



# 8<sup>th</sup> World March of Women International Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2011 Quezon City, Philippines

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## 1. Introduction

The 8<sup>th</sup> WMW International Meeting was held in Quezon City, Philippines, under the slogan "Women on the March: Strengthening Collective Action, Changing the World", from 21<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> November. The meeting brought together 80 women – including delegates, workers and guests from allied movements and partner organisations – from 35 countries: Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, 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.

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.

An interpreting team of six professional volunteers facilitated exchanges and the debates between the delegates throughout the meeting in the plenary sessions and working groups. For the first time, we also had interpretation into Korean and Bahasa Indonesia

## 2. Programme of plenary sessions and chairpersons

### **21<sup>st</sup> November**

*Chairs: Jean and Michele (afternoon)*

- Public Opening Ceremony
- Program Approval
- WMW Assessment and Reports (2008 – 2011 activities, 3rd International Action, Regional presentations, International presentation)
- Solidarity Night

### **22 November**

*Chairs: Miriam and Tereixa*

- WMW Challenges, Perspectives and Strategies 2011 - 2015
- WG presentations
- International Secretariat: Transfer process

### **23 November**

*Chairs: Emilia and Nana Aicha*

- Revision of WMW Constitution and By-laws
- Presentation of the feminist movement in the Philippines

### **24 November**

*Chairs: Saleha and Wilhelmina*

- Finances
- WMW Alliances
- 9th International Meeting
- Regional work plans, IC elections, etc
- Regional WG presentations
- Evaluation

### **25 November**

- Public Demonstration (morning)
- Public Forums (afternoon):
  1. Demilitarisation / Violence against women
  2. Common good and public services / Women's work
- Cultural Night



### 3. Debate on the international context and the WMW as a permanent movement

The debate began with the IS Coordinator's presentation of the document on the current context and analysis of the political path that we should follow as the WMW (the text is available at: <http://www.marchemondiale.org/structure/8rencontre/context/en>). The presentation emphasised that:

- At the present time, we are experiencing a period when capital is seeking strategies to reconstitute itself from its crisis, which is expressed in different ways. This recomposition promotes changes that will ensure that nothing changes and everything stays the same;
- One of the pillars of this strategy is to intensify the commercialization and privatization process: thus, everything is transformed into commodities – water, air, land, nature – through fictitious forms of capital appreciation via financial speculation (through carbon markets and mechanisms that displace populations and take over their territories);
- The second strategy for recreating or maintaining capital is to escalate militarisation, which results in increases in the sale of arms, security technology and technology for the prison industry; stimulus of internal conflicts and wars
- Finally, the strengthening of patriarchy through very strong attacks on the right of women to make decisions regarding our own lives, the right to abortion, to health or on efforts to approve laws where they are not yet in place.

In this context, we need a strong, permanent, feminist and anti-capitalist movement. We are seeking to build a new synthesis based on the political experiences from both the tradition, vertical and vanguardist left, which the feminist movement has historically questioned, and the horizontal mobilizations that - due to the absence of rules, mechanisms for participation or transparency in decision-making - run the risk of being equally authoritarian.

Today, two distinct processes of change can be observed. One is that of the camps and occupations, which express the idea of temporary, autonomous zones (TAZ) - moments where zones that are not based on capitalist forms of coexistence are established. One strong idea of these TAZ is that the capitalist system is so strong that it is impossible to defeat it and therefore, the most that can be done is win over given spaces or moments on a temporary basis. The other experience is that of the accumulation of strength, achieved by continuing to engage in struggles of resistance and affirming alternatives, which allow for an accumulation towards deeper changes in the structure.

It is possible to make a synthesis of these two experiences of change. Yet to do so, we must act in alliance, as one united movement fighting to change the world and women's lives, establishing minimal agreements for acting with other social movements. It is also necessary to think of alliances in terms of the political sphere, with political formations that are born out of social struggles, and we have to think of what kind of relationship we establish when these formations are elected to government. From experience in Latin America, we know that the only way to force friendly or 'more-or-less friendly' governments to fulfill objectives they have is by being strong, as an autonomous social movement, with our own thoughts, organisation and the capacity to question the path that they are taking.

Based on the introduction on the context, we discussed in small groups the lessons learned, the challenges met and the advances we have made in the actions held over the past few years as the WMW in our countries/territories or regions.

As common achievements, the following was mentioned:

- significant and growing participation of young women in the WMW
- the creation and strengthening of alliances
- diversity in terms of grassroots women's groups' participation in the NCBs (youth, indigenous, industrial workers, farmers, lesbians, etc.)
- joint work between NCBs from different countries
- work in alliance with other actors, social movements and organisations



- the subsequent strengthening and ever-increasing recognition of our movement (in society and from other social movements)

Other advances that were shared are:

- the strengthening of the fight against capitalism and liberalism
- the 'reconquering of the streets', which is traditionally the territory of young men
- the creation of a new and more significant image of feminism
- growing recognition among women themselves of the fact that they are strong and capable.

The delegates also shared many positive lessons they learned in the year 2010 and that will help us to build our movement during the next period:

- we have the social basis needed in order to be a movement in constant action, and not only during the key dates of the feminist calendar,
- the need to strengthen our work on the issue of feminism with young women,
- the importance of street actions (mobilizations),
- the importance of continuing to strengthen our solidarity with women in socio-environmental emergency situations,
- the need to be vigilant with regards to attacks on the right to abortion,
- the opportunities that we have to be inspired by other new struggles, like the young feminists camps – and the movements,
- the importance of continuing to connect the local with global challenges.

As challenges, the following appeared:

- survival as a movement with neither financial resources nor a high number of paid women (women who have paid work time dedicated to the construction of the WMW);
- maintaining our autonomy vis-à-vis funding sources while, at the same time, developing our self-financing policy further
- the need to articulate all struggles in a common agenda
- that the diversity in terms of the WMW's composition also be expressed at all levels of the WMW (youth, indigenous, industrial workers, farmers, lesbians, etc.)
- the reality of language barriers between countries and the need to find ways to overcome them;
- the need to provide political training, developed by the WMW, which includes all women's knowledge in order to redefine concepts and keep them up-to-date
- succeed in carrying out an assessment that contemplates tasks at the local, national and international levels.

#### **4. Assessment of the 3rd International Action and WMW Challenges, Perspectives and Strategies for 2011 - 2015**

On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, in work groups divided up according to language, we debated about how we see the WMW as a movement to be reckoned with for the year 2015, on what the challenges will be, what strategies to adopt and concrete actions to take over the next two years (2012-2013). A synthesis of the discussions held on each item follows below.

##### **a) How we envisage the WMW in 2015**

As a strong, permanent, feminist, anti-capitalist movement that is present in many more countries, that builds an internationalism rooted in local struggles and puts an end to the isolation of communities who suffer directly the impacts of militarisation and the advance of capital into all areas of life. A movement that acts in alliance with other mixed movements, which, in turn, assume a commitment to fight patriarchy both in their practices and discourse. A movement capable of building specific alliances with other women's organisations, while constantly reaffirming our political positions. A movement that, by strengthening international solidarity, strengthens local struggles. We want a WMW in which all women feel represented by the feminism that we are building; where there is greater presence of



young, rural, gypsy, indigenous and migrant women; and that represents all women suffering from oppression. A movement with greater autonomy and self-sufficiency in financial terms, with clear international demands, capable of expressing the struggles of all forgotten peoples. A movement that allows us to transcend victories: to go from temporary autonomous zones to permanent autonomous zones.

