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## Final Declaration Of The Sixth World Parliamentary Forum - Caracas 2006

The Sixth World Parliamentary Forum, which met in the city of Caracas within the framework of the Sixth World Social Forum of 24 to 29 January 2006, and was attended by Parliamentarians representing the five continents, presents the following declaration at the end of the sessions of 26 and 27 January 2006:

We, the Parliamentarians meeting at the Sixth World Parliamentary Forum on the occasion of the Sixth World Social Forum held in the city of Caracas, reaffirming the Charter of Principles approved and adopted by the Organising Committee of the World Social Forum in São Paulo on 9 April 2001, as amended and approved by the International Council of the World Social Forum of 10 June 2001, the commitments adopted in the Forums of previous years guided by peoples' fight to achieve dignity and respect for human, political, social, economic and cultural rights in the firm belief that 'another world is possible', a world which takes the principles of liberty, self-determination, integration, cooperation, solidarity, co-existence, peace and social justice as the indispensable basis for realising the full potential both of human beings and of the peoples of the world, declare the following:

1. We consider the commitment to democracy to be a space in which the ideas and activities of the various social movements can be debated in a pluralist and wide-ranging way and in which the civil and political rights of citizens - both men and women - labour associations and organisations can be fully exercised. In that regard we Parliamentarians must encourage all activities and mechanisms to foster and promote participative democracy in all spheres of power, whether local, regional, national or worldwide.
2. We reaffirm that achieving peace is the only way of achieving co-existence between the peoples of the world and the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. We declare ourselves against the militarization of international

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relations, the devastating effects of which are being felt especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The fight for peace entails constructing another world based on social justice.

That is why we Parliamentarians, committed as we are to achieving peace among all the world's peoples, promote mechanisms capable of peacefully resolving conflicts and denounce any form of or any attempt at military, political or economic dominance by one State over another.

We highlight and promote the fundamental role played by women's involvement in peace processes as set out in UN Resolution 1325 (2000) and in the Parliamentary and social fight against imperialism and for democracy and social justice. We support the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, their right to the return of their land and to a sovereign, independent State. We support the right of the Sahrawi people to a sovereign, independent State.

We demand the immediate withdrawal of the forces of the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy and other countries occupying Iraq and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories (the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and the Shebaa Farms area). We reject the decision made by the State of Israel to build the wall in the West Bank. We support the right of the people of Puerto Rico to full independence and self-determination.

We support the fight of the Haitian people for self-determination.

We also express our rejection of the arms race and advocate the universal elimination of and prohibition on nuclear weapons; we support the drafting of a treaty to regulate trade in light weapons and call for compliance with the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Mines. This is an appropriate moment vigorously to demand the withdrawal of the many North American and NATO bases, noting in particular the existence of the Guantánamo Base on Cuban national territory which is used to humiliate and torture detainees. We also repudiate the embargo imposed by the government of the United States on the Cuban people to crush their dignity and integrity.

by William Blum

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We condemn Plan Colombia both as another example of imperialist interference and unacceptable militarisation of a country and as a real and specific threat to the stability of the region, a threat which is now in danger of spreading to Central America having been authorised by the last Summit of Presidents of that Region. Likewise, we support any effort based on a negotiated political outcome for peace in Colombia; in respect of the current negotiations between the government and paramilitary groups, we reject the institutional framework under which those negotiations are taking place on the ground that they legalise impunity and the dispossession of land from three million peasant farmers, members of the indigenous communities and African descendants who are currently displaced and forced to live in conditions of abject poverty in cities.

We reject terrorism in all its forms, including State terrorism, and consider that the best way in which it can be combated is to bring an end to poverty, injustice, exclusion, illiteracy, unemployment, corruption and bureaucracy. We condemn the doctrine of pre-emptive war as an aberration, as we do the pretext of the fight against terrorism to restrict freedoms, violate human rights and lash out at social movements. Likewise we reject the idea whereby grass-roots resistance movements are labelled as terrorist groups. We therefore demand the immediate extradition of Luis Posada Carriles on the ground that he is a convicted criminal and self-confessed terrorist.

3. Concerned by the denial of peoples' political, economic, social and cultural rights as an obstacle to the development and integration of peoples, we reaffirm respect for human rights and, from within our respective Parliaments, take it upon ourselves to make a reality of the indivisible, interdependent and inalienable enjoyment and exercise of all rights and fundamental freedoms. In particular we will promote the right to an education which expands horizons, and to health, as social rights of a public nature. We therefore demand immediate compliance with the ruling of the Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, Atlanta, which has delivered justice to the Cuban Five and we consequently call for their release and immediate repatriation.

We recognise the growing strength of movements

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defending the right to be different in their opposition to discrimination and racism of all kinds.

We extend our support to include movements defending hitherto suppressed social groups so that they can achieve social justice.

4. Strengthening integration and cooperation as alternatives to neoliberalism. The neoliberal model imposed on our countries has caused serious damage to the system of production, damage which has led throughout the world to unprecedented levels of poverty, inequity, inequality and exclusion, and is adversely affecting the development, sustainability and governance of our countries. This has been reflected, among other things, by shortfalls in the food supply and literacy, the increasing spread of diseases, health care, the absence or lack of adequate public services, the lack of access to water resources and environmental degradation, which have brought about increased socio-economic impoverishment in our societies, particularly among the most vulnerable groups.

We welcome the rejection by the peoples of France and the Netherlands of the draft European Constitution, the aim of which was to restrict democracy, and to perpetuate neoliberalism and the subordination of the European Union's foreign policy to NATO. We support European workers' resistance to the attempt to liberalise services and place them in competition with each other, thereby undermining the social rights of large economic groups.

