



APRN NEWSLETTER

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Civil society groups meet in Bali, amplify people's call to junk WTO

JUNK WTO. Hundreds of protesters from different countries joined the People's March Against the WTO in Bali, Indonesia. The March was part of the People's Global Camp. Photo by APRN Secretariat

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Photo by APRN Secretariat

APRN celebrates 15 years of research for the people

APRN Secretariat | www.aprnet.org

BALI, Indonesia – The Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN) celebrated its 15th year of research for and with the people with a series of activities at the People's Global Camp (PGC) for sovereignty and development in Bali, Indonesia. The PGC is a counterpoint to the WTO MC9 which ran from December 3 to 7, 2013.

APRN Public Forum on the People's Trade Agenda

On December 4, the network conducted the Public Forum on the People's Trade Agenda with CSOs expounding on alternative frameworks to neoliberal trade such as Development Justice and the Bandung Principles as well as the already operating alternatives such as Fair Trade and the Bolivarian Alternative for the Latin Americas (ALBA).

Kate Lappin of the Asia Pacific Women in Law and Development (APWLD) discussed the five foundational shifts of Development Justice, which are: (a) redistributive justice; (b) economic justice; (c) social justice; (d) environmental justice, and; (e) accountability to peoples. As an alternative development framework, Development Justice envisions a new trade and financial architecture that will ensure that poor countries own their development strategies and meet their needs. Sonny Africa of IBON Foundation elaborated on the Bandung Principles of 1955 and their relevance to the current struggles for alternatives to neoliberal trade. Africa highlighted the Bandung Principles' emphasis on the struggle for decolonization of developing countries and genuine south-south cooperation as processes crucial to achieving economic development of poor countries. Patricia Randal of Australia Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) elaborated on the principles of people to people fair trade and the ALBA as among the existing and operational systems that apply the principles of trade to serve the people's interests at the international level.

Speakers from different sectors shared on the impacts of WTO and trade liberalization and what their sectors envisage as alternative development models. Ujjaini Halim from the

Institute for Motivating Self- Employment (IMSE) stressed the need to uphold the principles of food sovereignty to stop export dumping, land grabbing, the loss of local varieties of seeds, and other negatives impacts of the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA). Joselito Natividad of the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) called for providing domestic jobs and ensuring the rights of workers, both local and migrant; promotion of humane working conditions, just wages, freedom of organization, collective actions, gender justice and universal social protection.

Shiela Singh of All Nepal Women's Association [Revolutionary] (ANWA[R]) specified that genuine land reform must be implemented to empower rural women and help them oppose structural oppression and trade liberalization. Adam Wolfenden of the Pacific Network on Globalization (PANG) commented that for the Pacific, neoliberal globalization is actually the flawed alternative because local communities have been practicing sustainable forms of local economies before their introduction to the global market. Sarah Dekdeken of the Indigenous People's Movement for Self Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL) pointed out that like the Pacific peoples, indigenous peoples have been practicing sustainable local economies before their territories went up for sale with the advent of investment and trade liberalization. Kavaljit Singh of the Public Interest Research Center (PIRC) elaborated on the benefits of a banking system that are restrictive towards foreign banks, a system applied by India which helped insulate it from financial shocks. Singh also warned of the high risks in losing sovereignty of a country's development strategies.

At the end of the public forum, the draft statement prepared by the secretariat was revised and circulated to different networks. (*See Statement of the APRN Public Forum on People's Trade Agenda*).

APRN 15th Anniversary Dinner

The network celebrated its 15th year anniversary with a simple dinner attended by both new and old members, partners, and allies.

Former Board of Convenors (BOC) chairperson Antonio Tujan Jr. provided a history of the network, from its roots in the struggles against Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), to being a list serve before developing into a full grown network supporting people's struggles through research, advocacy and training. Jane Kelsey, a former BOC vice-chair, also shared her memories of APRN and lauded the new generation of members as the new unsung heroes that continue to give life to the network. Tyler Dale Hauger of The Karibu Foundation, one of APRN's longest partners, was present at the dinner and congratulated APRN on its 15th year anniversary.

APRN's latest publication, *WTO and Maldevelopment*, was launched during the anniversary dinner. Bonnie Setiawan, one of the authors and also a former BOC member, was present at the event where he also received the complimentary copies of the book and gave a short speech of how he developed his research. He also congratulated the network for its anniversary. To close the event, Maria Theresa Lauron, the current BOC chairperson of the APRN, affirmed APRN's continuing commitment to strengthen its research, advocacy

and training and to strive for greater heights in supporting people's movements.

Other activities

APRN put up two photo exhibits on display at the PGC. Titled 'APRN Through the Years', the photo exhibit showed how APRN developed from a list serve to a network actively advocating on people's issues for the past 15 years.

The other photo exhibit featured Orin Langelle's photos on 'People's Struggles Against WTO and Neoliberal Globalization'. Orin Langelle is a photojournalist and the Director of Langelle Photography and the Global Justice Ecology Project. He is involved in different movements for social justice including the opposition to the Vietnam War in the 1960's.