### **b) Which strategies**

To achieve the above objective by 2015, we must:

- Go further and expand at the local level: we have to get closer to and include the women with whom we have not yet had contact, always reaffirming that the WMW is an international movement of grassroots women.
- Revitalize the values of the Women's Global Charter for Humanity and employ the four action areas in our actions and the alliances we make.
- Think about alliances strategically, working on dimensions such as: a) the policy of alliances fighting against a common enemy; b) the inclusion of women who have been excluded from society: migrants, in prostitution, displaced, refugees, etc.
- On a day-to-day basis, work with our base in a very clear way: we are anti-capitalist and anti-patriarchy.
- Starting with our body as the most local "territory", develop an analysis of what is global.
- Invest in feminist training, update concepts from the perspective of WMW women. Reflect on how to train; we propose popular education methodologies such as the theatre of the oppressed, recuperating the experiences of feminist self-study groups and avoiding vertical training methods.
- Share among us lessons we have learned on the development of feminist alternatives; convert them into a document that explains our positions and clarifies our role in the current context.
- Strengthen our presence in the geopolitical North, such as in Canada and the United States, and also in the Arabic countries, where fundamentalists are running for election in order to occupy the place of former dictators.
- Organise self-funding and cooperative exchange activities.

### **c) Challenges**

- Include in the WMW all women who have been excluded for different reasons and increase the presence of youth
- Strengthen NCBs where they exist and work to establish them where they do not
- Deepen alliances with other mixed social movements and with women's networks
- Demystify the concept of feminism and continue on trying to contact all social struggles in order to create awareness and demand that they integrate feminism into their discourse
- Coordinate the WMW's four action areas in a way that coincides with our agenda
- Continue to exist as a permanent movement, improving our organisational structure and our actions
- Make people see and comprehend a woman's body as a territory where all power relations are concentrated
- Fight to uphold rights that have already been won
- Maintain good relations among us to maintain our self-confidence and empowerment
- Improve our visibility
- Overcome language barriers
- Continue to exist despite having to face limits in human and economic resources for continuing our work.

### **d) Actions in 2012-2013**

1) Organise a campaign – 24 hours of feminist action – linking up the four action areas in the actions held on the local level, involving lots of women at the grassroots level

- In these actions, address the issue of displaced and refugee women, the self-determination of their people and over their bodies, and the denunciation of capitalism that uses our resources and territories



- Share information locally and give visibility to the idea that the WMW supports other struggles (for example, that of the women of the Sahara and Palestine) with concrete mechanisms (such as missions and provide support to those seeking refuge)
- Use the action to collect information at the local level and elaborate a global document
- The plenary debate emphasised the importance of organizing a campaign, emphasizing that the fight against war is a 24-hour struggle. Symbolically, we can think of sentences/messages that could be exchanged between the different countries.

2) Develop a self-financing policy that helps to deepen feminist economy concepts. Going from practice to theory, develop a feminist analysis on the crisis and feminist alternatives. Systematise the proposals and demands regarding public policies in a document on the impact of the economic crisis on women's lives, which will be widely distributed. The crisis can be seen as a dynamizing element and an element of change.

3) Demand information and make the invisible visible, based on a feminist analysis: one concrete issue is the role of Canadian mining corporations in other countries, a study on their operations and the role they play in the world economy from a feminist perspective.

4) Strengthen women's role and deepen their vision on climate change.

5) Continue to be present in mobilizations organised with other social movements, always putting our feminist analysis forward. For 2012, in addition to the actions to be held in parallel to Rio+20 (in June), there will also be the World Social Forum Free Palestine (in November). For 2013, the World Social Forum, to be held in a country from the Arab world, which is yet to be defined (probably Tunisia).

6) Reflect on how to relaunch and continue the debate on lesbians within the WMW.

7) Other issues that appear and are to be deepened in a campaign or a training session are the negative impacts of the United Nations' interventions and the effects of conservatism on women's economic autonomy and control over their bodies.

8) Systematise information on the impact of military bases on women.

9) Organise a campaign on women's control over their bodies.

10) Disseminate and stimulate participation in the second European Young Feminists Camp.

#### **e) With regards to the monitoring of the UN:**

This was an issue that appeared in several groups. It was reported that since 2000, we have not chosen this as a priority, nor have we added gender without questioning the multilateral institutions' unequal and hierarchical structures. We preferred to concentrate our efforts on alternatives to be proposed by women. We recognize the importance of legal resources like the CEDAW, which must be defended and implemented and that increase in importance during attacks on women's legal rights by conservatives and religious fundamentalists. We know there is a wide diversity in the WMW; there are some NCBs that participate actively in the UN and are recognized in that space. However, as the WMW, we are not interested in acting at this level. We will be present, for example, in the activities held in parallel to the UN Rio+20 Conference, but not to do lobbying or to be in the official negotiations.

This does not exclude the possibility of participating in initiatives run by the UN like, for example, petitions or declarations that are submitted to the various UN commissions in order to intervene in the debates when there is a certain issue on the agenda (for example, the conflict in Western Sahara or when decisions are being made on the presence of UN troops in Haiti, DRC, etc.).





The WMW was an opportunity to unite many organisations in the women's movement, with a strong criticism of the process of institutionalising women's groups and of depoliticising the issue of gender, remitting it to experts and thereby creating divisions among grassroots women. The UN Cycle of Conferences and the demand for women's participation have contributed to this. There are groups in the WMW that say that we should not waste any of our time with the UN, which only uses women's groups to strengthen its agenda when it is in its interests and afterwards, disregards them. Therefore, we should only denounce its actions. Other groups hold a critical view of the United Nations' conferences but believe that it is necessary to participate in order to give visibility to this critique.

Another problem is that these UN processes demand a lot of energy, take us away from the work that we must do with our bases and require knowledge of their *modus operandi*. We have already debated over this with other social movements. Right now, we are concentrating on dedicating our energy to building our identity as the WMW, and not to following UN processes.

#### **f) Follow-up:**

It was suggested that we create Working Groups to elaborate the ideas that have been raised and to go more in depth on issues:

- on Canadian mining corporations
- on the impact of the United States military presence in women's lives
- on self-financing initiatives like pooling<sup>1</sup>.

It was also agreed that we would continue the debate on lesbian rights within the WMW. The International Committee will follow-up the suggestions for the working groups.

### **5. Report on the International Secretariat activities and its transfer process**

After a presentation of the IS's activities between 2008 and 2011, 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 finalised 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 organisation 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 organisation of international meetings and financial management (to maintain our minimum operating structure).

Questions were raised on the possibility of transferring the current team of IS workers to another country and of having an IS team in one country and the coordinator in another. It was clarified that both the IS coordinator and the work team must be located in the same National Coordinating Body that accepts to host the IS. It was also clarified that it is not advisable to extend the current IS mandate beyond the next International Meeting. The Brazilian NCB has already given its contribution to the construction of our international movement; other NCBs can do the same and contribute with their experience and political culture.

