



People's Rights Come First Guadalajara Social Declaration

On the occasion of the III Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America & the Caribbean and the European Union taking place in Guadalajara, Xalisco, social and civil organisations from both continents address the following declaration to our peoples, the international public opinion, the mass media and the heads of state and government gathered here.

This government summit is taking place in a context of serious drawbacks and threats for the self-determination of nations, and global human rights and peace in Europe and America, as well as in the rest of the world.

Latin America has been suffering neoliberal policies for two decades and it remains the region in the world with the highest level of inequality. The extreme concentration of wealth and land is aggravated by foreign debt, resources devoted to militarism, corruption and impunity. On top of this, Latin America and the Caribbean are nowadays overflowed with "free trade" agreements with the United States. Those agreements are meant to impose an integration process subjugated to US hegemony, which will culminate in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Simultaneously, bilateral agreements are forcing Europe and America to adopt those same models that foster unemployment and work instability, transforming health, education, social services, culture and social security into mere goods, and putting an end to family farming through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The Constitution that the European Union is about to approve takes on this approach without its peoples' consent. That is an example of the "social cohesion" model that the EU expects to foster in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The last Summit of Latin America & the Caribbean and the European Union took place in Madrid in 2002. Since then, the economic and social problems that were allegedly sought to be solved by strengthening the relationships between the two regions show no sign of improvement; actually, the hard life and working conditions faced by millions of people have worsened.

The impression that Latin America and the Caribbean will benefit more from their relationship with the European Union than with the United States after market liberalisation is false. And this is so because, behind the EU "good intentions", the Union is actually seeking to broaden markets for its large corporations in services and government purchases, as well as guarantees for its big investors. From an economic or business point of view, the agreements that the EU has been negotiating or signing with countries or regions in Latin America do not differ from the ones it has with the United States. Therefore, those agreements would consolidate for the decades to come the privileges that existing or new European transnationals have been enjoying at the expense of the interests of developing countries. The current neoliberal proposals made by the EU to Latin America do not represent a real alternative to the FTAA. In fact, those proposals utterly comply with the economic measures prescribed by the IMF, the WB, the IDB and the WTO. The EU is

using its co-operation policies as an instrument for the penetration of its corporations. On the other hand, co-operation agreements on security are helping militarising the continent.

It is worrying, though it certainly does not take us by surprise, that the EU demands Latin American countries to successfully settle all aspects concerning the outdated negotiations of the WTO Doha Agenda. This is nothing more than an old strategy that pursues the same interests through interregional negotiations, bypassing disagreements and impasses in the multilateral framework. We already raised the alarm in the case of the FTAA and the WTO, and must raise it again concerning the agreements with the EU. And we must do so because including in the agreements issues such as investments, government purchases, competition policies, and privatisation of natural resources and services, restricts sovereignty and determines the economic and social development of Latin American and the Caribbean countries. That is why those issues must be completely dropped out from the negotiations. Furthermore, access to European markets will prove to be profitable for big producers, but not necessarily for small farmers who produce for the domestic market and who lack any kind of protection.

For these reasons, the peoples of Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean reject agreements which continue to give priority to "free trade" over political dialogue and co-operation. We, the peoples, long for a fair and equal relationship based on the full respect of human, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights.

The social and civil organisations from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean gathered in Guadalajara declare and demand the following:

- A clear and firm declaration from the governments taking part in this Summit against the unilateral military and political operations in the Middle East by central powers. Those operations, which have led to an immoral and illegal war, violate all international conventions and laws adopted so far by the international community. We demand the strong condemnation of the criminal tortures inflicted by the United States and its allies to prisoners of war in Iraq, as well as efforts to solve all military conflicts and the active promotion of peace in the world. We demand the withdrawal from Iraq of all foreign troops.
- To stop the growing process of military occupation in Latin America and the Caribbean, where all ways to development are hampered by the systematic violation of human rights, and foreign political and military interference, frustrating thus the aspirations of the hard-hit peoples of Haiti, Colombia and Bolivia, in particular.
- A common and effective effort by European, Latin America and the Caribbean governments aimed at giving priority to the civil, political, economical, social, environmental and cultural rights of their peoples and organisations over trade liberalisation.
- An end to Plan Colombia and Plan Puebla Panamá.
- The promotion of a solidarity model for co-operation based on the respect of human rights of all peoples, including indigenous communities and peoples of African descent.
- Developed countries must comply with their commitment to allocate at least 0.7 of their GDPs to development co-operation. They must also strive for new means of income redistribution at domestic and international level aimed at sustainable development and social justice, such as social compensation funds or transfer taxes on speculation capitals. The EU must promote measures to stop capital and resource transfers from developing countries to industrialised countries.
- The EU, being the main foreign creditor of Latin America, must cancel the "hideous" debt and re-negotiate the public foreign debt according to real sustainable development criteria for developing countries.
- Any development co-operation initiative financed by the UE must be defined only after previous consultation and with full participation of the target groups, as stated by the ILO Convention 169 and the ESCR. The growing externally-imposed conditions that