APRN members and allies also joined the opening march of the PGC and the peoples march against WTO to express solidarity with the people's struggles against WTO and neoliberal globalization. ###

"WTO Bali Package delivers on corporate agenda, jeopardizes people's development"- APRN

BALI— After more than a year of negotiations and a series of marathon meetings at the WTO MC9, 159 member countries have finally come to an 11th-hour agreement signing the unfair, pro-corporate Bali Package (BP). India settled for the four-year Peace Clause on its agriculture proposal. However, this peace clause will protect only developing countries which already have their own food security programs, leaving out poor countries which do not have their own programs yet. Meanwhile Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia and Ecuador withdrew their protest in exchange for the compromise wording with the US to deal with the embargo.

The lion's share of the projected \$1 trillion increase in the GDP as a result of the implementation of the Bali Package will largely go to developed countries and their transnational corporations (TNCs), leaving crumbs to the working people of the rest of the world. The cheaper cost of trade as a result of trade facilitation will only be true for developed countries whose own customs and port facilities are already developed and whose economies can produce large-scale. The package will require developing countries to implement expensive customs-modernization programs without consideration to their local capacity and needs, or else, face sanctions imposed by the WTO through its dispute settlement mechanism. The import-facilitating character of the Trade Facilitation will cancel out any gains made by developing countries from the much contentious G33 proposal on agriculture and the LDC [least-developed countries] proposal which remains non-binding. The flood of imports from developed countries will further weaken the developing countries' local economies

and increase displacement among home-grown businesses, local farmers and workers.

The long-time impasse of the WTO and the signing of a relatively small agreement are signs of a weakened multilateral trading system led by the WTO desperate for a fresh lease on life. They are also a tell-tale signs of how developed countries and corporations are desperate to get out of the global crisis by demanding more market access while providing measly incentives in return and aggressively protecting their own subsidies. The signing of the Bali Package in the WTO MC9 has a potential to create conditions wherein developed countries and their corporations can take dainty steps to eventually gain more momentum.

The Bali Package may seem paltry in terms of the number of areas that it is set to liberalize. However, as Director General Roberto Azevedo puts it, the Bali Package is not the end. The opening of markets and demanding of generous concessions of developed countries from developing countries will not stop in the areas which are to be liberalized by the BP. Considering the issues surrounding the BP resolved signals the start of the talks on the Post-Bali Package that is set to deliver other areas of trade including information technology, environmental goods and services, government procurement, and movement of migrant workers into the clasp of TNC giants through further liberalization.

The signing of the WTO agreement comes at the heels of the imminent approval of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) in Singapore. Although often seen in competition with the WTO in terms of extent of areas

for liberalization, the TPPA, once signed, will contribute immensely in advancing global monopoly capital through giving corporations the right to sue governments and market access to the economies of the developing countries.

The massive poverty and maldevelopment that resulted from the two decades of trade liberalization are enough proof that WTO will not deliver genuine, sustainable development.

Midnight deal in Bali

IBON International | www.iboninternational.org

BALI-- The Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization concluded a new trade deal after intensive consultations almost round the clock from Wednesday 4 December until the early hours of Friday 6 December, followed by overnight meetings of heads of all delegations the following night.

The Bali trade deal is the first multilateral agreement reached in almost 20 years of WTO history. World leaders are now celebrating the Bali agreement for restoring confidence in the WTO after over a decade of failed ministerials.

WTO director-general Roberto Azevedo shed tears during the summit's closing ceremony on Saturday, a day after its scheduled conclusion. "We did it!" said Indonesia's Trade Minister Gita Wirjawan, who chaired the conference.

European Union President Jose Manuel Barroso said "I'm delighted at the news this morning of the global trade deal in Bali. This will give a real boost to the global economy."

"The WTO has entered a new era," remarked U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman. He said that the trade facilitation part of the agreement will be a major boost to U.S. small exporters trying to navigate complex customs rules abroad.

Azevedo affirms this, saying "We're back in business ... Bali is just the beginning."

Many believed the Ministerial was headed for another collapse especially after India declared that its food security was non-negotiable. It made vociferous objections to provisions that might endanger grain subsidies program mandated by its new food security bill. In the end India agreed to an interim Peace Clause that it says would protect existing food stockholding programs of developing countries from legal challenge under the WTO's agreement on agriculture until a more permanent solution is agreed.

At the 11th hour, Cuba objected to removal of a reference to the decades-long US trade embargo that the small Caribbean island-nation wants lifted. Together with Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, Cuba also expressed serious reservations about serious imbalances in the Bali package in favor of richer countries. After negotiations that lasted until the wee

Further measures to liberalize other areas of trade disguised behind the promotion of the global value chains must be preempted. The system needs to be replaced by a multilateral trading system that will forward development justice to meet the needs of the people and enable them to live dignified lives. ###

hours of the morning of December 6, a compromise was struck in the form of a sentence upholding the principle of non-discrimination in goods in transit added to the final declaration.

On the other hand, civil society groups have been mostly critical of the Bali Deal. The Our World Is Not For Sale (OWINFS) network says the Peace Clause agreed only applies to existing Food Security programs, leaving out poor countries that might be in the process of developing such programs.

The APWLD says that "while we endorse the principle that governments should have the autonomous power to manage their own food security policies, without threats and bullying from other countries, we don't think this should be gained in a trade deal that opens up markets through increased 'trade facilitation'."