After those debates, a transition plan was approved. It 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The word "pooling" is related to the sharing of resources amongst different NCBs. For example, sharing the costs of producing different items to be sold in order to raise money for NCB activities.



<b>Timeline for the IS transfer</b>	
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

## **6. Debate and approval of the new WMW 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. The discussion 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.

The debate was very rich. Here, we are registering only the points that were debated the most.

### **a) Participation of political parties and religious groups**

There was a long discussion on whether or not to explicitly include the prohibition of the participation of political parties' women's committees and women from religious groups in the statutes. Some women asked if trade unions should be excluded due to their links to parties.

In principle, there is a common understanding that women with links to political parties participating in the WMW as activists of women's groups or associations will not be excluded. The issue was in reference to party structures and how to find ways to prevent parties from gaining control over organisations in the movement.

Based on the reports from the delegates of the different National Coordinating Bodies, it was concluded that it is not possible to have a common international rule. There are countries where progressive parties' women's commissions, that affirm commitments to women's struggles in their programs, are an integral part of the NCB. In these cases, to exclude parties would mean excluding a wide number of activists. Furthermore, there are strategic moments in the context of different countries when a national WMW does adopt a position during elections in support of a given party – one that in its platform and history has assumed commitments to the struggle for justice – and against other parties that represent a setback or an advance of conservative forces. Other NCBs work directly with parties to try to advance women's agendas in the different legislative and executive bodies. In this sense, the parties are allies so that our voices can be heard.

We must continue sharing our experiences to avoid situations in which parties impose their agenda on the movements, act to create divisions and co-opt the best activists for their lists – that is, when they





do not act to strengthen a movement in which women have autonomy, but rather use the movement to advance their own interests.

A similar concern was expressed with regards to the relationship with women's groups that are linked to religious structures. How do we avoid the interference of fundamentalist religious groups that attempt to use social organisations to advance their own agenda? Once again, we concluded that it was impossible to have an international rule. In Latin America, for example, grassroots women's groups related to the Theology of Liberation participate in the WMW and it does not stop them from denouncing the Catholic Church's hierarchical and patriarchal structure. Each country or region should continue to look for ways to oppose the growing social influence of fundamentalist religious groups that attack women's rights, to prevent them from infiltrating our organisations and to continue exchanging experiences and information on this issue.

### **b) Changes to the statutes and annual fees**

There was a discussion on whether changes to statutes could be proposed only by NCBs that are up-to-date with their annual fees. During the debates, it was made explicit that this would be ideal, as the fees are very important for the autonomy of and commitment to the construction of the movement, but that, at this moment in the WMW, it is impossible to put this into practice and would exclude from our democratic life NCBs that are not yet well organised. In the end, the result is that statutes or changes to the statutes can be proposed if they are the initiative of at least 3 NCBs or a region.

## **7. Finances**

The IS presented the financial report of the projects administered in order to maintain the international operational structure, according to the priorities established in previous meetings (first, the functioning of the Secretariat, the international committee meetings and different activities in representation of the WMW). She also explained the budget for the current operating year - 2011 and 2012.

More technical doubts related to understanding the tables presented and how different expenses are distributed among the categories were clarified in the plenary. After these clarifications, the plenary approved the financial reports that had been presented.

One of the issues of debate emphasised during this point was the reason for the discontinuity of support for the WMW from agencies and organisations and the impact this will have on activities. It was explained that, in addition to the global crisis affecting the richest countries, the decrease in support for the WMW is also a result of the rise of conservatism, which is manifested in different ways, like the election of right-wing sectors that withdraw support from organisations fighting for women's autonomy. There has also been a change in the agencies' priorities and a reorientation of support towards certain countries or regions, and Brazil is not a priority for the majority of the agencies.

Among the possibilities of support for the WMW's international work, the following suggestions were made:

- that NCBs organise and raise funds for some of the International Committee meetings (two per year, ideally)
- encourage WMW members to pay their annual fee (and establish mechanisms for this)
- the creation of a "pooling" (collective self-financing) working group, dedicated to thinking of ways to share the costs of producing materials that can be sold by NCBs to raise funds for their activities.
- that the countries that can send three delegates to the meetings only send two and help fund the trip of a delegate from another country, as was done for the meeting in the Philippines.



## 8. WMW Alliances

This item of the debate started with a review of 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.

In addition to sharing with us about what their alliance with the WMW means to them, some of these movements and organisations 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. A report follows below on the proposals that the international committee will continue to discuss for future follow-up.

### **CADTM**

During its congress, CADTM created women's structures in its network. In their link with the WMW, they hope to produce analysis on the impacts of debt on women. They seek to incorporate feminist analyses in all of their analyses and strengthen convergences with other feminist movements. They also plan to deepen the reflection on how the patriarchal model is reproduced within the organisation. In Europe, together with the WMW, they are leading the initiative for a women's march against austerity measures, demanding debt audit processes, in which the accounts of each country would be opened to know where money was allocated, and the participation of women in these citizen processes.

### **Via Campesina**

The campaign against violence against women in rural areas, the fight against militarisation and the market appropriation of agriculture are VC women's foci of action that are related to the struggles we are developing in the WMW. While continuing to resist, they seek to build alternatives that promote farming families' control over their land and their seeds and to build solidarity, gender equality and a food sustainability model based on peasant farming production. Among the important dates for joint action, April 17<sup>th</sup>, the International Day of Peasant Struggle, was highlighted.

### **Friends of the Earth**

Together with the WMW and VC, they are building alliances around the struggle to end violence against women and for food sovereignty. Within the organisation, they are experiencing challenges, such as making men understand that including a gender analysis does not mean creating an internal division or a women's sector in the organisation.

They propose developing a resistance kit for the discussion on struggles against land grabbing, for women's access to land and against agrofuels. They are asking for the WMW's support for this, to verify if the way they are presenting the women's perspective is appropriate.

The alliance with the WMW can also help with the analysis of decision-making processes at the UN and governmental levels and the corporate control of official agendas. They also want support for the deepening of the debate on other forms of violence against women, like economic forms and the ones being used against rural and indigenous women.

### **Grassroots Global Justice (GGJ)**

The alliance with the WMW was built and is being strengthened through the World Social Forum (WSF) and the Social Movement Assembly (SMA) process. The WMW has been participating in several GGJ meetings and they would like us to continue helping GGJ generate greater impacts.

In their most recent congress, they debated and defined three strategic areas for action, which are summarized in their slogan: "No War, No Warming, Build a People's Economy". 'No War' refers to redefining other priorities for the US budget; 'No Warming', to alternatives for climate justice; and 'Build an Economy for the People, to defining an alternative path that has concrete impacts and is inspired by revolutionary processes around the world.



As follow-up to our alliances, we will continue the joint work in the WSF and SMA process. We will also organise a joint mobilization program against the G-8 and OTAN, which will meet in Chicago in May, with the intention of taking the agenda against war and militarisation further within the US. We will also give continuity to the processes related to the struggle against false solutions to the climate crisis. For this, organise joint actions in the Rio+20 framework, in June 2012.