subordinate development co-operation to a commercial agenda based on structural adjustment programmes that have traditionally failed are unacceptable. The peoples in Europe, as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean, must have their say in co-operation amongst nations.

- We demand the legal and economic recognition of peasant and indigenous family farming as a productive sector which does not only guarantee food sovereignty but also environment protection, and the social, political and cultural cohesion of nations and regions. We demand the free use of native seeds and a ban on their co-existence with genetically modified organisms. We demand that strategic products, which guarantee the food sovereignty of developing countries, be excluded from the trade liberalisation process. We demand the elimination of unfair trade practices, such as the allowance of subsidies to support import costs below actual production costs.
- We demand the respect of all workers' rights according to and complying with the ILO conventions on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, working stability, the elimination of forced and compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in the workplace, especially those included in the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. We demand a close monitoring of the compliance of the aforementioned conventions especially by transnational corporations. We demand to put an end to the trend towards longer working hours and working instability.
- We reject the patriarchal model that aggravates inequality towards women, exacerbating violence and leading to the femicide taking place in Latin America and Europe. The European Union and Latin America must make a serious commitment to achieve gender equity.
- To revert the longstanding exclusion processes of native peoples and peoples of African descent by promoting the respect for their autonomy, culture and traditional organisation in the framework of ILO Convention 169 and in compliance with the San Andrés Agreements.
- We reject patents and intellectual property rights on ancient knowledge, medicines and biological diversity, since it is the peoples and communities the ones preserving and promoting diversity, in the framework of their right to their land.
- The commitment to unconditionally respect the natural resources and the biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to prevent any kind of mechanism allowing for water looting, land exploitation, water pollution, mineral extraction and wild lands expropriation, and the related dangerous environmental risks.
- To promote a new social security system which is public, universal and global, and particularly to stop the threat to pensions.
- To revert the new wave of privatisations, aimed at commercialising basic rights and services, such as education, energy, water and health, and affecting therefore the poorer. Public goods and services (water, land, biodiversity, education, health, culture, etc.) are not subject to negotiation.
- To adopt the required measures to stop discrimination, racism and xenophobia against immigrants and other minorities, and to acknowledge their human and civil rights. Immigration recipient countries must wholly acknowledge immigrants' individual and collective rights, and respect their dignity and cultural contribution.
- We denounce the European Union attitude not to condemn the Helms-Burton law. The Summit should demand the United States to lift the embargo on Cuba, which seriously damages Cuban self-determination and economy, and its population living conditions. We demand that co-operation agreements between Latin American and the European Union and Cuba be saved, and in particular to reject the new aggression plans against Cuba proclaimed by Bush, which constitute the main and more serious risk for stability and peace in the American continent.

We, the participants in this social meeting, acknowledge the right of any human being to freedom of expression and the right to express ideas publicly. In the framework of the peaceful

demonstrations we are carrying out in this III Summit of Latin America & the Caribbean - European Union, we condemn the acts of harassment, intimidation and provocation we are subject to by public or private security institutions here.

Finally, we, the civil society in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe, are alert, mobilised and committed to the construction of real spaces for social consensus, as a basis for democratising bi-regional processes. Faced with demagoguery, omissions and threats coming from government summits such as this one, our answer is clear: we rely on the fight of our peoples for the construction of fair societies, and of a better and possible world.

PEOPLES RIGHTS COME FIRST! Guadalajara, Mexico, 28 May 2004