



WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER

Volume 15 – Number 3 – September 2013

Editorial

The decisions made during the World March of Women 9th International Meeting in São Paulo, Brazil, launched a new cycle - full of challenges - in the history of our movement, now in its adolescence. For the past 15 years, the aim of building a large movement of grassroots women that is capable of changing the balance of power in society, to bring an end to the systems that generate poverty and violence against women, has borne its fruit.

Challenges have presented themselves in the form of many different types of conservative advances. While finalising this newsletter, we witnessed attacks by terrorist groups in Kenya and Pakistan, with numerous victims, many of them women and children. Every day, our sisters in those two countries are resisting the violence committed against them and the imposition of discriminatory religious norms. In 2010, sisters from Pakistan managed to maintain the mobilisation that they had been preparing, despite a bombing attack; they did not allow the violence to intimidate them. Our sisters in Kenya – who had mobilised against electoral violence in 2007 – filled a bus in 2010 to go to Bukavu in a show of solidarity with Congolese women in resistance.

We also received news this week that the Honduras “justice” system has sentenced the COPINH (Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras) activist, Berta Cáceres, to prison, in an attempt to stop the fight against the construction of a dam and the actions of mining companies in indigenous territories. The “Feminists in Resistance” in Honduras have been fighting since the coup of 2009.

Each visible attack by a conservative power is a response to the ongoing, historical resistance of women and peoples. The WMW is our tool for bringing unity and strengthen to us all.

INTERNATIONAL

WMW 9th International Meeting: Main decisions

The city of São Paulo, Brazil, was the epicentre of debates, actions and displays of cross-border feminist solidarity, during the 9th International Meeting of the World March of Women, held from the 25th – 31st August, under the slogan “Feminism in March to change the World!”. The IM was attended by 1,650 women from different parts of Brazil and the world, including delegates, observers, workers and guests from invited movement and organisations: ALAI – Latin American News Agency, Friends of the Earth International, AWID – Association of Women’s Rights in Development, ITUC – International Trade Union Confederation, REMTE – Network of Women Transforming the Economy, GGJ – Grassroots Global Justice, Via Campesina, Women on Web, WRM – World Rainforest Movement, WIDF – Women’s International Democratic Federation and OIF – International Francophone Organisation, OIF. The participants came from a total of 50 countries: Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Basque Country, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso,



“Women on the March Until We are all Free!”, 9th International Meeting final assembly, morning of 31st August

Canada, Catalonia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Galicia, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, England, Japan, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Nova Caledonia, Philippines, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Quebec, South Africa, Spanish State, Switzerland; Tunisia, Turkey, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, Western Sahara and Zimbabwe.



Exhibition inauguration, 25



Conferences on 26th and 27th August



The IM began with the inauguration of an exhibition on the history of the WMW in Brazil (25th August), followed by two days of conferences that offered feminist training to the movement's members (see the newsletter for more information, available at http://www.marchemondiale.org/bulletin_liaison/2013/EI-newsletter/en). The conferences were broadcast online via live-streaming, at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/marchamulheres>.

Between the 28th – 30th August, the international delegates focused their energy on making important decisions about the movement's direction, including the WMW 4th International Action (which will take place in 2015), the election of Mozambique as the next host country for the International Secretariat and of the new WMW International Coordinator, Graça Samo, as well as the election of International Committee members.

Parallel to these discussions, the Brazilian sisters organised a series of hands-on workshops, debates, cultural activities and urban actions, in addition to a demonstration of the feminist, solidarity-based economy. And the Solidarity Tent – “We are all Apodi!” – was a space for women of different countries to share their struggles with the other participants, whether against foreign interventions or the advance of conservatism and neoliberalism in our lives.

The International Meeting came to a close on the 31st August, with a large assembly of the international delegates and Brazilian participants, followed by a public demonstration of more than 4,000 women, with a march ending at ‘Republic Square’ and a closing concert with the sounds of Karina Buhr’s alternative rock group, the feminist hip hop of Cuban group Krudas Cubensi and the traditional Brazilian music of Chinelos de Couro.

Communications coverage of the IM was provided by the ‘Social Movements Communications Convergence’, with the participation of WMW activists, as well as women and men from other social movements and communications media, like Via Campesina, Radio Mundo Real, Minga de los Movimientos Sociales, ALAI and Alba TV. All of the articles produced (in Spanish, English, French and Portuguese) are available on the IM’s blog – <http://encontrommm.wordpress.com/> – which had received more than 20,000 hits by the start of September. Visit the link <http://www.marchemondiale.org/structure/9rencontre/media/> for a complete report on the communications coverage of the 9th International Meeting.

This newsletter provides a summary of the IM’s key moments and decisions.