### **International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)**

To broaden the alliance of ITUC women with the WMW, the following has been proposed:

- Suggest that a point on the WMW be added to the agenda of the next ITUC women's committee meeting, to be held in May 2012;
- Promote the ratification of the new international convention on domestic workers (ILO Convention 189): in the Philippines, throughout 2012, they will pressure the Ministry of Labour and of Foreign Affairs so that the country will sign the Convention;
- Support and disseminate ITUC guidelines on "decent work"
- The struggle against violence against women: take action on this issue during key mobilizing dates like March 8<sup>th</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup> (day of action for decent work)

### **World Rainforest Movement**

They have had an alliance with the WMW since 2007 on the fight for food sovereignty, for forests and against monocultures. The struggle of women crosscuts all of these thematic areas. They also act together in the WSF process. They want to deepen their links with the WMW and act as a bridge to communities that are fighting for their survival.

### **Women's Global Network on Reproductive Rights**

In 2005, the network moved from Holland, where it had been located since its creation in 1984, to the Philippines. The struggle for safe abortion is its main issue; in the Philippines, the network is currently focusing on the approval of the reproductive rights bill (RH Bill).

With regards to the WMW, they are requesting support to strengthen capacities and common struggles. Also, they wish to promote joint actions, like the one on May 28<sup>th</sup>, the International Day of Action for Women's Health, and a global campaign against the criminalisation of abortion in Latin America.

### **Rebelles**

They want the support of allied movements to see how to advance in their priority of expanding their bases, especially in Canada. They hope to include the voices of all women, LGBT and, especially, indigenous women. They propose to create mechanisms to widen the participation of indigenous women within the WMW.

### **Coalition pour les droits et la citoyenneté des femmes en Afrique de l'Ouest/CECI (Coalition for Women's Rights and Citizenship in West Africa/CECI)**

The Coalition unites five West African countries (Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Guinea). They want to establish a strong alliance with the WMW around the fight against violence towards women, the struggle for equality and for women's citizenship and participation in power. They are proposing the creation of a sub-regional network and to elaborate a joint action plan for the follow-up of the action in the DR of Congo.

### **Focus on the Global South**

They are reorganizing their activities to face current changes and the role of the Asia-Pacific region in the current context. They are organizing debates on the issue "Who are the winners and losers in the so-called growth in Asia?" They want the WMW to participate in these discussions. They also follow analysis on multilateral institutions and decision-making processes and the struggle against the commercialization of natural resources (land and water). They have invited the WMW to participate in the Alternative World Water Forum to be held in March 2012 in Marseilles, France.



## 9. Regional work plans

On the 24<sup>th</sup>, meeting participants met up by regions – Africa, Americas, Asia-Oceania, Europe and the Middle East-ArabWorld. Each region discussed their challenges, work plan and the election of international committee members. The main decisions from each region follow below:

### a) Africa

- establish a work plan to improve communication between the countries in the region, in which countries identify a coordinator who will communicate with the other countries and disseminate news.
- strengthen alliances as part of the follow-up to the closing act of the action in Bukavu
- hold a second regional meeting of the WMW on the continent
- the majority of the group approved Mali's candidacy to host the next International Meeting.

### b) Americas

Delegates made an assessment of the activities held regionally since the last international meeting, in 2008: the Americas regional meeting in Cochabamba, Bolivia (in 2009), the Women and Peoples' Summit of the Americas Against Militarisation (which we joined as part of our international action in 2010), and the Americas Work Group meeting in January 2011 in Lima, Peru. Supporting women in Honduras during the coup d'état and in Haiti during the earthquake were strong moments of solidarity during these encounters. The challenges for the next period are: the strengthening of NCBs in the region; participation in mobilizations to be held in the framework of Rio+20, in alliance with other movements; and the organisation of a common day of action – the 24 hours of action against war. The group supported Brazil's proposal to host the next WMW International Meeting in this country, as a step in the cycle of the IS transition to another country.

### c) Asia-Oceania

The group discussed common issues shared by the WMW in different countries in the region:

- climate change (and the impacts of environmental catastrophes like floods, earthquakes and tsunamis that kill millions);
- the fight against APEC (that will meet soon in Hawaii);
- human security;
- capitalism's interests in the region;
- violence against women and
- military presence.

Points that had been identified as challenges during the regional meeting held in June 2010 were also recuperated:

- the military junta in Burma and China as an arms supplier to this country
- trade liberalization
- the G-20
- the fight against "contractualization" (fixed-terms contracts that last in general only 6 months)
- recognition of domestic work (non-remunerated reproductive/care work)
- the struggle against fundamentalism.

It was suggested that work be done to broaden the participation of indigenous women from the region in the WMW.

For the future, it was suggested that two campaigns be organised:

- against mining (very evident in the Philippines, Pakistan and New Caledonia)
- against nuclear energy and weapons.

Holding another regional meeting in 2012 is also part of the region's plans.



#### **d) Europe**

- The next regional European meeting will be held at the beginning of June in Lyon, France.
- They are using new ways to promote debates like the theatre of the oppressed and the video and they want to deepen the discussion on communication.
- They are working on the idea of a European campaign on the crisis and women. There is already a video on the issue with testimonies from women who participated in the last regional meeting held in Skopje, Macedonia on their experience in the crisis. The idea is to listen to women at the grassroots level from different countries.
- They are also working on the organisation of a new edition of the Young Feminists Camp to be held in the summer of 2012, this time in Romania.
- Funding: they are working on the self-financing proposal on pooling, sharing resources and preparing joint promotional objects that can be sold to support NCBs that are experiencing financial difficulties. A funding strategy must be developed and future rules for a solidarity fund need to be defined.

#### **e) Arab World/Middle East**

The focus is to build the WMW mainly in Tunisia and Palestine. They have mapped out the women's organisations in every country in the Arab World, whom they will contact to try to organise a WMW meeting in the region. One moment that will be key both for the strengthening of the WMW and for the region as a whole will be the holding of the World Social Forum in 2013 (in a country that has not yet been defined, but Tunisia was a candidate).

### **10. International Committee (IC) election**

Based on the new constitution and by-laws approved during the international meeting, delegates for each region elected their new IC members, plus one substitute, per region. The new IC is now composed by:

Africa	Graça Samo (Mozambique) and Nana Aicha Cissé (Mali). Substitute: 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: Khatam Khatib (Palestine)
International Secretariat Coordinator	Miriam Nobre (Brazil)

### **11. 9th International Meeting: date and venue**

We decided that the 9th WMW International Meeting would be held in Brazil in 2013. There is a possibility of holding the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in Mali, a NCB that also presented its candidacy as host of the next meeting.

### **12. Approval of International Meetings reports**

It was decided that the International Committee is responsible for the approval of the reports from the international meetings. Upon the IC's approval, the report can be distributed to the National Coordinating Bodies for follow-up.



