

For reference: www.foromesoamericano.org

[Final] Declaration of the V Mesoamerican Forum

We, the constituent peoples and organizations of the Mesoamerican social and popular resistance movement –gathered in San Salvador, El Salvador from July 19 to 21, 2004 at the Fifth Mesoamerican Forum– ratify our conviction and commitment to continue the struggle in our region in the defense of our peoples' rights. We are determined to move forward in building popular power as a guarantee to the self determination of peoples in the region.

During these three days of debates at the different discussion panels we have witnessed the iron-willed and growing popular opposition in Mesoamerica to neoliberal policies and their instruments, such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Plan Puebla Panama (PPP) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). These policies have devastated the peoples and the natural resources of the region, subjecting our lives to the logic of profit and to the interests of transnational corporations.

It is evident that the imposition of such policies by corrupt governments in the area responds directly to the interests of transnational corporations and of a few national companies, complicit with international financial institutions such as the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE), and the World Bank.

With a vision towards the future, we assert the need to build Mesoamerican political subjects who will be multicultural and inclusive, and who will promote our alternatives for the common good of peoples, based on principles of ethics, justice, equity and sustainability. This is in direct contrast to the deathly project of neoliberal capitalism and to its practices of corruption, lack of transparency, and exclusion.

This V Mesoamerican Forum, as well as the special conferences on specific issues and sectors taking place in El Salvador in the month of July show that the Mesoamerican social and popular movement is ready to face the challenges that confront us. The organizations of women, youth, Indigenous people and workers are becoming stronger, together with the Mesoamerican alliance for the defense and self-determination of our peoples.

Therefore, WE AGREE

- To block the ratification of the Free Trade Agreement US/Central America (CAFTA), and the approval of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), by increasing the pressure on governments, legislative assemblies and congresses in our region.
- To maintain and increase the mobilization of peoples in the region, in order to stop the imposition of the Plan Puebla Panama(PPP).
- To reject the project of the governments in the area to negotiate a free trade agreement between Central America and the European Union.

- To promote an integral agrarian reform, in order to guarantee our self sufficiency and sovereignty with relation to foodstuffs; to oppose the privatization of public services, particularly water; and to defend our biodiversity and our natural and cultural heritage.
- To defend our economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, with an emphasis on labor rights, which are being seriously threatened by the /maquiladora/ model, particularly in the case of women workers.
- To mobilize against institutionalized violence exemplified by the killing of women, ethnocidal and genocidal practices, and by violence against youth. Therefore we declare the Mesoamerican region an “Area of Humanitarian Disaster.”
- To struggle against militarization and terrorist practices of the US government and its allies.
- To promote our national and regional development projects stimulating integration based on our peoples, and on the principles of democratic participation; sustainability; reduction of gender, ethnic, geographical and social inequality gaps; as well as on the affirmation of our Mesoamerican cultural identity.
- We express our solidarity with the Venezuelan people and their Bolivarian Revolution, with the Cuban people, with the Iraqi people and with the Palestinian people. We also express our solidarity with the peoples of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador.

Finally, we issue a call to keep alive October 12 as a symbolic date for resistance and alternative proposals by the Mesoamerican region.

No to NAFTA, No to FTAA, no to PPP !

For the union of all peoples !

A different Mesoamerica is possible.

San Salvador, July 21, 2004