The OWINFS network says the deal on Trade Facilitation was shamelessly over-hyped in the media in terms of claimed economic gains and that it represents more of the same failed model of pro-corporate globalization and liberalization. "The bad deal binds developing countries to the customs and port-of-entry policies and procedures that rich countries have implemented over many decades to their own advantage, imposing excessive regulatory, human resources, and technological burdens on developing countries."

OWINFS says "The package of policies for the LDCs, which members agreed to almost a decade ago but have failed to implement, is completely non-binding. It is shameful that it was held hostage to rich country demands for pro-corporate rules on Trade Facilitation. This state of unfairness further exposes the WTO as an institution that facilitates the corporate priorities of developed countries over the needs of the poorest members."

"After 12 years of impasse, the WTO makes a midnight deal as a last-ditch effort to renew its legitimacy. But this Bali deal is an omen of a more aggressive neoliberal offensive," says Ario Adityo, national coordinator of the Indonesian Peoples Alliance (IPA). The Bali agreement, according to Adityo, sets the stage for a new expansion of the neoliberal agenda that is geared towards further liberalization of trade and agriculture, and privatization of services and technology.

A statement signed by over 30 civil society organizations including IBON International underscored the need to abandon the World Trade Organization and work towards an "Alternative Framework for International Trade and

Cooperation for Development Justice.” The statement released 3 December says “instead of acceding to the unfair trade and investment regime that is being codified, strengthened and enforced by the WTO, free trade agreements such as the transpacific partnership and other neoliberal economic agreements, we need to abandon neoliberal globalization as a framework for development and international relations.”

Warsaw outcome has seriously undermined the CVC interest

EquityBd | www.equitybd.org

WARSAW, Poland -- On 30 November 2013, eight climate-focused civil society networks urged the government to work out on a concrete climate action plan, as the latest CoP-19 outcome has seriously undermined the interests of LDC and CVC (Climate Victim Countries) in facing climate changed present and future negative impact.

A press conference entitled “CoP-19 outcome: Interest of climate victim countries are really vulnerable” was organized by eight Bangladeshi climate-focused CSO networks, including EquityBd. The keynote paper was presented by Syed Aminul Hoque of EquityBD while Dr. Abdul Matin of BAPA moderated the press conference. In the written statement, Syed Aminul Haque mentioned that the CVC has gained very little out of the climate talks in Warsaw because of frequent non-cooperation of developed countries who are the biggest emitter and responsible for the climate warming.

He added that the most contentious topic for LDC and CVC's interest was the Loss & Damage issue, which has been concluded with establishing a working mechanism which has a three-year mandate up to 2016, and without any clarity on financing, which was strongly opposed by USA and EU allies especially by Australia.

Human chain held to mark International Day to End Impunity

VOICE Bangladesh | www.voicebd.org

DHAKA, Bangladesh -- Rights group VOICE, Media Watch and International Press Institute (IPI) jointly organized a human chain in front of the National Press Club in Dhaka today to mark the International Day to End Impunity.

Speakers called on the government to end impunity and demanded to stop violence against journalists, bloggers, and writers. The event was attended by journalists, human rights defenders, and civil society workers. Among those attended were Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, President of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and IPI Bangladesh; Omar Faruk, President of Dhaka Union Journalists (DUJ); Jahangir Alam Pradhan, General Secretary of DUJ; Ruhul Amin Gazi, the other president of BFUJ; Khairuzzaman Kamal, Treasurer of BFUJ; Rafiqul Islam Sabuj and Rahman Mustafiz, Executive Members of BFUJ. The event was

The statement calls for a “Social Summit on Trade and Development” where social movements, civil society, academics, parliamentarians, local authorities, policy makers and officials from governments and multilateral institutions can gather to discuss and elaborate an alternative multilateral agenda for trade and development based on the basic principles of solidarity, equality, cooperation and respect for human rights. ###

He also recommended for Bangladesh not to wait for aid, but instead use its more than US\$15 billion of remittance. Bangladesh should design the own national climate plan for the future in compliance with the national five-year plan.

In his speech, Dr. Ahsan Uddin said that Bangladesh and the other LDCs are now facing strong opposition with Annex 1 countries along with the recently developed LMDC (Like-Minded Developing Countries) like India, China and Australia etc. He said that these countries are just obstructing the climate talks in every step. They have pushed the Loss and Damage issues, towards uncertainty. The developed countries are offering just a \$100m over the promised \$100b.

Golam Mortoza, editor of Weekly Shaptahik, said that the government delegation of Bangladesh to COP19 should have been more committed to the country and skilled to face the negotiators, ‘because, a little humble sympathy from developed countries would not be enough.... We have to recognize our demand with our own right.’ Dr. Abdul Matin of BAPA said that we should not only focus on claiming climate fund. We have to revise our own climate policy so that we can address issues of power plants like Rampal, as well as corruption. Otherwise, we will be morally and logically weak in the international climate negotiations in the future.###

moderated by VOICE Executive Director Ahmed Swapan Mahmud.

Speakers of the conference urged the government to bring justice for the journalists killed while doing their duties. They also urged just punishment for the offenders, including the killers of Sagar-Runi. A total number of 700 journalists were killed in the last decade, including 93 killed this year. Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul said that impunity, which is pervasive in many forms, is a serious global problem. It works to silence critical voices and create a fearful atmosphere so that journalists and bloggers would stop reporting on crimes and governance, and would restrain from documenting abuses of power, corruption of the governments and individuals. He demanded to end impunity and create a conducive environment respecting principles of human rights.