### 13. Reports on Specific Actions

- a) The Cuban delegation presented the Declaration of the event "Learning and Experiences of Rural Women", held in La Habana, Cuba, from the 11th – 13th October.. Click to read the full declaration (in Spanish only): <http://www.marchemondiale.org/structure/cn-groupe/ameriques/cuba/2011/jornada-mujeres-rurales/view>
- b) Korea: requested the support of all of the WMW delegates and NCBs for the demonstration to be held on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Seoul, where they will hold a protest against sexual slavery practiced by soldiers in the region, which was very common during the world wars. The protest is to draw special attention to the situation of a group of women survivors from the Second World War, known as the "Comfort Women". Various delegates wrote messages of solidarity on a banner that was later given to the survivors.
- c) Brazil: The delegation requested that sisters from all over the world send messages to the President of the Republic of Brazil demanding the reversal of the Decree that expelled peasant farming families from their land for the installation of an irrigated fruit production project in the Apodi region (in the North East of Brazil). In this region, there are various women's groups working with agroecology and solidarity economy that participate in the WMW.

### 14. Public and parallel events

#### a) Presentation of the feminist movement in the Philippines

Through a play created by the WMW militants in the Philippines, they narrated their country's history of colonization and foreign occupation, and the continuous resistance of women against these different forms of violence.

Formal independence of the Philippines was declared by the US on July 4, 1946, but the Filipino people's struggle for true sovereignty continues as US neo-colonial policies helped shape weak and compliant governments with the compliance of the local elite. Today, feminism continues to struggle for deeper changes in the country and in women's lives

The Filipino government celebrates the country's independence on June 12, which was the date declared by the first President of the Republic, Emilio Aguinaldo, in 1898. However, it should be kept in mind that Aguinaldo was also part of the sell-out of the Philippines' freedom from Spain to the US. For this reason, the Filipino people's movement continues to organise protests today.

Click to [read the text](#) of "Herstory - The Filipinas and their struggle as women, as part of the oppressed classes and as part of a nation asserting sovereignty", which narrates the country's history of colonization and foreign occupation, and the continued resistance of women against these different forms of violence.

Click to [read more](#) about the current context in the Philippines.

#### b) 25 November: demonstration, public forum and cultural night

On November 25<sup>th</sup>, a demonstration against violence against women, a public forum on the four action areas and a cultural evening marked the closing of the 8<sup>th</sup> WMW International Meeting.

The slogans used in the demonstration, which brought nearly 1,200 women and men together from around the country, included: stop the criminalisation 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, militarisation, 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. There was also the strong call to pass the Anti-Prostitution Bill, which will decriminalize the women bought in the sex industry, and shift accountability towards the buyers and the business. More than 10 years have passed since the first draft of both bills were submitted to Congress and, since then, there has been a strong reaction from the Catholic Church, conservative sectors of society, and 'macho' legislators against their approval.

In the afternoon, a public forum at the Law School brought together Filipino and international activists, who shared their visions on the subjects of Peace, Demilitarisation 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.

### **c) International coordination of young women**

As in previous meetings, each National Coordinating Body was encouraged to include a young woman in their delegation. 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. The Brazilians spoke of the "Batucada" (drumming) as an irreverent political tool specific to the organisation of youth within the WMW. The Canadians explained the process of organizing the Rebelles meeting. The young Filipinas also shared their experiences of organizing young women's camps in the Philippines around gender issues, sexuality and prostitution, resulting in strong groups fighting sexual violence not only in the country but also in Indonesia, India and Thailand. As follow-up to this discussion, we will be encouraging the presence of international delegates at the next European Young Feminists' Camp, which will take place in 2012.

### **d) Lesbian meeting**

WMW sisters from France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, and the IS met together during lunch time of the 24<sup>th</sup> September to exchange experiences around the violence suffered by, struggles and victories of the LGBT populations in their countries, particularly focusing on lesbians and bisexuals. Participants agreed that there is growing desire within the WMW to promote the participation of lesbians and their struggles as part of our movement's political agenda.

### **e) Trade union women meeting**

WMW trade union activists from Québec, the Philippines, South Africa, Belgium, Galicia and Zimbabwe got together on the 24<sup>th</sup> November to discuss:

- the possibility to create an informal network for exchange and information among trade union activists from different countries who are also WMW activists and;
- exchange about different ways to support the WMW.

### **f) WMW delegates participation in local TV and radio**

1. Jean Enriquez, CLTV36, 8<sup>th</sup> Novembre 2011.
2. Judite Fernandes and Ana Maria Nemenzo, CLTV 36, 22<sup>nd</sup> Novembre 2011.
3. Yildiz Temurturkan and Anna Carr, DZRH 666 KHz, 24<sup>th</sup> Novembre 2011.
4. Jean Enriquez, ABC 5, 28<sup>th</sup> Novembre 2011.
5. [http://www.daylife.com/photo/03CO4Ww13bcyb?\\_site=daylife&q=Philippines](http://www.daylife.com/photo/03CO4Ww13bcyb?_site=daylife&q=Philippines)
6. [http://www.daylife.com/photo/085Baye7AVb5a?\\_site=daylife&q=Philippines+women+activists](http://www.daylife.com/photo/085Baye7AVb5a?_site=daylife&q=Philippines+women+activists)
7. [http://www.daylife.com/photo/05iB8V1aIh4Ut?\\_site=daylife&q=Philippines+women+activists](http://www.daylife.com/photo/05iB8V1aIh4Ut?_site=daylife&q=Philippines+women+activists)
8. [http://law.upd.edu.ph/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=394:public-forum-on-peace-demilitarization-and-violence-against-women-and-access-to-commons-and-womens-work&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=50](http://law.upd.edu.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=394:public-forum-on-peace-demilitarization-and-violence-against-women-and-access-to-commons-and-womens-work&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=50)
9. <http://www.cubadiplomatica.cu/filipinas/EN/FiveHeroes/SolidaritywiththeFIVE/tabid/20286/ctl/Details/mid/31219/ItemID/10442/Default.aspx>
10. <http://www.cubadiplomatica.cu/filipinas/EN/FiveHeroes/SolidaritywiththeFIVE/tabid/20286/ctl/Details/mid/31219/ItemID/10444/Default.aspx>



### g) Saharawi meeting at the Parliament of the Philippines

WMW Philippines counted on the support of the representative Walden Bello in order to guarantee that Saharui sisters were received by Philippines Parliament (on 23<sup>rd</sup> November) and by the Department of Foreign Affairs (on 25<sup>th</sup> November). These two occasions were an opportunity to explain to the members of Parliament and national authorities about the situation of the Saharui people and to ask for official government support for their struggle. Rep. Bello committed himself to following-up the demand and to maintain contact with the National Union of Saharui Women (UNMS, in Spanish).

## 15. Assessment of the International Meeting

The IS distributed an evaluation form during the IM. We received responses from 15 participants in 14 countries. According to the responses, the IM was an opportunity to learn about the international context from the voices of women who act to change it and, at the same time, make one's own situation known. They recognized what is common among women and solidarity, in practice, has been strengthened. The diversity of the IM participants – youth, lesbians, indigenous – has made some of them think about how to achieve greater diversity in their own National Coordinating Bodies. Several evaluated the work in groups positively; one of them said that the debates had provided elements for thought, but they still need to be structured. Some delegates highlighted the democratic decision-making methods, but others felt that more time was needed in the plenary to better discuss the issues that cause conflicts. One delegate from the Philippine NCB wrote that the WMW's international presence was a result not only for them, but for all of the social movements in the country.

