

Mexico City, March 19, 2006

Joint Declaration of the Movements in Defense of Water

From March 14 to 19th, we, human beings with a holistic vision of life, activists from social movements, non-governmental organizations, and networks that struggle throughout the world in the defense of water and territory and for the commons, have shared ideas, struggles, worries and proposals. At the same time we have realized how our struggles have brought change around the world, slowing the process of water privatization. Now that we are not on the defensive, we are capable of promoting concrete proposals advancing in the life of every corner of our world.

With the spirit of Caracas which brought together many global organizations in the defense of water, now we have in our history and in our hearts the struggles of La Parota, La Laguna, Xoxocotla, Acuitapilco and many others of Mexico and around the world. The humanity and the commitment of those who have organized this Forum is a great success in the construction of our movement.

For all of this, in continuity with the meetings of previous years during the World Social Fora, social movements around the world struggle for a holistic and ecological vision of the right to water and against its commodification in all spheres (domestic, agricultural and industrial), and we come together in a platform of common action, seeing the struggles of each locality within the framework of a global strategy.

Considering that:

1. Water in all of its forms is a common good and access to water is a fundamental and inalienable human right. Water is the patrimony of communities, of the people, and of humanity, the basic element of all life on our planet. Water is not a commodity. For these reasons we reject all forms of privatization, including that of public-private partnerships that have been revealed to be a complete failure around the world.
2. Management and control of water must be public, social, cooperative, participatory, equitable, and not for profit. It is the obligation of all local, national and international public institutions to guarantee these conditions from the planning stages through the delivery of water services.
3. Solidarity between present and future generations should be guaranteed, and for this reason we reject the neoliberal, consumerist development model that promotes overexploitation of Mother Nature.
4. Sustainable management of ecosystems and the preservation of the water cycle is necessary by way of the proper administration of territories and the conservation of natural environments. Watersheds are fundamental units of public management, a factor in community identity and unity, where popular participation is effected. The defense of water implies recuperating the health of ecosystems from the catchment basin to the treatment of residual waters.
5. In regards to the aforementioned, we affirm our direct opposition to all World Water Fora as meetings of large transnational corporations, international financial institutions (the World Bank, the Interamerican Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, etc.) and of the world's powerful governments, for being exclusive and antidemocratic. For these reasons we reject the legitimacy of these organizations which ignore the demands and the real needs of the people and which, on the contrary, continue seeking new forms of commercialization of water, disregarding the extremely high human, social and ecological costs of this neoliberal model.

WE CALL

On all organizations, social movements, governments and parliaments to include these principles in local, national and international laws and regulations.

On all citizens of the planet to develop collective actions to unite, organize, and realize proposals for change through the articulation of a global water movement.

WE DEMAND

The exclusion of the WTO and of all international, multilateral and bilateral free trade agreements from water.

The abolition of the International Center for International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), considering the experiences of Cochabamba and other localities that want to restore the sovereignty of their common resources to public control.

The restoration and promotion of the public, social cooperative, participatory and holistic management of water.

We demand that every human being have access and the right to water of good quality and in quantity sufficient for hygiene and good nutrition and that, in places where there is potable water delivery service, the minimum necessary amount should be allocated free of charge regardless of any differences, whether of culture, society, religion, geography, economy or gender. We reject any double standard. No corporation, government or international institution can stop water service in domestic uses for lack of payment.

Industries and corporations responsible for contamination of water resources must repair any damage, whether environmental, human, or economic, that they have caused.

WE REJECT

For illegitimate all demands for profits and indemnities by transnational corporations.

Any financing from International Financial Institutions that is conditional on the liberalization and privatization of water services.

National and regional legislation that invites the process of privatization and commercialization of water.

The predatory and unsustainable model of water management based on megaprojects, dams, port construction, mining exploitation and bottling water.

WE PROPOSE

To promote the development of high-quality public water management services that function democratically and by way of the equitable exchange of skills and knowledge, sharing all knowledge whether it be technical, capacity-building, or involving financing schemes and proposals for a model that is public, social, cooperative and participatory.

To promote education and community organization about the responsible and sustainable use of water.

To share and make known experiences of the development of solidarity funds for the financing of public, social, cooperative and participatory water management.

The creation of international and regional observatories as meeting points for social organizations, movements and cooperative networks in order to exercise social control over the activities of transnational corporations and international financial institutions, and which will also involve parliaments, local governments and democratic institutions.

To advance the demand that governments and businesses repair the damage they have caused to human populations through contamination and lack of access to water services.

To strengthen existing international tribunals and to promote the formation of additional such tribunals in diverse regions of the world.

WE COMMIT

To promote a global action plan to continue the process of the construction and mobilization of solidarity networks in the defense of water.

To promote, from the base of local struggles, a solidarity platform on a global level that will strengthen and unify a global water movement.

To value the contribution of women, indigenous and aboriginal peoples, youth and all people incorporating the defense of their rights in the development of models that show that another form of water management is possible.

To continue this process and to enrich it with all possible contributions in the succeeding gatherings that our movements will organize around the world, from the Encuentro Enlazando Alternativas Unión Europea-América Latina in May in Vienna, the Gathering of the Community of South American Nations in Bolivia in September and the Assembly of Citizens for Water in Brussels in December.

Under these conditions the world water movement commits to realizing three collective actions:

1. A simultaneous, collective, global action between September and October of 2006.
2. To take up a common slogan for all of our activities: The right to water is possible: public participatory management.
3. This declaration will be made public through press conferences in each locality upon returning to our homes as a collective statement of the global water movement.

Signed on this 19th day of March, 2006, in Mexico, Tenochtitlan, by the organizations from more than 40 countries participating in the International Forum in the Defense of Water

A preliminary list will be ready shortly. If you wish to sign this declaration please send an email to comdainfo@hotmail.com indicating