Ruhul Amin Gazi said that journalists become the enemy of the government since they report abuses of power, other crimes as well as corruption. But acts of violence towards journalists are alarmingly increasing in Bangladesh. Violations committed against media people are clear attack against to their human rights and freedom of expression. Ahmed Swapan Mahmud, Executive Director of VOICE who moderated the programme, told that the chilling effects of impunity lead a society to self-censorship, hampered free speech, ignored human rights principles and undermined democratic practices, and also silenced the voices, putting fear in career and families at risk. He also made mention

that in the movement for free expression, democracy and human rights, citizens, artists, writers, bloggers, scientists, and journalists have been harassed, threatened, tortured, intimidated, jailed and killed. He also cited over 80 organizations based in more than 60 countries that observed the day and led a united voice in the similar call for justice.

Speakers also demanded greater scrutiny, prosecution, punishment, and effective measures to end impunity. They said that it is time to take a more decisive role in combating impunity and focus on all dimensions of the problems, especially in upholding the rule of law and justice. ###

End of feudalism to usher development in Pakistan; land reform is the solution, speakers say

Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research | www.piler.org.pk

KARACHI, Pakistan -- Speakers at a consultation on land and resource rights on Wednesday, November 6, expressed concern over increasing landholding by big landlords and underlined the need to abolish the feudal system which is the main cause of underdevelopment in the country, specifically in Sindh and Balochistan provinces, where big land lords have also acquired political power. The consultation entitled “Responding to the Development Deficit in Sindh: A Dialogue on Land and Resource Rights” was organized by the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER) at a local hotel. The speakers included (a) Senior Economist and Advisor to Balochistan Chief Minister, Dr. Kaiser Bengali; (b) Ms. Sadiqa Salahuddin of Indus Resource Centre, (c) Mr. Karamat Ali of PILER, and; (d) Taj Haider, Secretary General of Pakistan People’s Party (PPP).

According to Dr. Bengali, “We have witnessed a big change in Southern Punjab that there is very low number of tenants of agriculture land, where number of lessee has also increased. Big farms have mostly been developed in Southern Punjab and land is utilized by corporations.”

Dr. Bengali said wherever tenancy farming exists there is no development, because peasants do not get fair share of their labor. “When I was in the government in Sindh, I found that big landlords do not want development in Sindh,” he remarked.

PILER Executive Director Karamat Ali said Pakistan is the only country, where new feudal landlords are created. Upon retirement, army officers are provided agriculture lands which make them new feudal lords. A large number of absentee landlords have deprived the people of their rights of livelihood. He said that the before British colonizers left Pakistan, they distributed agriculture lands to 6,000 landlords in Sindh to impose the neo-colonial system in the country. The lands were provided as gifts of their support to the British in the 1857 mutiny.

Militarization, religious fundamentalism and feudalism are the main hurdles in democracy in Pakistan. Mr. Ali also said that more than 80 percent of the elected representatives in the assemblies belong to feudal families in Pakistan. The bureaucracy in the country also belongs to landed families so there is a direct conflict of interests in the implementation of labor laws and land reforms in Pakistan, he furthered. Ali said the former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had introduced land reforms in Pakistan which the National Assembly passed as the Land Reforms Act in 1977. He suggested that Pakistan People Party (PPP) should introduce the Land Reforms Bill in Sindh Assembly and implement it accordingly, or the PPP should become a party in the Supreme Court’s petition because its founder had introduced the land reforms.

Ms. Salahuddin of Indus Resource Centre (IRC) said that during the 2010 floods, her organization worked in a relief camp in Khairpur. Out of 195 families, only five had their own land, most of the affected were peasants working on the lands of powerful and influential persons who were either in the assemblies or were members of leading political parties. She pointed out that it was incorrect to say that people in rural Sindh do not want to leave their villages when in fact, people are devoid of all social services like education, health and family planning.

Mr. Haider of Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) said the Land Rights Act was passed by Waderas of PPP in 1977. According to him, the provincial Sindh government is planning to set up Hari Courts in Sindh as provided under the Tenancy Act which the law department is already working on. For the manufacturing sector, the government is providing loans through Sindh Bank to the industrialists to restart the closed factories in the province. He sought the support from the civil society and regretted that bureaucracy is causing hurdles in implementation of the government policies. ###



#VOLVEREMOS. CSO representatives who attended this year's Conference of Parties (COP19) of the UNFCCC in Warsaw, Poland walked out during the discussion of Loss and Damage Mechanism, an important aspect of the Climate Talks for developing countries. Photo from IBON International website

Commitments lost, ambitions damaged: No outcome in sight from Warsaw climate talks

IBON International

WARSAW, Poland—After grueling days of intense negotiations between developed and developing countries, this year's climate summit failed to produce meaningful outcomes to address climate change.

Firmly demanding for binding commitments, civil society and developing countries expressed disappointment over a last-minute proposal that again failed to meet impassioned calls for urgent climate action. The said plan, which is crucial in drafting a comprehensive international agreement for the Paris 2015 climate conference, adopted the term “nationally determined contributions” to replace climate finance commitments, but provided no mechanism to ensure that such “contributions” are actually met.