## 16. Attendance list

### a) Delegates:

Country	Name
Brazil	Maria da Conceição Dantas Moura Bezerra
Brazil	Raquel Cristina Pereira Duarte
Belgium	Veronika Lemeire
Belgium	Marie-Claire Ruhamy Cikolacabo Namurhobo
Belgium	Ilke Ester Jaspers
Chile	Maria Corina Muñoz Caris
Cuba	Olga Zoila Morales Pacheco
Cuba	Dilcia de la Caridad García Pérez
Cuba	Tamara Silvia Columbié Matos
DR Congo	Adèle Safi Kagarabi
France	Frédérique Payen
France	Clara Carbanar
Galicia	Teresa Otero Dacosta
Galicia	Nuria Pahino Dasilva
Germany	Ulrike Braun
Haiti	Marie Frantz Joachim
Japan	Takafumi Suzuki
Japan	Sumie Iwatsuki
Kenya	Lydia Ann Adoyo Ogutu
Korea	Jinmi Choi
Korea	Sookyung Jang
Korea	Youngsoon Shin



Macedonia	Natasha Dokovska
Mali	Nana Aïcha Cissé
Mozambique	Ximena Jorquera Andrade
Mozambique	Cândida Luís Quintano
Mozambique	Hortência Alexandre Macaúzo Kapfensteiner
New Caledonia	Françoise Sipa ép. Caillard
New Caledonia	Valentine Wakeli ép. Holle Nyitrue
New Caledonia	Emilie Giraut
Pakistan	Bushra Khaliq
Pakistan	Saleha Azhar Athar
Palestine	Khitam I.M.Khatib
Philippines	Jo Enrica Enriquez Rosales
Philippines	Monina Geaga (Jing)
Philippines	Riza Mae Palen
Portugal	Judite Marieta Canha Fernandes
Quebec	Manon Fortier
Quebec	Emilia Castro
South Africa	Wilhelmina Caroline Trout
Switzerland	Michèle Spieler
Switzerland	Nani Moras
Switzerland	Raphaëlle Bessette-Viens
Turkey	Yıldız Temürtürkan
Tunisia	Souad Mahmoud
Vanuatu	Blandine Bulekone
Western Sahara	Fatma Mehdi Hassam
Western Sahara	Suilma Hay Enhamed Saleh
Zimbabwe	Rita Beauty Nyampinga

#### b) Guests:

Country	Organisation	Name
Belgium	CADTM	Christine Vanden Daelen
Burkina Faso	CECI	Félicité Medah
Canada	ReBELLES	Alissa Rappaport
Canada	ReBELLES	M Anna Celestrya Carr
Holland	Oxfam NOVIB	Christel Speller
Indonesia	La Vía Campesina	Zubaidah
Indonesia	La Vía Campesina	Elisha Kartini Tenalema Samon
Philippines	WGNRR	Marevic H Parcon
Philippines	ITUC	Cabatingan Florencia Pantaliano
Philippines	FOEI	Judith Pamela A. Pasimio
Philippines	Focus on the Global South	Mary Ann Manahan
Uruguay	World Rainforest Movement	Gladys Raquel Núñez Mutter
USA	AWID	Natalia Cardona Sanchez
USA / Korea	GGJ	Sunyoung Yang

#### c) Observers:

Country	Name
Belgium	Angèle Muhigirwa
France	Isabelle Giraud



New Caledonia	Emélie katrawi ita Héa
New Caledonia	Lyvia Karine Briault

#### d) Workers:

##### d1) Interpreters and reporters:

Country	Name
Belgium	Ann Jamar
Cuba	Zulema Hidalgo Gomez
France	Marion Lafon
Québec	Joane Mc Dermott
Québec	Marie-France Benoit
Spain	Ioana Pop Corina
Spain	Sara Martin Menduïña
Spain	Julia Rodríguez Nieto
Spain	Clara Louise Meschia
USA	Laurel Eileen Clausen

##### d2) International Secretariat:

Country	Name
Brazil	Alessandra Ceregatti
Brazil	Celia Alldridge
Brazil	Miriam da Silva Pacheco Nobre

### 17. Attachment: Links to the websites of the organisations and movements invited to the meeting

Organ.	Sitio web
AWID	<a href="http://www.awid.org/">http://www.awid.org/</a>
CADTM	<a href="http://www.cadtm.org/">http://www.cadtm.org/</a>
CECI	<a href="http://www.ceci.ca/">http://www.ceci.ca/</a>
Focus on the Global South	<a href="http://www.focusweb.org/">http://www.focusweb.org/</a>
FOEI	<a href="http://www.foei.org/">http://www.foei.org/</a>
GGJ	<a href="http://ggjalliance.org/">http://ggjalliance.org/</a>
CSI/ITUC	<a href="http://www.ituc-csi.org/">http://www.ituc-csi.org/</a>
La Vía Campesina	<a href="http://viacampesina.org">http://viacampesina.org</a>
Oxfam NOVIB	<a href="http://www.oxfamnovib.nl/">http://www.oxfamnovib.nl/</a>
ReBELLES	<a href="http://www.rebelles.org/">http://www.rebelles.org/</a>
RIEFEC	--
WGNRR	<a href="http://www.wgnrr.org/">http://www.wgnrr.org/</a>
World Rainforest Movement	<a href="http://www.wrm.org.uy/">http://www.wrm.org.uy/</a>



## 18. Attachment: Constitution and by-laws

# World March of Women Constitution and By-laws\*

## 1. Preamble

a. The World March of Women (WMW) was born as a response to the Quebec Women's Federation appeal to organise a campaign against poverty and violence against women. The first International Meeting was held in October 1998. In 2000 this huge campaign mobilised women from all regions of the world from the 8<sup>th</sup> March to 17<sup>th</sup> October. On the day after the end of the mobilisation, several groups decided to continue to work together. The founding assembly of the WMW as a permanent movement took place at the Third International Meeting in New Delhi, India, in March 2003. The movement's commitment to eradicate structural causes of poverty and violence against women was translated into four Action Areas: Women's work; Common good and public services; Violence against women and Peace and demilitarisation.

b. The World March of Women is a feminist, anti-capitalist movement struggling against all forms of inequality and discrimination that we suffer as women. Our values and actions are directed at making political, economic, social and cultural stereotypes change. They centre on the globalisation of solidarity; equality between women and men, among women themselves and between peoples; the respect and recognition of diversity among women; the multiplicity of our strategies; the appreciation of women's leadership; and the strength of alliances among women and with other progressive social movements.