Events have reliably shown that the neoliberal policies of the capitalist model do not lead to the overall, sustained development of our peoples, on the contrary they have reinforced international financial capital to the detriment of regional economies, with a marked imbalance working against citizens' living conditions through privatisation processes which undermine collective rights and prevent States laying down guidelines for achieving national development.

We therefore reject free trade treaties such as the WTO Round, the FTAA, and the ACP-EU Economic Partnership Agreement, designed to benefit corporate interests and international financial capital, serving their plans for economic expansion and recolonisation and opposing the

legitimate interests of our peoples, violating national sovereignties, worsening conditions for workers and hurting human dignity.

We call for ties of genuine cooperation to be established between peoples and to that end we support the 'Linking Alternatives 2' initiative to be held in Vienna from 10 to 13 May during the Summit of the Heads of State and of Government of Latin America and the European Union. Likewise we give notice of the Fifth Summit on Social Debt and Latin American Integration to be held in Caracas from 25 to 27 May 2006.

At the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference held in the city of Hong Kong between 13 and 18 December 2005, it became clear that far from achieving the aim set out in its preamble of resolving the serious economic and social issues facing our countries, particularly those adversely affected by an asymmetric trade relationship, the WTO System has helped to increase poverty and inequalities between our peoples by favouring the powerful interests of a few countries arising from their dominant trading position.

In that respect the statistics speak for themselves: over 80 countries still have a per capita income lower than that of ten or more years ago; the accumulation of wealth has reached the point where the world's three wealthiest individuals have a fortune greater than the GDP of the 48 poorest countries; over 3000 million people - half of humanity - struggle to get by on less than a dollar a day. Yet year in, year out, inequalities grow not only between rich and poor regions, but between the citizens of the same country, including so-called 'developed' countries such as the United States and Great Britain.

We reject the pressures exerted on developing countries to force them to open up their markets, requiring them to liberalise their services and reduce their tariffs on manufactured products thereby hindering their technological and industrial development.

We demand the immediate removal of all mechanisms subsidising the export of agricultural products and we demand peoples' rights to food sovereignty.

We consider water to be a human right and therefore reject its privatisation.

We call on governments to assume their responsibility tackling the scourge of major epidemics responsibly (AIDS, tuberculosis, bird flu, etc.) by making public health a greater priority than the profits of the major pharmaceutical laboratories, and by recasting the TRIPS Agreement.

It is therefore a task for all of us, and our joint, shared responsibility to fight against the imposition and implementation of the neoliberal capitalist model and to undertake to ensure the provision of economic and social structures which are accessible to all under the same conditions, to make every effort to implement models of integration and cooperation which benefit peoples as a way of achieving the goals of reducing poverty, hunger and disease and achieving the protection and promotion of the cultural, social, economic, and political rights of people in all our countries, such as the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), the SADC, and the Charter of Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.

5. We reaffirm our commitment to a new order in international relations and a multi-polar world, with an immediate review of the economic relations between the countries and bodies of the world system of governance, taking account of the differing levels of social and economic development which mean that the participation in international trade of some countries, in Africa for example, is barely one per cent.

We consider that recent natural disasters are evidence of worrying changes in climate caused by the action of human civilisation, the irrational nature of the capitalist production model and irresponsible government action.

We therefore confirm our support for the Kyoto Protocol and any international initiative intended to protect the environment through a new model of sustainable economic, social and cultural development. We urge the government of the United States to sign this extremely important International Treaty.

We consider it essential for humanity for national

governments to drive State policies to conserve and restore the environment. Likewise we reaffirm the full sovereign right of the nations in Amazonia and reject any imperialist challenge or challenge by any international body in their regard.

6. We demand the strong presence of grass-roots movements to be recognized, as well as their important role in the construction of alternatives to the capitalist model in its neoliberal globalisation phase. Native peoples and indigenous communities have also a high profile in the social movement. We draw special attention to the victory of the grass-roots sectors in Bolivia and the election to the Presidency of their indigenous leader Evo Morales Ayma.

We acknowledge the fight fought by women who have achieved greater levels of participation in national and State parliaments, their contribution to Democracy in their countries and their contribution to a social and humanist policy for the world. We salute and welcome the victory of President Michelle Bachelet who has been democratically elected in Chile.

7. We, the people attending the Sixth World Parliamentary Forum held on 26 and 27 January 2006 in the city of Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, state our opposition to Law HR4437 which seeks to authorize the construction of a wall along the border between Mexico and the United States, and demand that the emigration issue be resolved by International Law, and not by militarisation, force and the criminalisation of innocent people. We agree to submit a request for a Declaration of Condemnation in that regard to our respective Parliaments. We declare that this inhumane wall would constitute a monument to fascism and intolerance.
8. We reaffirm our commitment to consolidating the international Parliamentary network as a space for thinking and for the in-depth study of relations and the adoption of a common agenda, and for debating and identifying specific mechanisms set out in an action plan which reflects our peoples' views on imperialism and neoliberal globalisation. That conviction leads us to use this Forum as a trigger for social Parliamentarianism able, in the street and with our peoples, to re-establish our democracies from their foundations through grass-roots

involvement and action. An action plan is to be drawn up on the basis of this proposal.

This Forum acknowledges the long list of men and women who have given their lives for the ideals of building a free, just and egalitarian society. We pay particular homage to Schafik Jorge Handal of whom, as the traditional Venezuelan singer-songwriter Alí Primera may fittingly have put it, 'Those who die for the sake of life, have not died at all'.

Caracas, 26 and 27 January 2006, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

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