NO to violence! No to violence in the home. No to nuclear violence." We are continuing to build bridges based on resistance and solidarity.

### INTERNATIONAL

## Young feminists from 12 countries meet in a camp in Romania

The second Young Feminists of Europe Camp took place in Moroieni, Romania, from August 6 to 16, 2012. The participants included more than 50 young women from 12 countries and territories: Armenia, Basque Country, Catalonia, France, Galicia, Germany, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland and Turkey. Young feminists from Brazil and Chile were also in attendance, to further strengthen our movement.

The participants led workshops on subjects like attacks on abortion rights, feminicide and honor crimes, safe sex, self-defense, lesbian politics, women and the environment, women, militarization and peace, and radical struggles against sexual violence.



In our general assemblies, we organized our shared living arrangements and discussed an agenda

of common struggles and the WMW's agenda, such as the European campaign against debt and austerity. On Saturday, August 11, we held a rally in downtown Targoviste that included performances, batucadas and slogans from the various participating countries. Young WMW activists from Kenya, the Philippines and Tunisia were unable to join the camp, because their visa applications had been denied. We denounced Fortress Europe and its immigration regime, which encourages trafficking in women in order to service men sexually, and the over-exploitation of their work. "We affirm that we, young feminists of Europe and of the world, are working to dismantle the system and to overcome our prejudices, and are working in our own societies – which are influenced by racist and patriarchal ideologies – to find new ways for all human beings to live free from violence and oppression."

## AFRICA

### Actions targeting the extractive industry and violence against women

The WMW took part in a large people's rally on August 16, held simultaneously to the meeting of Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique. Among other issues, participants addressed the extractive industry and violence against women. These themes were also covered by the Peoples' Summit in parallel to the SADC meeting.

In addition, the WMW in Mozambique coordinated with various regional associations in order to discuss the adoption of

a women's manifesto and political agenda in view of the SADC.

A national seminar on August 10 covered the issue and identified goals, such as for women to account for 50% of participation in all areas of the economy, and gender equality in institutions, electoral processes and observatories, and Consultative Councils, as well as the need for increased access to economic resources and loans.



## ASIA-OCEANIA

### Herstoric fights in Asia-Oceania: For women's reproductive rights and for nuke-free societies

When the 8th International Meeting was held in Manila last November 2011, a major battle we supported was for the passage of the Reproductive Health (RH) bill in the Philippine Congress. As we marched under the scorching heat, we shouted with our Filipina sisters that this law be passed to mandate local government units (LGUs) to guarantee access to reproductive health services, particularly for poor women and women with disabilities. The bill would provide for adequate emergency obstetric and neonatal care, including in crisis situations, such as post-abortion complications. It would also mandate age-appropriate sex education in formal and non-formal educational structures.

However, the Catholic Church has mounted strong opposition to passage of the bill in the past decade, using Sunday masses as platforms for their anti-RH campaign. Most recently, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) warned Catholic school teachers who "contradicted the Catholic doctrine," in the wake of 192 professors from a Jesuit school signing a statement supporting the RH bill. The World March of Women **Philippines** issued a statement supporting the Ateneo professors, invoking academic freedom. A

major hurdle overcome was the majority vote by the House of Representatives on August 6, 2012, to move the bill to amendments. In the meantime, male senators continue to demonize women's groups that are pushing for the RH bill, even as female senators are pushing for its immediate passage.

Over in Tokyo, **Japan**, the World March of Women members joined tens of thousands calling out, "Sayonara, Nukes" (Goodbye, Nuclear Energy), on July 16, 2012, on the heels of a nuclear reactor being restarted. The crowd of some 170,000 demonstrators was considered to be the largest rally following the Fukushima nuclear tragedy on March 11, 2011. The huge rally denounced the nuclear mafia, who are making immense profits from the plants, and asserted that there is no sense in insisting on energy that only serves the few (particularly in urban areas), at the expense of the lives of many.



## AMERICAS

### In the streets to fight mining corporations and pro-coup attitudes

The WMW and other social movements in **Peru** continue to mobilize against the firm Yanacocha's CONGA mining project in the Cajamarca Region in the north of the country. On May 31, the region's population began an indefinite strike. Since that date, they have been violently repressed, with blows, insults, arrests and imprisonment. This brutal attempt to weaken and criminalize the resistance did not have the desired effect, and the protests continued. On June 29, under slogans like, "When women unite, the mines are screwed," thousands of women demonstrated their opposition to the project, which threatens and contaminates their water resources and, as a result, places their very survival – and that of their families – at risk, along with their means of subsistence (plants, animals and land).