## 2. The character of the WMW

a. The World March of Women is an international, feminist action movement connecting grass-roots groups and organisations working to eliminate the causes at the root of poverty and violence against women. The WMW is an autonomous, multicultural, multiethnic, pluralist and independent movement. The WMW seeks to bring together women, particularly those from grass-roots organisations.

b. The strength of national level activities and work with WMW allies is particularly evident during International Actions, such as those held in 2005 and 2010. These actions are moments for strengthening our identity as a movement. Being "on the march" expresses the idea of moving ahead freely, without constraints. It expresses the strength of collectively-organised women in associations, groups, and movements; women with diverse experiences, political cultures, and ethnicities but who have a common goal, which is to overcome the current unjust order that provokes violence and poverty. Part of our identity is also our international solidarity and the fact that we are attentive to what happens to our sisters in other parts of the world.

## 3. Goals

a. Strengthen and maintain a vast solidarity movement of women and grass-roots groups so that the World March of Women constitutes an affirmation of women's capacity for action and autonomy around the world.

b. Achieve equality and justice between women and men, among women themselves and between all peoples.

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\*Approved during the 8<sup>th</sup> WMW International Meeting, held in Quezon City, Philippines, from 21 to 25 November 2011



- c. Contribute to the building and strengthening of a vast process of popular education so that all women can analyse for themselves the causes of their oppression and discrimination, and the possible alternatives.
- d. Highlight the common demands and alternatives emanating from women's movements worldwide, on the local, national, regional and international levels, relating to the issues of poverty and violence against women.
- e. Challenge and denounce the policies and strategies of international financial, economic and military institutions (IMF – International Monetary Fund, NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, WTO – World Trade Organisation, WB – World Bank, transnational corporations, cooperation agencies that impose conditions on women's struggles, etc.) that impoverish and marginalise women and intensify the violence committed against us, and formulate alternative institutional proposals.
- f. Exert political pressure on governments and denounce multilateral political institutions (e.g. the UN) so that they institute the changes necessary for radically transforming the status of women and women's quality of life worldwide, including a disarmament and peaceful conflict resolution policy, and an end to all forms of impunity and corruption, the use of rape as a weapon of war, occupations, foreign military presence and the imposition of political/economic blockades.
- g. Convince the general public, other sectors of society and social movements to support and institute the changes necessary for improving the status and conditions of women and women's quality of life around the world.
- h. Develop and implement feminist actions and proposals that denounce the economic and financial institutions that promote the exploitation and degradation of our resources, climate change and the loss of biodiversity.
- i. Struggle for the self-management of our environmental resources and for food sovereignty as part of a development model that respects the basic needs of present and future generations.
- j. Work in alliance with other social movements, feminist organisations, and with the networks and institutions that share the WMW values.

#### **4. Values**

- a. The leadership of the World March of Women is always in the hands of women.
- b. All regions of the world have a role to play in the organisation of World March of Women actions.
- c. Active Participating Groups act independently in the organisation of actions in their respective countries.
- d. We recognise, respect and value the diversity of women's movements (women's realities, different countries, political approaches that are respectful of women's rights and freedoms, and action strategies).
- e. The World March of Women organises mass mobilisation actions; popular education activities; resistance actions; and national, regional and worldwide mobilisations. We advocate non-violence while recognising the right to self-defence.

#### **5. Composition**

The WMW is composed of National Coordinating Bodies, active Participant Groups, and sympathisers.





## 5.1 National Coordinating Bodies

a. National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) – that bring together active Participating Groups in a specific country/territory – are the WMW organisational structure at national level. The WMW recognises nations struggling for self-determination, who are able to form NCBs in accordance with the request of local active Participating Groups. NCBs are autonomous with regard to their functioning, policies and actions, as long as they respect the following: to have consultation and decision-making mechanisms which include the active Participating Groups in the whole country, and to carry out collective activities as laid out in the work plans approved by the International and Regional Meetings.

b. The International Committee (IC) and the International Secretariat (IS) can intervene and guide them if there is a major contravention of the principles, values and goals of the World March of Women. In the case of NCBs who do not function democratically and do not organise activities approved in the International and Regional Meetings, the IC and the IS may contribute to a better functioning at the request of Participating Groups in the country/territory concerned.

c. In order to ensure that the WMW functions well, the National Coordinating Bodies have the responsibility to:

- c.1 Coordinate active Participating Groups in their country or territory and promote their participation in the democratic process at the national level;
- c.2 Carry out popular education, mobilisation activities and World March of Women actions at the national level, especially those adopted at International Meetings;
- c.3 Adopt public positions on political questions;
- c.4 Update the list of active Participating Groups in their country/territory (in coordination with the International Secretariat);
- c.5 Participate in the WMW's democratic life (for example, participating in and preparing International Meetings, participating in working groups and collectives, etc.);
- c.6 Communicate regularly with the International Secretariat in order to share information regarding their WMW actions and activities;
- c.7 Fundraise for national actions and activities;

## 5.2 Active Participating Groups

To be an active Participating Group, the group must meet the following criteria:

a. be an autonomous women's group, a women's committee within a mixed group (groups in which both men and women participate) or a mixed organisation that does not have a women's committee but within which a women's group is responsible for the WMW leadership;

b. subscribe to the objectives and values of the World March of Women, to the Women's Charter for Humanity adopted in 2004 at the Fifth International Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda; to the Declaration of Values adopted in 2003 at the Fourth International Meeting in New Delhi, India, and to the Demands adopted in 1998 at the First International Meeting, which were revised at the Third International Meeting in Montreal, Quebec

c. participate in the actions of the National Coordinating Bodies, to incorporate the movement's actions in its calendar of activities, or to promote the World March of Women.

d. Governments and governmental institutions can not be members of the World March of Women.

## 5.3 Sympathisers

Women individually and groups who are interested in receiving World March of Women information but who are unable to commit to organising WMW actions can become sympathisers. To do so, they must



register with the International Secretariat who will include them in a WMW distribution list of information, news and calls to action.

## 6. Membership

a. Joining the WMW is carried out through the National Coordinating Bodies, in countries where one exists, and directly with the International Secretariat in countries and territories without an NCB.

b. The access of the active Participating Groups to the international structure is possible through the National Coordinating Bodies. To be an active Participating Group, it is necessary to be part of the NCB in country/territory where the group is based, or to work towards the establishment of a new NCB where there is none.

## 7. World March of Women operational structure

### 7.1 International Meeting

a. The International Meeting functions as a general assembly and the highest decision-making structure of the World March of Women. The meeting is attended by National Coordinating Body delegations. The general assembly has the following responsibilities, among others:

- a.1 to adopt the WMW international political platform;
- a.2 to decide on International Actions (with prior consultation of NCBs) and the working plan;
- a.3 to adopt activities and financial reports prepared by the International Secretariat;
- a.4 to evaluate and review the WMW operational structure, including the general functioning of the International Committee and the International Secretariat, and the mandates, launch and follow-up of thematic commissions and ad hoc working groups in relation to the working plan demands;
- a.5 to elect the International Committee;
- a.6 to choose the location of the International Secretariat, when applicable.

#### b. Date and location of the Meeting

The International Meeting is held once every three (3) years maximum; the dates will be decided based on the WMW's calendar of actions. The Meeting location will rotate among the major world regions.