The diluted language of the conference outcome presents a growing problem for poor countries that are most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. It allows further leeway for developed nations to backtrack on their commitments and effectively weakens the position of developing countries that struggle every year from the damages of climate catastrophes. Furthermore, the Green Climate Fund, a crucial operating body for climate finance, remains filled with empty promises and conservative pledges.

“The devastation in the Philippines should be reason enough for everybody to increase ambition AND action. We cannot afford to be stingy (in commitments) and conservative (in vision),” said Tetet Nera-Lauron of IBON International as she tackled the need for ambitious goals in addressing the impacts of climate change.

“The world needs drastic and urgent emissions cuts,” she added.

Citing the refusal of developed countries to agree on the substance of an international agreement for 2015 and the overly branded corporate influence seen throughout the summit, civil society representatives staged a massive protest last Saturday to demand for climate justice. Marcin Korolec, COP 19 president and the Polish environment minister, was heavily berated for holding the climate talks parallel to a ‘Coal and Climate Summit.’

Efforts of developed countries to stall negotiations were also criticized following the walkout of G77+China during the loss and damage talks. In addition, Japan reneged from its earlier commitments to cut carbon emissions as Australia followed suit and expressed disinterest in achieving a workable pathway towards a fair and equitable climate agreement.

Despite the tremendous pressure to come up with positive results, the Warsaw climate talks delivered no substantive outcome and instead allowed dirty energy industries to undermine the fundamental objectives of the UNFCCC itself. Indeed, this year's climate talks attest to the commitments lost in the course of negotiations and the ambitions damaged by the refusal to accept historical responsibilities. ###

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Women say no to WTO during the People's March against the WTO in Bali, Indonesia. Photo from APWLD

The Bali Package is a bad deal for women

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development | www.apwld.org

We, women coming from different countries in the Asia Pacific region gathered here in Bali, Indonesia on the occasion of the 9th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, unequivocally declare that the just concluded WTO Bali Package is not a good outcome for women. We insist any WTO deal is a bad deal.

...the WTO can never deliver justice as it is premised on the pernicious idea that the world needs increased consumption and production that profits multi-nationals.

Since its formation, women have resisted the WTO because it channels wealth and power away from poor women and gives it to foreign governments, corporations and domestic elite. We have opposed it because it triggers land grabbing, forced evictions, exploitative labour migration, reduces food sovereignty and robs women of their livelihoods. The Bali Package breathes new life into a dying institution.

Once again the WTO ignored civil society concerns that labour rights violations, climate change, food insecurity, land-grabbing and most critically – the deepening chasm of wealth inequalities, between rich countries and poor countries, between an obscenely rich elite and the poor and between men and women are exacerbated, rather than assisted by the WTO.

The subsidies as contained in the Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes Agreement will not reach small and marginalised farmers, and will only continue to serve the interests of large scale and corporate farmers who control local production and distribution of food. There is no guarantee that cheap food will be made available to populations living in poverty. Moreover with the Peace Clause and the burdensome reporting requirement, developing and least developing countries expose themselves to future litigation, fines and further incursion on

pro-poor policy making. The package for the least developed countries (LDCs) consisting of Duty Free and Quota Free Market Access will not trade the products of local producers but will promote multi-national corporations' interests to penetrate and monopolise local markets.

And while we endorse the principle that governments should have the autonomous power to manage their own food security policies, without threats and bullying from other countries, we don't think this should be gained in a trade deal that opens up markets through increased 'trade facilitation'. Trade facilitation is said to cut red tape, but it instead cuts poor traders out of people to people cross border trading and forces governments to re-direct funds into corporate subsidies of trade facilitation and corporate infrastructure. The digitalisation of trade does not help small scale women farmers who cross borders with their local produce, it hinders them. It simply makes trade more elitist, more designed to accommodate access to multi-nationals who will displace local producers and local markets.

Trade can be a way of empowering local economies and strengthen women's economic autonomy. But we maintain that the WTO can never deliver justice as it is premised on the pernicious idea that the world needs increased consumption and production that profits multi-nationals. Instead women demand people centered trade where local communities and elected and people centered governments have sovereignty over their own economies.

For endorsements, please contact the APWLD Secretariat at apwld@apwld.org



Push for People's Alternatives to the WTO! Statement of the APRN Public Forum on the People's Trade Agenda

BALI, Indonesia-- Until today, the WTO remains as one of the most important mechanisms of the global monopoly capital in advancing neoliberal trade. After almost two decades since its establishment, the WTO's legacy is the plunder of the world's resources by rich countries and their corporations through unequal trade agreements that enabled them to capture the markets of poor countries, access cheap raw materials and exploit neocolonial labor. Poor countries were made to lower or completely remove protective barriers such as tariffs, import bans, quotas, and other restrictions particularly on agriculture, services, and industrial goods. While hammering for the further opening of economies, developed countries fiercely protected their own through pushing for trade agreements on intellectual property and phytosanitary measures and also by implementing high domestic subsidies for their products.