Protests in solidarity with the northern population occurred throughout the country. On July 13, the WMW went out into the streets of Lima on the Day of Struggle and Mobilization, which was also marked by regional strikes. At that time, the WMW demanded an investigation of the circumstances and responsibilities at the root the events, and expressed our support for the struggle to defend water, land and territory, as well as traditional modes of food production and consumption. The WMW urged Ollanta Humala's government to respect the everyone's human rights and to suspend the state of emergency and cease the repression.

The resistance to pro-coup philosophy in **Paraguay** has been another central topic for the WMW in the Americas. On the June 22, Fernando Lugo – legitimately



elected President in 2008 – was impeached following a political trial recognized as a parliamentary coup d'état, a process widely supported by the press linked to the local oligarchy and corporations. In the Americas, we experienced a very

similar situation in Honduras, exactly three years ago. In solidarity with the Paraguayan women and people, the World March of Women joined the international condemnation of the latest attack on their country's democracy-building process. We call on the WMW's National Coordinating Bodies to express their solidarity and support towards the Paraguayan people's peaceful resistance, especially our sisters with actions demanding, above all, the NON-recognition of Federico Franco as President of the Republic, due to his seizure of power through the manipulation of the Paraguayan Constitution and the resulting violation of the institutional democracy established in the country in 2008.

Click to [read the full WMW call to action](#).



### Guatemala organizes WMW 3rd Americas Regional Meeting

From August 31 to September 2, delegates from the WMW's National Coordinating Bodies will be meeting in Guatemala City to discuss the regional context, our challenges as movements, and our organization, and to define actions in response to these. We will be talking about how to follow through on the decisions made during the 8th International Meeting in the Philippines, particularly the organization of the 24 hours of feminist action across the world.

## EUROPE

### Progress in preparing for the campaign against austerity measures



A WMW European Coordination Meeting was held in Romans, France, from June 1-3, with the participation of National

Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) from nine countries. In addition to debating the organization of the second Young Feminists Camp, the meeting moved forward in our preparations for the European campaign against debt and austerity. Other issues on the agenda were the follow-up to Democratic Republic of Congo and the 24 hours of feminist action across the world.

It was decided that the campaign will be launched on October 4, with a common action on October 17, and will end on March 8, 2013. Another key date for the campaign will be on December 10, when we from the WMW will hold our 24 hours of feminist action around the world. On that day, our European sisters intend to focus on health as their main issue.

The slogan for the campaign was also finalized: *“Governments owe a debt toward women, not toward banks. Marching together for decent, sustainable lives.”*

Among the various actions already carried out for the campaign is a video with testimonials by women, and the Portuguese NCB’s initiative to organize a feminist, anti-austerity protest. The campaign is being built in alliance with other social movements and organizations such as CADTM. A first step was the creation of a discussion paper on the situation of women in different countries across Europe, as a result of political responses to the crisis. In this document, we demand our rights and affirm our alternatives. Click here to read the draft text:

<http://www.marchemondiale.org/actions/2012/camp-ign-europe/en/>

Further details on the campaign will be coming soon. Click [here](#) to see images from the meeting.



### Galician women marching for the right to open, free abortions

After the Partido Popular (People’s Party) government announced its intention to reform the current Organic Law 2/2010 on sexual and reproductive health, which allowed for voluntary termination of pregnancy, the

World March of Women, working with other women’s organizations, movements and collectives in Galicia, launched a campaign entitled, “Choice Sets Us Free.”

[www.feminismo.info](http://www.feminismo.info) | [nacional@feminismo.info](mailto:nacional@feminismo.info)  
**concentración** o partir do 7 de agosto  
**todos os martes ás 20:30h**  
**diante do MARCO**



Each Tuesday evening since August 7, women have gathered before the MARCO (Contemporary Art Museum of Vigo), to show their total disagreement with the restrictions on the current Abortion Law. “We women will not rest until the few advances made in recent years have become immovable and entrenched by present and future governments, as something that is normal and

fundamental to any democratic, egalitarian society”, they affirm.

In their manifesto, Galician women demand to be treated as people, not as uteri, which is why they are defending their right to choice, concerning their bodies and motherhood, not only in Galicia, but around the world. “If we cannot choose for ourselves, we cannot be free.”