#### c. Delegates

c.1 To ensure a balanced representation of participating countries/territories, a maximum of three (3) delegates will represent each National Coordinating Body. Countries or territories with more than one NCB are requested to respect the maximum of three representatives. At least one of the three delegates should be a young woman.

c.2 The WMW International Committee members participate automatically in the International Meetings and it is the decision of the members of their NCB whether they participate as one of the three national delegates, or only as an IC member.

c.3 Participating Groups with no National Coordinating Body are invited to form one in order to participate in the International Meeting. If this is not possible, they can request participation as observers (*see below*).

#### d. Quorum

The quorum of the International Meeting is composed of delegates from a minimum of 20 countries/territories and three world regions.



#### e. Voting

Decisions will be made by consensus. In situations where consensus cannot be reached, each National Coordinating Body (or country/territory in the event there is more than one NCB) is entitled to one vote. To be adopted, a proposal must obtain the support of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the National Coordinating Bodies present. When there is an equal vote or a significant regional disparity in the vote, the committee responsible for ensuring the smooth functioning of the meeting will be asked to propose a solution or solutions.

#### f. Observers

f.1 The number of observers and their invitation are decided by the Meeting's organising committee (International committee and the host NCB).

f.2 WMW women activists of the host country and its sub-region can participate as observers, as well as women representing active Participating Groups from countries where there is no National Coordinating Body, and guests from feminist movements and networks and allied social movements, as well as technical and financial partners.

f.3 Observers do not have the right to vote; they have the right to speak during group caucuses but not in plenary sessions.

## **7.2 International Committee**

#### a. Role, responsibilities and functioning

a.1 The International Committee (IC) is responsible for the follow-up of decisions adopted by International Meetings, assuming a liaison role, ensuring information circulation and acting as a catalyst for the WMW in the different world regions, as well as following-up work done by the International Secretariat.

a.2 The IC is composed of elected representatives from different world regions, that meets twice a year and functions in a collective and horizontal manner. Committee members will share tasks. They are not only regional representatives but will politically accompany the WMW as a whole. IC members' responsibilities for WMW international and regional activities is prioritised over and above responsibilities related to national activities.

#### b. Composition

The International Committee is composed of 10 effective members and 5 substitutes. Committee members will be selected according to the following regional representation:

- b.1 Africa (2 effective and 1 substitute)
- b.2 Americas (2 effective and 1 substitute)
- b.3 Asia-Oceania (2 effective and 1 substitute)
- b.4 Europe (2 effective and 1 substitute)
- b.5 Middle East and Arab World (1 effective and 1 substitute)
- b.6 The World March of Women International Secretariat Coordinator

#### c. Elections

Candidates for election are initially proposed by their National Coordinating Body, and NCBs are invited to present their candidates to the respective Regional Coordinating Body (if there is one). Elections take place during the International Meeting, within the regional caucuses. When there is no regional consensus, the regional delegates decide by vote. The International Meeting assembly ratifies the regional decision. If the International Committee vacancies are not filled during the International Meeting, they will remain as vacancies until the next International Meeting.

#### d. Selection Criteria

d.1 Activists proposed as members of the International Committee (effective and substitutes) must meet the following general criteria:



- d.1.1 have the support of her National Coordinating Body;
- d.1.2 defend the goals, values and feminist positions of the World March of Women;
- d.1.3 be willing to abide by decisions made by the group even if they do not coincide with their personal positions;
- d.1.4 be available to participate in the International Committee virtual and face-to-face meetings.

d.2 If an IC candidate is to be presented by the National Coordinating Body, it is recommended that she be sent to the International Meeting as one of the national delegates.

#### e. Vacancy and substitutes

e.1 When a member of the International Committee announces that she is not able to attend a meeting, the substitute is invited to take her place.

e.2 Substitutes will become effective members of the IC when a member of the International Committee is absent for more than two consecutive meetings without a valid reason. Absences due to visa problems, changing the dates of the meetings at short notice, flight problems, health problems and maternity leave are exceptions. The IC and IS are responsible for creating mechanisms to guarantee that transfers take place without discontinuity.

#### f. Term

f.1 The term is an individual one but the NCBs of the region are responsible for following-up and supporting the work of their representatives.

f.2 The terms last from one International Meeting to the next, and are renewable twice, up to a total of three (3) consecutive terms. Former IC members may present themselves as candidates again at the second International Meeting after the end of their term.

f.3 Substitutes that take over a vacancy become effective members, and their term is counted accordingly to the International Meeting in which they were elected.

### **7.3 International Secretariat**

#### a. Role, responsibilities and functioning

a.1 The International Secretariat is responsible for: putting into practice the decisions made during International Meetings and the work plan updated annually by the International Committee; guaranteeing communication between the different levels of participation and coordination of the WMW; and mobilising the human and financial resources necessary to carry out their mandates. The International Secretariat works in a collective and horizontal manner and is supported by International Committee members in carrying out its work.

a.2 The International Secretariat is accountable to the International Committee and International Meeting

#### b. Location of the International Secretariat

The location of the International Secretariat rotates amongst countries. The International Meeting elects the host National Coordinating Body as well as the International Coordinator proposed by that NCB for a period of six (6) years that can be extended for another three (3) years maximum.

#### c. International Secretariat office selection process

c.1 The International Committee and the IS are responsible for the organisation of the process for the presentation of candidacies. Decisions related to the new location and the transition process are taken during the International Meeting.

c.2 Criteria for countries that want to present their candidacy for the International Secretariat:



- c.2.1 to have a functioning National Coordinating Body that has participated in International Actions and is broadly recognised by the national women's movement in their country;
- c.2.2 to have the capacity to fund-raise in order to maintain the work of the International Secretariat;
- c.2.3 to work in partnership with an organisation that is willing to ensure the legal status of the International Secretariat;
- c.2.4 to have the capacity to guarantee communication in at least the three working languages of the WMW (English, Spanish and French).

#### d. Coordinator

d.1 The coordinator holds a statutory role as spokeswoman and representative of the March, but she shares this responsibility with the Secretariat team and the International Committee.

d.2 In case of vacancy of the position of the coordinator, the IC will manage the situation together with the NCB hosting the IS.

### **7.4 Thematic commissions and working groups**

a. The International Meeting proposes the creation and the mandate, and is responsible for the follow-up of the WMW thematic commissions. The thematic commissions' goal is to facilitate debate, popular education activities, and public activities that express the WMW analyses and positions regarding the issues and themes related to WMW goals, values and Action Areas. The commissions are responsible for guaranteeing their working conditions and the communication between their members and the IC. Fundraising for the commissions has to be done in agreement with the IC and the IS, in order to maintain a balance between different commissions, the regional work and the priorities decided in International Meetings.

b. The International Meeting and/or the International Committee can create ad hoc working groups according to the work plan needs.

## **8. Resources**

WMW resources are principally from: the members' annual contribution, public funds, technical and financial partners' contributions, subventions, donations and bequests.

#### *a. Members' annual fee*

The National Coordinating Bodies are invited to contribute annually to the international functioning of the WMW to the amount of US\$100-200, depending on its income and budget.

#### *b. Participant groups contribution*

A US\$50 contribution is suggested for active Participating Groups in countries where there is no National Coordinating Body.

## **9. Amendments to the Constitution and By-laws**

Only the WMW International Meeting is entitled to make any amendments to the Constitution and By-laws if necessary.