Due to the unequal and undemocratic nature of the WTO, the Doha Round which supposedly will address the development needs of poor countries was used by developed countries to expand trade liberalization in the areas of investments, government procurement, and competition policies. Contentious proposals and massive protests from the people drove the Doha negotiations to a deadlock for the past 12 years. However, the pursuit of the corporate agenda did not stop. Bilateral and regional free trade agreements (FTAs) became new highways for securing concessions and required poor countries to implement liberalization policies which strip them of hard-won protection measures under the existing WTO rules.

Decades of implementing WTO policies and FTAs under the banner of free trade has not delivered the development needed by the people. Instead, these policies and agreements pushed people deeper into poverty and dependence. Neoliberal policies increased unfair competition for natural resources between agri-corporate giants and small peasants, magnified threats of evictions of small holders, led to fluctuations in crop price in the

global market, resulted into hike in costs of inputs for production. Far from addressing hunger, the AoA facilitated the destruction of the already backward and underdeveloped local agriculture of developing countries. The deluge of cheaper subsidized food imports particularly from the United States (US), Canada, and European Union (EU) destroyed the already backward rural food systems and worsened the poverty of small agricultural producers.

The incipient national industries of poor countries likewise did not survive the intense competition from the large amounts of imports and foreign investments. The resulting destruction of local economies, job losses, ultra-low wages and chronic poverty push millions of workers and their families to become migrant workers. The WTO through its neoliberal agenda delivers fatter profit margins to big capital by privatizing the deployment of migrant workers and cornering the lucrative remittance market, enriching predatory recruitment agencies and banks while ignoring attendant violations of migrant human rights such as trafficking, overcharging of fees, forced labor and criminalization of undocumented migrants. Oppressive social structures that undermine women's rights and welfare are further strengthened by neoliberal trade. The destruction of local economies, the intense competition for natural resources and jobs increased the landlessness of women and forced many of them to accept low-paying jobs in sub-human conditions to feed their families. The privatization of social services and offering them up for grabs by TNCs has negatively impacted women's access to education, water, health, and other vital services.

Investment liberalization and the entry of foreign extractive industries such as logging, mining, and even energy companies have invaded indigenous people's territories. Land grabbing and incursion of foreign investors in their territories worsen the marginalization IPs whose right to self-determination, self-determined sustainable development, and collective rights as indigenous

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peoples their traditional lands, territories and resources are violated.

The liberalization of finance has promoted a global financial market that dominates over the real economy, foments greed and is incapable of supporting needed long term investment in socially and ecologically sustainable production.

The lingering and worsening multiple crises compels global monopoly capital to 'salvage' the WTO in its 9th Ministerial Conference (MC9) on December 2013 in Bali, Indonesia. However, solutions being offered by the neoliberalizers are more of the same. The Bali Package and the post-Bali agenda being pushed in the MC9 are calling for more liberalization in all areas of trade including information technology, environmental goods and services, government procurement, and movement of migrant workers. The recent developments in the negotiations over trade facilitation and agriculture bear evidence to the influence and arm twisting done by developed countries to promote their agenda.

The massive poverty and maldevelopment that resulted from the two decades of trade liberalization are enough proof that WTO will not deliver genuine, sustainable development. The WTO should be junked and replaced by a multilateral trading system that will ensure development justice. Building on the Bandung principles and past declarations of visions for alternatives, governments must adopt a new trade regime based on the following principles that will promote people's development:

1. Respect and uphold genuine democratic processes and ensure democratic participation of marginalized groups, i.e. women, peasants, fishers, workers, indigenous people: groups who are shut out in the current undemocratic and secretive WTO process but bear most of the burdens of unbridled liberalization. People's collective voices should count in planning and implementing development strategies.

2. Respect the sovereignty of countries to chart their own development paths, based on local conditions. For example, policy space must be available to countries to adopt economic development and other domestic policies that promotes human rights, welfare, sustainable development, and the economic equality of the people as well as protect the environment and respect cultural diversity.

3. Provide domestic jobs and ensure the rights of workers, both local and migrant, to humane

working conditions, just wages, freedom of organization, collective actions, gender justice and universal social protection.

4. Ensure access to science and technology as well as access to social services including clean water, public health services, life-saving medicines among others.

5. Promotes alternative forms of regional integration that aim to achieve complementarity and solidarity between countries to satisfy the needs of their population in a much more rational and efficient way.

6. Regulate the financial sector to ensure sustainability and resiliency against financial crisis and reorient it towards the satisfaction of the development needs of the people.

All over the world and at different levels, people are pushing back against the corporate agenda not only by opposing neoliberal policies with street protests and collective actions against corporate intrusions but also with solutions on the ground, proving that there are alternatives after all.

Although highly constrained by the dominant capitalist system, fair trade practices applied in grassroots initiatives on people-to-people trade arrangements in order to facilitate exports from developing countries to industrialized countries at fair prices are very positive when they provide training and technology transfer, foster community development on democratic terms, and the development of long-term relationships of international solidarity.

The Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), on the other hand, is an example of an existing multilateral trade regime, built on principles opposite to those of the WTO. ALBA wishes to consolidate regional economic integration based on a vision of social welfare; bartering and mutual economic aid aimed at rapid achievement of economic redistribution, social justice and economic development goals.

System change is needed. The corporate-centered global economic system implemented by the WTO and similar economic agreements must end. CSOs must continue pushing their governments to resist unfair trade agreements. Existing alternatives both at the community and international levels show that another trade regime, pursuing people's development for a sustainable and just world, is possible and worth struggling for. ###

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Development Justice Now! Junk WTO!

