

STATEMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS ENCOUNTER AT THE ASIAN SOCIAL FORUM

People's Movements - Building Our World

End Imperialist Globalisation, Fundamentalism and War!

We, the people's movements of Asia have come together in Hyderabad from 3-7 January 2003 at the People's Movements Encounters at the Asian Social Forum. This encounter testifies to the increasing resistance of people against imperialist globalisation and that a New World is evolving. We are 35 movements representing Dalits, peasants, workers, women, Adivasis, indigenous peoples, fisherfolks, urban poor and the physically and challenged.

Imperialist globalisation led by the G8 and the transnational corporations (TNCs), facilitated by the WTO and international financial institutions and supported by national elites, has devastated our lives, resources and the environment. As a result we are losing our livelihoods, shelter, land, water, forests and other resources. We have little or no access to food and employment resulting in hunger, starvation and famine. We are being displaced. We face unemployment and bonded form of labour, including forced migration. This has brought increased vulnerability to exploitation, oppression and subordination of our people and communities.

Our productive resources and means of production are being monopolised and concentrated in the hands of the landed elites and a few giant corporations through corporate agriculture. This form of agriculture is externally dependent and promotes hazardous technologies including pesticides and GMOs that threaten health, food safety and the environment. The dominance of corporate control is further entrenched by patents on life forms.

Fundamentalism through fascist forces has led to widespread communal tensions, violence and genocide of communities in Asia. It has eroded the unity of people, universal beliefs and divided people on the basis of religion, caste and race.

The US-led War on Terrorism is the continued global economic, political, social, and cultural domination of the G8 on the world, and entrenches their control of resources especially oil, gas and uranium. This war on terrorism is used by the State to violently suppress people's movements and resistance, and to criminalise and imprison movement leaders. It is used to dismantle all mechanisms that protect and promote the universal rights of people. It has also increased militarisation and the arms trade at the expense of people.

These same imperialist forces with the support of patriarchal institutions and values are further denying the reproductive and health rights of women; their land and political rights; and right to housing. This has increased different forms of violence against women, forced migration, trafficking, violence against tribal and minorities, and has reduced their access to justice.

The society we live in is a caste society based on the purity and impurity concept

hence the practice of untouchability prevails in communities. It has denied the Dalits equal status in society, and land and political rights. More than ever today the communities and people are raising their resistance against these imperialist forces and their lackeys at all levels. Women are resisting the introduction of machines that displace labour. Women have succeeded in preventing the construction of dams. Peasants are occupying lands. Dalits are asserting their rights. Agricultural workers are organising for the right to work and livelihood. Workers are also driving out transnational corporations such as Syngenta and Monsanto. Farmers are practising sustainable agriculture and livelihoods. These are only a few examples of the diversity of the resistance of Our New World.

No one else can speak for us except we in the people's movements. We have our victories, our culture, our political agenda and our aspirations. We have come together here in the People's Movements Encounters to further strengthen, consolidate and heighten our resistance within Asia.

We will forward our struggles with greater determination, force and strength. We therefore:

1. Reject WTO. We will derail WTO at Cancun. Towards this, we will develop actions and proposals at all levels. As a first step we want WTO out of food and agriculture and health. There will be a special Global Day of Protest to derail WTO.
2. Reject TNCs, and we will drive them out of our communities, our nations and in Asia. The resistance that has already been organized, will now be further strengthened and consolidated with special focus on TNCs that promote hazardous technologies particularly Syngenta, Monsanto, Aventis, Du Pont and Bayer.
3. Assert our people's food sovereignty i.e. the right of people to decide our own food and agriculture policy, founded on right to land and productive resources including water, seeds, forests, our knowledge and skills. We will only achieve food sovereignty when we are free and independent from all forms of foreign and local domination. We will take back the Panchami land (land allocated to Dalits by the government) and other lands and distribute land to the landless and women. We reject labour replacement technologies.

We will expand sustainable agriculture and promote sustainable livelihoods. We will have fair prices for agricultural products where Trade will respect the rights of peoples and assert food sovereignty.

4. Protect and promote the rights, equality and dignity of women. We reject and resist the culture of violence and torture arising from repression and subordination, particularly against women. In our rejection of patriarchal values and institutions, we will strongly defend and promote reproductive rights and health of women. Land and other productive resources will be equally distributed to women. Recognising women's role and contribution in food production and use of resources, women are equal partners in the struggle.

5. Resist and will destroy Fundamentalist culture, values and forces through our struggles for democratic rights, equality and freedom. The discrimination and atrocities on Dalits should be immediately stopped and the caste system and untouchability practices eradicated with immediate effect.

6. Strongly oppose the US led war on terrorism. We demand the immediate withdrawal of US troops placed for the war against Iraq. We reject state terrorism on our people and demand the immediate release of all political activists from prison. We also demand transparency and accountability at all levels on the use of people's money, especially on arms trade and defence.

Towards this end we will build international solidarity with people's movements everywhere.