

CALL TO ACTION

Resisting Free Trade, Building Alliances, Alternatives and Common Strategies

We are representatives of peasant organizations, women, migrants, workers, urban and rural poor, fisherfolks, social movements and civil society organizations from East and Southeast Asia who have worked together for several years in our common struggle to resist and stop neo-liberal globalization. We gathered together from August 24-26 in Bangkok to discuss and debate common strategies to resist neo-liberal trade and to build and strengthen our alliances and solidarity across the region.

Through our discussions, we reached the following conclusions:

Trade liberalization should not be at the expense of our right to food, agriculture, fisheries, public services, natural resources and livelihoods.

As a part of the struggle against trade liberalization and corporate globalization, we must mobilize and strengthen our joint actions against all neo-liberal trade and investment regimes.

Throughout the region, the WTO, free trade agreements (FTAs) and investment agreements are imposing and deepening neo-liberal economic programs in collusion with local ruling-elites and transnational corporations (TNCs).

Neo-liberal economic integration in the form of economic partnership agreements such as ASEAN-China FTA, ASEAN-Korea FTA and the ASEAN + 3 (China, Japan and Korea) process is also having a negative impact. We recognize the urgent need to tackle FTAs, especially those being negotiated between our governments and the EU and the US.

Although trade and investment liberalization adversely effects many sectors, we need to emphasize that women are disproportionately and negatively effected by neo-liberal policies: More than half of the irregular workers are women, placing them in vulnerable situations. In addition, the privatization of services severely limits women's access to housing, health and education for themselves and their families.

We therefore commit ourselves to continuing and strengthening our struggle against neo-liberal globalization, to work together in a more sustained, coordinated and systematic manner, and to begin the process of building people's alternatives.

The focus of our struggle is the trade and investment aspects of neo-liberal globalization, as manifested by the WTO, FTAs and bilateral/multilateral trade and investment agreements that promote the neo-liberal agenda.

We are committed to consolidate each and every struggle, whether the local, national or regional, and to strengthen our solidarity and common work in more strategic ways with the aim of building our capacities, strengthening alliances and creating alternatives in East and Southeast Asia.

We recognize the importance of creating strong links, communication and solidarity between mass movement organizations such as trade unions, migrants' groups, peasants, fisherfolks and women, and social and civic movement groups with a common objective of resisting neo-liberal globalization and the building of peoples' alternatives.

We are calling on all social and people's movements in East and Southeast Asia who share this vision to join us in the struggle.

ACTION PLAN

FTAs

We recognize the urgent need to tackle every proposed FTA, especially between our governments and the EU and the US. In addition to this, we are also concerned about the negative impact of FTAs being negotiated among our governments in this region such as ASEAN-Korea, ASEAN-China etc. We will make linkages among our local/national struggles against the FTAs. We are committed to exchange information, conduct joint studies, publish joint booklets/posters and organize concerted actions locally, nationally, regionally and internationally.

- Exchange information on FTAs
- Publish joint materials on the FTAs with EU
- Joint studies and workshops on FTAs

WTO DOHA DEVELOPMENT ROUND NEGOTIATIONS

The big trading powers are still pushing the conclusion of the Doha Development Round which will only result in the further impoverishment of majority of the people in our region. We are committed to organize every possible activity and action in September and October 2007 when the negotiations restart. In this regard, we support the call of Via Campesina for a global day of action in commemoration of Lee Kyung-Hae in September 10, 2007.

- Issue joint statement rejecting the revival of the Doha Round
- Support and join Via Campesina mobilizations on the Doha Round

UN CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE, DECEMBER 2007

The UN Conference on Climate Change in Bali is an opportunity to raise debates about global warming and to launch dialogues among different sectors and movements. We will also utilise this moment to highlight and continue our campaigns against neo-liberal trade policies which take away our livelihoods and destroy the environment.

- Support and join the mobilizations in Bali
- Organise joint workshop on "WTO/FTA and Climate Change"

GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION, JANUARY 2008

Responding to calls emanating from the World Social Forum process, social movements around the world have committed to a week of action against neo-liberalism, war, colonialism, racism and patriarchy which produce violence, exploitation, exclusion, poverty, hunger and ecological disaster and deprive people of Human rights, which will culminate in a Global Day of Mobilization and Action on January 26, 2008.

- Support and join the mobilizations and actions during this global week of action

G8 SUMMIT IN JAPAN, JULY 2008

The G8 Summit as another moment to make our voices heard the world over. We are committed to mobilize and join the common activities around this Summit in solidarity with the Japanese social and people's movements.

- Mobilize in Hokkaido, Japan
- Organise joint campaign, "From Hong Kong to Hokkaido: Fight against neo-liberal globalization"
- Call on international civil society to mobilize against the G8 Summit

2ND GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT, JULY 2008

We recognize the value and importance of migration as factor of development. In this context, we see the necessity of looking into the effects of neo-liberal trade agreements on development, particularly on the displacement of workers and society's right to development.

WORLD SOCIAL FORUM, BELEM (BRAZIL) JANUARY 2009

We will take the opportunity of the World Social Forum to evaluate our common activities, to strengthen links with other regions and to chart our next steps.

Action Calendar

- 1) September – November, 2007: WTO Doha Round
- 2) September 17-22, 2007: Korean People's Action against the EU FTA at Brussels
- 2) October 14-21, 2007: Week of Global Action against Debt and IFIs
- 3) October 16, 2007: World Food Day
- 4) October 17, 2007: International Action Day of Workers against Debt and IFIs.
- 5) December 3-14, 2007, Bali: UN Conference on Climate Change
- 6) January 26, 2008: Global Action Day
- 7) April 2008: International Peasants Rights Conference, Indonesia
- 8) July 1-6, 2008: alternative activities (before G8 Summit)
- 9) July 7-9, 2008: G8 Summit, Hokkaido, Japan
- 10) July 2008: Global Forum on Development and Migration, Manila, Philippines
- 11) January, 2009: World Social Forum, Belem, Brazil

Endorsed by:

ATTAC Japan
FTA Watch Thailand
Globalization Monitor, Hong Kong
Global Network Asia
Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU)
Institute for Global Justice, Indonesia
Jubilee South-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)
Kilusang Mangingisda (KM)
Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU)
Korean Peasants League
Migrant Forum in Asia
NOUMINREN, Japan
Stop the New Round! Coalition, Philippines
Womyn's Agenda for Change, Cambodia