Photo from Indonesian People's Alliance

Declaration of the Peoples' Global Camp

We, representatives of people's organizations, social movements and political forces come together in the People's Global Camp (PGC) in Denpasar, Bali on December 3-6, 2013 to collectively expose, resist and call to junk the renewed neoliberal offensives of the World Trade Organization.

We bring the experiences of struggles from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam, and the United States, to further advance the people's rights and to affirm our collective resistance against the new round of deception and maneuverings pushed by the WTO in this 9th Ministerial Meeting.

The WTO Bali conference is the latest imperialist effort to revive the failed neoliberal paradigm. As the multiple crises continue to reverberate around the world, impacting the poorest both in developed and developing countries, imperialist powers led by the US, European Union and Australia are desperately pushing a new wave of neoliberal globalization through the so-called 'Bali Package' and on the set of issues identified as the post-Bali agenda.

This round of negotiations is a critical arena for monopoly capitalists to circle around, if not dismantle, the roadblocks to further neo-liberal globalization. As WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo puts it, "it is all or nothing now. We must tie the package up once and for all." Imperialists block proposals that ran counter to its interests, and use media to portray India as the culprit for preventing consensus on the Bali Package, although the India-led G33 proposal does not respond to the demands for food sovereignty.

The Bali Package further brings down barriers to liberalization, deregulation and privatization while attempting to lull opposition through vague and non-binding measures purportedly supporting Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Even the so-called "Peace Clause" is a pitiful trade-off as it is only temporary, and comes with difficult conditions to actually provide any protection at all for developing countries.

But even if the WTO fails to deliver on the Bali agenda, monopoly capitalism will find other, more insidious ways to advance their neoliberal agenda through bilateral and regionally negotiated trade agreements.

Neoliberal globalization, imposed through neocolonial dictates or outright coercion, opens the natural and human resources of countries to plunder, and precludes self-reliant and sustainable economic development responsive to the peoples' interests. Rather than mitigate the effects of the global capitalist crisis, the neoliberal regime aggravates the severe impoverishment, exploitation, displacement and repression of the working classes and the rest of the people.

Everywhere, workers face depressed wages and erosion of labor rights, peasants are driven out of their lands, Indigenous Peoples' customs, practices, rights to land, territories, resources and self-determination is violated, fisherfolks lose the riches of the seas and their livelihood, women and children suffer rampant oppression in all spheres and become more vulnerable to violence, youth are denied access to education and jobs, urban poor communities suffer from massive unemployment and are demolished with residents forcibly evicted from their homes and deprived of livelihood, many people are deprived of the basic social services like health, for example people living with HIV/AIDS accessing medicine; and even the middle class are driven into poverty. Tens of millions have been forced by desperation to find work overseas and be treated as commodities and modern-day slaves.

From Seattle, to Hong Kong and now in Bali, people's movements have consistently resisted neoliberal globalization's attacks on people's rights through militant struggle. We asserted the principles of sovereignty, human rights and justice to counter attempts to defend the system that favors monopoly capitalists and the local exploiting classes in our countries.

We in the Peoples' Global Camp, uphold the Bandung principles on international relations based on human rights, solidarity, equality and cooperation set sixty years ago. The Asia-Africa Conference of 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia rejected attempts by major powers to deny the independence of other nations through colonial and neocolonial means or by fostering various forms of dependence. The Bandung Declaration reflects the people's aspirations for genuine socio-economic development as the material basis for national sovereignty.

We, participants of the Peoples Global Camp, call for a just framework for trade and development that is geared towards the realization of peoples' economic, political, social, and cultural well-being.

Rather than mitigate the effects of the global capitalist crisis, the neoliberal regime aggravates the severe impoverishment, exploitation, displacement and repression of the working classes and the rest of the people.

Grassroots organizations and peoples' movements across the world representing those suffering from the unjust trade system set up by the WTO have called for the complete rejection of the WTO and its promotion of trade liberalization and the neoliberal agenda.

We have had enough of misleading platitudes and false solutions. The WTO is not the answer to

address the multiple crises caused and aggravated by neoliberal globalization. Towards our goal for a system change and sustainable development for all, there is no other just, right and immediate call but to JUNK WTO!

Trade and genuine sustainable development for the people and the planet, not for corporate profits!

Development justice NOW!

APMM Statement on International Migrants' Day 2013

This year marks a virtual watershed in global policymaking, with a series of international meetings such as UN High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development (UN HLDMD), the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ninth Ministerial Conference (MC9) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations occurring within the final quarter of 2013. The outcomes in all three meetings are not encouraging, and neither will be the upcoming Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) slated for May 2014.

The UN HLDMD set the tone for this series of regressive responses by international policymakers to profound socio-economic problems besetting the majority of the world's population. To the demands of migrant organizations that the migration discourse be shifted to a rights-based approach, the UN HLDMD responded by reaffirming the validity of the "migration for development" orientation and the GFMD's role in promoting it. This amounts to a virtual slap in the face for millions of migrant workers who have wanted an end to their tribulations abroad and to more humane conditions in their employment destinations. The profit motive is more paramount than ever in the world of migration, and big corporations rule even in the hallowed halls of UN headquarters in New York.