“Batacada” (drumming) workshop



Press conference organised by Social Movements Communications Convergence



Feminist hip hop from Cuban group Krudas Cubensi, during the closing act, on the 31st August

Audiovisual materials

Pictures

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/marchamulheres/>

Videos:

WMW Brazil Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/mulheresemmarcha/videos>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ajLeX2gtlV0#t=28
<http://youtu.be/t6ZkCzbcZw>

4th International Action

The next International Action will take place in 2015, and the 9th International Meeting was the opportunity to reach some initial consensuses on the subject: that it will be an educational process that will strengthen the different regions and provide visibility to women's struggles to regain control over their bodies and defend the land and their territories. Faced with racial, classist, patriarchal and lesbophobic oppression, which seeks to take control of women's bodies and strip them of their land and territories, we will be proposing a new, feminist map of the planet, illustrating the resistances and alternatives that are being built up around the world.

Differently from previous actions, which concluded with a centralised global action in a given country, the actions in 2015 will include caravans, actions and regional meetings, held between 8th March and 17th October to which delegates from other regions will be invited. In addition, we will organise 24 Hours of Feminist Action on the 24th April, in memory of the more than 1,000 women who died this year in Bangladesh, in the collapse of the factory where they worked.



Asia-Oceania region



Europe region



Participants of the Africa region



Americas region



Arab World-Middle East region



Plenary meeting on the 28th August

Mozambique takes on the international coordination of the WMW

On the 30th August, Graça Samo, of Fórum Mulher, and the Mozambican National Coordinating Body, were respectively elected International Coordinator and host country for the WMW's International Secretariat (IS). A transition plan between Brazil and Mozambique was presented to the delegates that guarantees the IS transfer from Brazil to Mozambique by January 2014, and covers the IS's various tasks, like communication, accompaniment of NCBs and alliance processes,

facilitating and supporting the International Committee, and the preparation of the 4th International Action. Another organisational challenge for the new IS will involve gaining familiarity with the training processes developed by the WMW at the national level and, from that, preparing a proposal to extend those processes internationally.



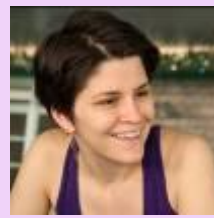
Mozambican delegates demonstrate their commitment to the International Secretariat and the WMW



Graça Samo, newly elected WMW International Coordinator, and Nalu Faria, from WMW Brazil, facilitate the assembly on 31st August, where results of the IM were presented.

Transition of the International Secretariat: Next steps

The International Meeting participants expressed their gratitude for the work performed by the current International Secretariat team in Brazil: Alessandra Ceregatti, Celia Alldridge and Miriam Nobre. Between now and the end of December 2013, the team will continue to operate in Brazil, as will continue to use their individual email addresses ending in @marchemondiale.org. After December, the email address, info@marchemondiale.org, and the website, www.marchemondiale.org, will continue to be your main channels for communication with the WMW, and new email addresses will be created for the new team in Mozambique (that will be sent out as soon as they have been set up).



A series of tasks is still under the responsibility of the IS in Brazil, like the preparation of the narrative and financial reports on the IM, as well as the organisation of the documentation covering the work performed over the past seven years. The transfer of the IS will also involve the physical transfer of a set of material assets, including the WMW's interpreting equipment, books and laptop. Finally, the Brazilian team has already started working with the Mozambican NCB on fund-raising projects to cover the IS's operations.

We, the team at the IS, would like to express our thanks for all of the kindness and affection expressed by the National Coordinating Bodies and the International Committee, and for all of the learning and experiences shared over the years of working together, and we reassert our promise to continue to support the construction of the WMW through our local activism. We will be victorious!

New members join the International Committee



Above, from left to right: Elpidia, Souad, Salima, Judite, Yildiz, Sophie, Awa, Chaba, Khitam, Sandra and Emilia, with the coordinators of the International Secretariat - Miriam (current) and Graça (newly elected)

On the 30th August, the delegates met by region to elect the new International Committee, whose new membership is now as follows:

- **Africa:** Awa Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso) and Sophie Dowllar (Kenya). Substitute: Chaba Siny (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic)
- **Americas:** Emilia Castro (Quebec) and Sandra Morán (Guatemala). Substitute: Elpidia Moreno (Cuba)
- **Asia-Oceania:** Princess Nemenzo (Philippines) and Salima Sultana (Bangladesh). Substitute: Françoise Caillard (New Caledonia)
- **Europe:** Judite Fernández (Portugal) and Yildiz Temürtürkan (Turkey). Substitute: to be determined at the upcoming Regional Meeting

- **Arab World / Middle East:** Souad Mahmoud (Tunisia). Substitute: Khitam Khatib (Palestine)
- **International Coordinator:** Graça Samo (Mozambique)



The IM also provided the opportunity to thank the departing IC members, Jean Enriquez (Philippines) and Nana Aicha Cissé (Mali), who will be continuing the fight with us from their respective countries.