Click here to read more (in Galician):

<http://www.feminismo.info/webgalego/campanas/342-decidir-faiños-libres.html>



## MIDDLE EAST-ARAB WORLD

### Tunisians on the alert in defense of their rights; WMW coordination continues in the Arab World

On August 13, thousands of women demonstrated in multiple cities in Tunisia – even in very remote, small villages – to defend their rights. Tunisian feminist associations celebrated the 56th anniversary of promulgation of the Personal Status Code, with a demand to withdraw a proposed Constitutional article referring to gender complementarity rather than gender equality. The article, adopted by the National Congress's Rights and Liberties Committee, opens the door to challenging women's right to work since, in this domain, "complementarity" can be interpreted as meaning that women's work is in the home and men's work, in the outside world. The article in question could also open the door to a challenge of the principle of monogamy.

On Avenue Bourguiba in Tunis and throughout the country, women stood up against the ban on demonstrations, driven by their need to respond to the major threats to Tunisian women's rights and to civil liberties, in general. Restrictions are gradually being instituted, threatening freedoms in the name of moral standards, sacred values and public order. These women also stood by the mobilizations that took place in Sidi Bouzid, the birthplace of the Tunisian Revolution, and elsewhere, demanding solutions to

high unemployment, power cuts and poverty. "Men and women alike stressed a single demand: gender equality. We are proud of this, and it has given us even more strength to continue the fight," says Fathia Hizem of the WMW in Tunisia.

#### WMW in the Arab World

On the occasion of the Preparatory Assembly to the World Social Forum (WSF) and the meeting of the WSF's International Council, held from July 12 to 17 in Monastir, Tunisia, we had the opportunity to meet with sisters from Algeria, Iraq, Mauritania, Morocco, Western Sahara and Yemen, and to discuss their participation in the WMW. According to WMW International Committee member Souad Mahmoud, the idea is to create and/or strengthen up to six National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) in the region by the end of September (bearing in mind that Mauritania is already very active) and, later on, to organize a regional meeting. One goal is to re-establish contact with feminist associations in Jordan, via the intermediary of our Palestinian sisters. The World Social Forum Free Palestine (*see the article on this specific topic*) will be another key time of joint action for the WMW and Arab women.

## ALLIANCES AND MOBILISATION

### WSF Free Palestine: Focus on solidarity strategies

Since the start of the year, social movements, associations and Palestinian solidarity fronts in Brazil and around the world have been working on mobilization and preparations for the World Social Forum Free Palestine, scheduled for November 28 through December 1, 2012, in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The objectives of the forum are to:

1. Show the strength of solidarity with the Palestinian people's calls to action and the diversity of initiatives and actions aimed at promoting justice and peace in the region;

2. Create effective actions to ensure Palestinian self-determination, the creation of a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, and the fulfillment of human rights and international law, by:

a) ending Israeli occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall,

b) ensuring the fundamental rights and full equality of Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel, and



c) implementing, protecting, and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties, as stipulated in UN Resolution 194; and

3. Provide a space for discussions, exchanges of ideas, strategizing and planning, in order to improve the structure of solidarity.

The forum will hinge on five main points:

- Self-determination and the right of return;
- Human rights and international law;
- BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) and strategies of struggle;
- For a world without walls and without racism; and
- Social movements and forms of resistance.

In addition to central conferences on these five themes, the program for the meeting includes self-managed activities and a major rally on November 29, in honor of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

We at the WMW are actively participating in the Brazilian Organizing Committee and its Secretariat, and have already begun preparations for a self-managed women's activity within the context of the event. Faced with various challenges in obtaining access to resources, we are working to build a forum with a strongly activist character. Registration for the forum will open in September for organizations and activities, and in October for individual participants.

Click [here](#) to read the full announcement.