Migrants also joined people's protests in Bali against the WTO's 9th Ministerial, denouncing the organization for exacerbating underdevelopment in sending countries that serves as a push factor in forced labor migration and calling for its dismantling. The developed countries under US leadership responded by clinching a "historic" midnight deal on trade facilitation, agriculture and LDCs – the so-called Bali Package that served as a last-ditch effort by neoliberal globalization to salvage the waning viability of the WTO as a multilateral trade negotiation platform. Rather than reducing the pressure on push factors to migration, the MC9 has resulted in the opposite – and forced labor migration is now expected to increase due to this renewed offensive by

neoliberalism, which is certain to widen the inequitable distribution of the world's wealth and worsen underdevelopment in sending countries.

As a related concern, the TPP currently being negotiated in Singapore is bound to corner global trade for US corporate interests and provoke wars in the Asia Pacific, especially against the extension of China's economic reach. This multilateral deal, dubbed the "Mother of All Free Trade Agreements", will have the effect of reinforcing the impact of the WTO in undermining Third World economies and therefore boosting the push factors of forced labor migration.

While these outcomes amount to a "triple whammy" for migrants and other marginalized sectors that have been campaigning vigorously against these global meetings since early this year, there is a silver lining in the whole equation. These corporate maneuvers serve as practical proof for grassroots organizations on the folly of expecting paradigm shifts to come from the status quo – as developed country governments and their client states constantly collude while paying lip-service to human rights in order to rejuvenate neoliberal globalization's failed agenda. The appalling callousness with which these intergovernmental talk-shops have ignored or rejected demands from below speaks volumes on the duplicity of capital-led initiatives, and shows people's movements everywhere the importance of relying on their own organized strength for effecting the kind of changes they want.

As grassroots migrant organizations all over the world commemorate 2013's International Migrants' Day, the way forward for our common advocacy has never been clearer: we will end forced labor migration by mobilizing in the millions to support people's development at home, even as we promote and defend our human rights abroad. We march towards this goal with or without the approval of the status quo, for a future where migration becomes truly a matter of choice and not of desperation. # ##

..we will end forced labor migration by mobilizing in the millions to support people's development at home, even as we promote and defend our human rights abroad.



The Asia Pacific Research Network is a network of leading research NGOs in the Asia-Pacific. It is active in promoting exchange, coordination and capacity building support in research.

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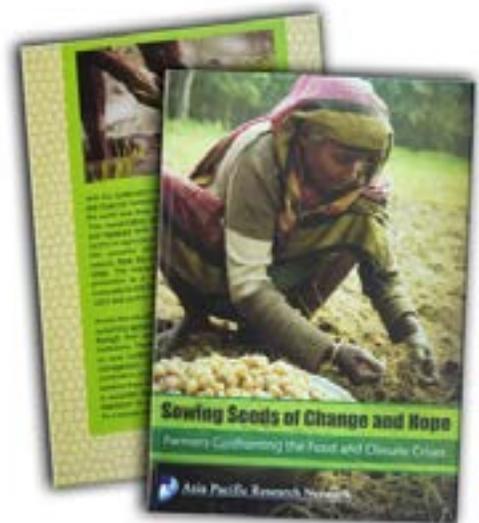
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Available APRN Publications



WTO and Maldevelopment

Two decades since the establishment of the World Trade Organization, only developed countries gained and prospered. Developing countries, on the other hand, suffer from the plunder of corporate economy, giving way for more profit for the rich and powerful nations.



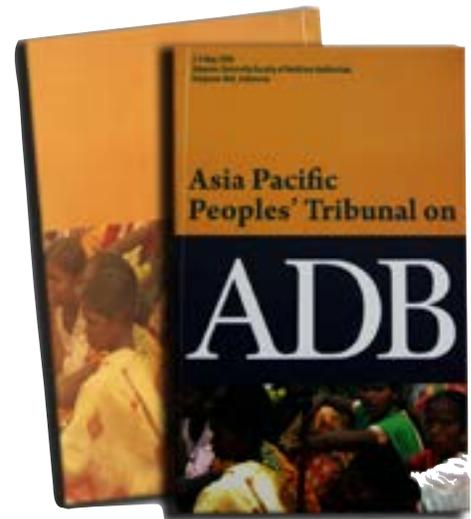
Sowing Seeds of Change and Hope

The food producers of Asia Pacific are now reclaiming agroecological farming systems and methodologies through their own farmers' organizations and other support institutions. These local 'alternatives' from the people are rooted on local context and situation and are mindful of sustainable management of communities' resources



Women Resisting Crisis and War

Although women are mostly at the receiving end of the negative impacts of neoliberal globalization and war, the reality is that they also go through various cycles of coping with, adapting to, and resisting the onslaught of the multiple crises.



Asia Pacific People's Tribunal on ADB

Taking into account the need to create space to examine the roles and impact of ADB on the issue of development, APRN and its members from Indonesia, organized the Asia Pacific People's Tribunal on ADB to gather studies, researches, and testimonies from affected communities on the negative impacts of ADB projects and submit these evidences before a tribunal of law experts, development practitioners and parliamentarians.

Contact the secretariat to get the full list of publications and how to avail of copies.