International solidarity

The struggle of women and peoples from around the world were shared on different occasions during the IM, at the conferences inaugurating the feminist training on the 26th and 27th August, as well as during the activities in the Solidarity Tent, “We are all Apodi!,” between the 26th and 30th August. In those spaces, we were able to hear about and discuss women’s struggles in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cuba,

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Mali, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Western Sahara. In the face of US threats to invade Syria, we denounced the economic interests concealed by claims of defending human rights, and called for an end to the casualties and the lies. “No nation can be freed by another; only the people can free themselves.”



Morocco and Tunisia



Bangladesh



Western Sahara



Greece



Cuba



Palestine

Next International Meeting: Mali

The 10th International Meeting of the WMW will be held 2016, in Mali (Africa), a country that had previously offered to host the IM.

Denouncing of transnational corporations: Vale

On the evening of 27th August, the participants were surprised by the presence, at the venue for the IM, of a representative from the Brazilian transnational corporation Vale, who had been invited to an activity unrelated to the WMW. Vale is involved in a number of mining mega-projects in Brazil and other countries around the world – like New Caledonia and Mozambique – and is known for its repeated violations of communities' rights and for the privatization of nature. The news spread quickly, and



the participants organized a major action in which the denunciation of Vale was further enhanced by testimonials from women suffering each day under those violations. Click here to read the text and to see photos and video of the demonstration:

<http://encontrommm.wordpress.com/2013/09/03/out-with-vale-wmw-protests-against-the-transnational-company-during-the-international-meeting/>

Trade unionism on the march!

On the 25th August, at a meeting held just before the start of the 9th International Meeting, trade union women from various countries discussed the inclusion and active involvement of the trade union movement in the feminist movement, particular in building the World March of Women, and the contributions made by feminism in building the agenda and demands of the working class. During this meeting, the importance of maintaining hard-won rights from years of struggle was emphasized, and of consolidating ties between the union movement and the women's movement. The WMW has been and continues to be a vital tool in achieving this. The meeting also provided the opportunity to pay homage to feminist activist Maria Ednalva Bezerra de Lima, who played a key role in the construction of the WMW in Brazil.

Lesbians in focus

The 29th August is the Day of Lesbian Visibility in Brazil. During the IM, the history of the debate on Lesbian rights within the WMW was highlighted. Lesbophobia was explained as a system of oppression, intimately linked to capitalism and patriarchy, that which should be considered as such in both our analyses and when constructing our alternatives. The lesbian group presented a series of suggestions to the international delegates, as to how to move forward within the WMW, in the debate on sexuality, in order to further overcome barriers between women. At the same time, strong solidarity was expressed towards women who have come out as lesbians and who, as a result, have been victims of violence. The 29th ended with an evening street action in one of the main squares in São Paulo.



Our special thanks go out to...

... the team of professional volunteer interpreters, who worked throughout the IM to enable communication between the delegates, in Spanish, English, French and Portuguese: Ann Jamar, Annie Cambe, Bettina Gertum, Ioana Pop, Julia di Giovanni, Katie Whiddon, Laurel Clausen, Mónica Salom, Priscila Moura and Sarah Martin Meduiña;

... the team that supported the IS by acting as the IM's note-takers: Carmen Díaz, Joane McDermott, María Ramírez and Marie-France Benoit (photos);

... Michèle Spieler, who joined the IS team at the beginning of August, helping with communications and logistical arrangements for the IM, and to former IS team members Julia Clímaco and Nathalia Cappellini,

who supported us by performing a multitude of different tasks throughout the Meeting;

... the many other volunteer sisters, whom we will not name here, but who speak other languages and who helped in facilitating the various activities developed for the Brazilian portion of the IM, like the Solidarity Tent, and in welcoming and providing information to the international participants;

... the National Coordinating Body of the WMW in Brazil, who, despite coming up against all sorts of adversity, tackled the organisation of this large, popular women's meeting with energy, courage and dedication.

Final assembly and feminist street demonstration



The 31st August opened with a final assembly, during which we shared with the Brazilian women the decisions made regarding the 4th International Action, introduced the new International Committee, celebrated the transfer of the International Secretariat from Brazil to Mozambique, and demonstrated our solidarity with women around the world. Our sisters from the Brazilian NCB shared the results of their activities, as expressed in their Final Declaration, which is available (in Portuguese) at <http://encontrommm.wordpress.com/2013/08/31/doc>

[umento-final-do-9o-encontro-internacional-da-marcha-mundial-das-mulheres/](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajLeX2gtIV0).

Afterwards, more than 4,000 women took to the streets, on a march that started on Avenida Paulista, in São Paulo's financial district, and ended in the heart of downtown, asserting that, to change the lives of all women, it is crucial that the capitalist, patriarchal, racist, lesbophobic system be overthrown. Watch the video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ajLeX2gtIV0

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