For more information about the WSFFP, please visit the website at <http://www.wsfpalestine.net/>

## Mobilization: the focus of our presence at the Peoples Summit Rio+20

*With a delegation of more than 700 women from 15 Brazilian states, as well as from Argentina, Chile, Cuba, France, Honduras, Mozambique, Peru and the Philippines, the WMW made our presence known in the streets and the debates during the “Peoples Summit for Social and Environmental Justice: Against the commodification of life and nature and in defense of the commons”, which took place from June 15 to 23. Our presence in Rio de Janeiro emphasized mobilization and action in the streets, considered by social movements as the best way to break the media siege and discuss our proposals with the public at large, non-organized people, and the city’s formal and informal workers.*

Then, on **June 18**, under the slogan of “Women against the commodification of our bodies, our lives and nature!” we launched the journey of mobilization with a rally that we at the WMW planned with women from mixed-gender movements and other feminist organizations. The march brought more than 10,000 people together and was the first key moment in which we shared our message with all of society: we need to develop equality and eradicate violence against women, in order to move beyond the capitalist, patriarchal, homophobic and racist model, today translated as the green economy.



“We need to overcome this model but, in order to achieve that, we must overcome the gender-based division of labor, which does not recognize our work as work, and which says that we must perform care-

giving out of love, because we share a burden of guilt. We are demanding the recognition of women’s work and also an end to the gender-based division of labor in the productive world,” said Nalu Faria of the WMW, in the final speech at the rally in Carioca Square.

“The question is not only about environmental sustainability but also about building another production and consumption model that will ensure equality. To achieve this, we must be free from all forms of oppression, and must consider not only harmony with nature but also harmony between human beings – men and women. That means putting an end to violence, that men must no longer be at the service of capitalism and must stop beating and harassing us. It means having the freedom to express our sexuality and exercise our abortion rights. That is why we will continue to struggle until we have brought about all the necessary transformations, and to strengthen our struggle against green capitalism and insist that our demands be recognized, including by our brothers in the social movements!”



**BNDES** – At the end of the march on the 18th, the WMW held a protest against a branch of BNDES (National Bank of Economic and Social Development), which belongs to the Brazilian State, pointing out that the bank “finances the sexual exploitation of women.” BNDES is the main funder of many mega-projects in Brazil that are responsible for various environmental and social impacts in its different regions.

At the end of the action, when women were leaving the site in front of BNDES, thousands of representatives of indigenous peoples from various regions of Brazil suddenly appeared and entered the bank’s premises. The WMW’s feminist activists joined their protest. Several indigenous women tried to go through a door in order to present their complaints and grievances to the authorities. After this strong direct action, and after negotiations with the security guards and a BNDES spokesman, a group of 12 indigenous people were seen by a bank representative.



Watch the video of the protest against BNDES at: <http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/5636-ellas-al-frente?lang=es> and <http://youtu.be/iWHKaXPkdxE>

On the afternoon of **June 20**, more than 80,000 people had joined the demonstration to denounce the fiction of the official Rio+20 conference, taken over by transnational corporations that control national governments and that are incapable of promoting social and environmental justice. Graça Samo, of WMW Mozambique, called out for an end to capitalism and neoliberalism, and to corporations like Vale, which only serve to increase violence against women, the exploitation of our peoples, and extreme poverty, and which deprive us of our means of survival: our bread, our homes and our hope. “What are our governments talking about at Rio+20? What hope can there be for our daughters and sons, when our homes, our economies, our lands and our lifestyles are being destroyed?” Graça urged the governments at Rio+20 to listen to us and to use their power to return our freedoms to us, and promised that, “We will be on the march until we are all free!”



The actions continued each day. In the early evening on **June 19**, Batucada Feminista opened the action/performance against multinational corporations, which brought together some 2,000 people in front of the headquarters of Vale, the mining company considered to be the worst firm in the world. The protest also denounced other major corporations the likes of Petrobras, Natura, Bunge, Syngenta, Souza Cruz, Monsanto, Shell, Unilever and Pfizer, companies that appropriate and profit from natural resources, which rightfully belong to everyone. The action culminated in the launch of a report on Vale’s unsustainability, prepared by the International Network of People Affected by Vale. This report relates the company’s damages and impacts on water and energy resources, and health and safety. In Mozambique, for example, more than 760 families were displaced by the expansion of Vale’s mining mega-projects in 2010.



Via Campesina issued a call for all peoples to join forces, and to fight and denounce – in their countries and their communities – the main destroyers of the environment and the Earth, and the usurpers of the peoples’ natural resources: capitalism, the banking industry and major transnationals like Monsanto and Cargill.



On the morning of June 20<sup>th</sup>, we joined the demonstration against the displacement of Vila Autodromo's community, which symbolizes the struggle of many communities around the world that are resisting against landgrabbing. Click to watch a video of this demonstration: <http://albatv.org/Gran-jornada-de-movilizacion-en.html>

## Convergence plenary, assemblies and communications

In addition to demonstrations, WMW sisters were actively involved – as moderators and report-writers – in the convergence plenaries occurring on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, which focused on five topics:

- Plenary 1 – Rights, Social and Environmental Justice
- Plenary 2 – In Defense of Common Goods and Against Commodification
- Plenary 3 – Food Sovereignty
- Plenary 4 – Energy and Extractive Industries
- Plenary 5 – Work: For Another Economy and New Paradigms for Society

The outcomes of these plenaries then contributed to the assemblies organized around three main lines: the structural causes of, and false solutions to, the crisis (19<sup>th</sup>), our solutions (21<sup>st</sup>), and our activist agendas and campaigns (22<sup>nd</sup>).

Click here to read the final document from the assemblies (including the results of the plenaries) in [English](#), [Portuguese](#) and [Spanish](#).



Plenary 5 – Work: For Another Economy and New Paradigms for Society

Graça Samo, WMW International Committee member, speaks at the final assembly (our agendas of struggle and campaigns)



Above, WMW Brazil young activists broadcast the program called "Boteco das Minas"

We also participated in the summit's media coverage initiative, entitled "Social Movements Communications Convergence," producing articles, photos and videos throughout the events, as well as daily radio broadcasts (in English and Spanish). Click here to download the convergence newsletters, with articles produced in different languages (but especially in Spanish): <http://www.marchemondiale.org/themes/biencommun/Rio20>

Click to access the **Convergence Photo Gallery**: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/convergenciacomunicacion>

**Note:** All pictures published in this special article on the summit are part of the material produced in the framework of the Social Movements Communications Convergence



## Workshop: “Feminism, Agroecology and Food Sovereignty: Building New Paradigms for Sustainable Human Life”

Understanding that the work performed by women is central to society – and not just “help”, “support” or “complementary” – is crucial to the construction of an alternative to the capitalist, racist and patriarchal development model, as seen today in the so-called “green economy.” This was one of the points that were stressed



during the self-managed activity on June 16, jointly organized by the World March of Women (WMW), Via Campesina (VC), the Women’s Working Group at the Brazilian National Agroecology Coalition (ANA), the women of the Andean Coordination of Indigenous Organizations (CAOI), CONTAG (Brazilian Confederation of Agricultural Workers), the Feminist Economics Network (REF), the Rural Working Women in Northeastern Brazil (MMTR-NE) and the Brazilian Forum on Food Sovereignty and Food Security (FBSSAN).

Based on our analysis and on the testimonials of the women in attendance, we concluded that what is now being called the “green economy” is just one in a long history of changes that began to occur in agriculture in the 1950s, changing it into something that is becoming more and more artificial. This series of changes began with the so-called “green revolution,” characterized by the expansion of single-crop cultivation, pesticides and, more recently, “biotechnology,” with the production of artificial, transgenic seeds produced in

labs, which tear down the boundaries between species. And this process has only accelerated in the past 20 years, after Eco-92, leading to an alarming increase in the power of large corporations and in their various strategies for controlling nature.

Green capitalism has had a substantial impact but, at

the same time, there is resistance among people seeking to create alternative models. Women are not passive in this arena: they are political actors in the story, mobilizing in women’s movements and groups, building networks, participating in combats in regions suffering from these processes, and negotiating with governments. Our activist sisters at CAOI, the WMW and MMC (Rural Women’s Movement) shared their experiences of how to contend with capitalism’s encroachment on their lives and their territories. All of our conversations confirmed the importance of agroecology and the possibility of feeding the world through another type of food production and consumption – different from the dominant model, with its social and environmental impacts.

Click here to read the full article on this activity (in Spanish only):

<http://cupuladospovos.org.br/es/2012/06/feminismo-elemento-central-en-la-construccion-de-las-alternativas-a-la-economia-verde/>

### The struggle continues!

We left the summit with the certainty of having made women’s struggles and presence more visible, and that we demonstrated our capacity for self-organization and strengthened our network of alliances. The fight against green capitalism continues, as seen in the struggle against the commodification of our territories – our bodies, our lands and nature – as well as in the

development of our alternatives (food sovereignty, agroecology and a solidarity-based economy). During the summit, we also made progress in our fight against corporations, joining the campaigns, “Free the UN from Corporate Co-opting!” and “Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity” (click to [read the call to action](#)).

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

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