

2003

ANNUAL REPORT



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Anti-war march, Bangkok: Timo Kuronen

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2003 | A year of challenges

2003 posed massive challenges to global civil society. The greatest occurred on April 20, when, in an unprovoked act of aggression reminiscent of Hitler's move into Czechoslovakia in September 1, 1939, the US invaded Iraq.

Even before the invasion, Focus was already active in the movement against the impending war. One of our contributions was to put together an Asian Parliamentary and Civil Society Mission that visited Baghdad on the eve of the invasion, in mid-April. We hoped that along with so many other actions throughout the world, our mission would contribute to a critical mass that would prevent war. After a few days talking to Iraqis from all walks of life, we left a few hours before the bombs began to fall. We left sad at the looming prospect that carnage and tragedy would overtake Iraqi society. But we were also impressed by the spirit of the people, particularly of the young people we met at Baghdad University, who told us that had George Bush studied his history, he would have realized that his troops would face the same fate as the armies that had invaded and pillaged Mesopotamia for the last 4,000 years.

Soon after the invasion, Focus came together with representatives of anti-war organizations from throughout the world in Jakarta in mid-May. The "Jakarta Peace Consensus" that was approved

provided one of the major road maps for the global anti-war movement for the next year.

Even as resisting the US occupation in Iraq drew much of our energies, we were also preparing for the confrontation that was building with the US and the European Union in the realm of trade. At the Fifth Ministerial of the World Trade Organization (WTO) slated for Cancun, Mexico, in mid-September, the powers of global trade were set to drastically enlarge the jurisdiction of the WTO to cover non-trade issues of investment, competition policy, and government procurement, even as they were determined to keep the subsidies to their agricultural interests that were driving millions of small farmers in the South from the land. We at Focus joined others in a massive drive in international civil society to stop the EU-US agenda. The failure of the big trading powers to impose their program in Cancun is often attributed to the united action of developing country governments. That is only part of the truth, since it was the pressure from international civil society on these governments that forced them to stand up to the EU and the US.

Perhaps the most poignant and powerful symbol of civil society resistance to the WTO was our comrade Lee Kyung Hae, who committed suicide at the barricades of Cancun to call attention to the silent



homicide being perpetrated on small farmers all over the world by the policies of free trade and monopoly institutionalized in the WTO.

A third major enterprise to which our staff devoted much time and energy was the World Social Forum process with which Focus has been engaged since it began in 2000. The Asian Social Forum in Hyderabad in January 2003 and the World Social Forum in Mumbai in January 2004 served as the bookends for an immensely successful transfer of the site of the WSF from Brazil to India. The events married the hundreds of indoor teach-ins of Porto Alegre to non-stop dynamic and colorful outdoor marches and rallies staged by workers, peasants, outcastes, and other marginalized groups from India and Asia. In a country where the free-trade, neo-liberal trend appeared to have been securely ensconced at the top levels of government, the ASF and WSF posed the possibility of a radically different future built on justice and cooperation. We would like to think that the impressive events attended by hundreds of thousands of people in Hyderabad and Mumbai contributed to the popular mood that resulted in the ouster of the neo-liberal, fundamentalist BJP government in the recent Indian elections.

Iraq, Cancun, and Mumbai did not, of course, completely monopolize Focus' energies. Among our other activities in the course of the year were providing advice on alternative development strategies to governments in Laos, Vietnam, and East Timor; doing research and educating people on the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund; and working with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific (UNESCAP) to hold a conference challenging conventional poverty-reduction approaches.

I would like to report that the morale of our Focus staff has never been higher as we look forward to the challenges of 2004.

I would like to end by thanking all of those partners, supporters, allies, funders that have provided us the inspiration, moral backing, and material means without which we would not have met the challenges of 2003.

*Walden Bello
Executive Director
Bangkok, May 26, 2004*



2003 | Peace Building & Peoples Security

This programme was extremely dynamic and intense throughout 2003. The year started with a commitment to the February 15 worldwide demonstrations against the war on Iraq and Focus staff were actively involved in mobilising in India, Philippines and Thailand.

In the months preceding the invasion of Iraq, Focus produced several articles analysing the situation, and participated in numerous anti-war events and activities.

Immediately prior to the invasion, Focus mounted an international peace mission of parliamentarians and activists to Iraq, who were in Baghdad from March 13-18, one day before the US invasion. Mission members were Dita Sari, Hussin Amin, Walden Bello, Zulfiqar Gondal and Etta Rosales. (See Box 1)

Following the invasion, Focus acted quickly to convene an international meeting of anti-war and anti-globalisation movements and campaigns, with the intention of developing a common position, strategy and agenda of anti-war activities. The Jakarta Peace Conference was held in Indonesia from 19-21 May, and the resulting document, the Jakarta Peace Consensus (JPC), has become one of the key documents uniting the international anti-war movement and setting

an agenda of common campaigns and activities. (See Box 2)

The key activities identified in the JPC: the Iraq International War Tribunal, the International Occupation Watch Centre, the Anti-War Assembly of the World Social Forum and the International Campaign on US Bases have all developed into viable and vibrant processes and campaigns in which Focus is an active participant working together with networks of other activists, movements, researchers and intellectuals.

The International Occupation Watch Centre was established in Baghdad in August 2003. The founding board comprised eight organisations: Bridges to Baghdad (Italy), Civil Missions for the Protection of the Palestinian People (CCIPPP, France), Focus on the Global South (Thailand), Global Exchange (USA), Institute of Policy Studies (USA), Code Pink (USA), and ZENKO and PARC (Japan). The Centre is staffed by an Iraqi director, local and international staff. Herbert Docena from Focus spent one month working out of the OWC in December 2003, preparing reports on the activities of the corporations, and the implementation of economic reforms in Iraq. The Centre produces regular bulletins, news reports and analysis on the impacts of the occupation



in Iraq. These are circulated weekly via email and the OWC website is updated several times a day (www.occupationwatch.org)

The War Tribunal on Iraq (WTI) got off the ground with an international meeting in Istanbul in September 2003. Campaigners from many countries were represented and agreed on a common framework for the Tribunal, while leaving enough scope for local campaigns to adopt their own approach. The process is progressing well, and to date, hearings have been held in Brussels, Belgium; Hiroshima, Japan; London, UK; Mumbai, India; Tokyo, Japan; Barcelona, Spain; Copenhagen, Denmark; Monterrey, Mexico; Munich, Germany; Osaka, Japan; Paris, France;

San Jose, US; New York, USA, Rome, Italy; and Istanbul, Turkey. (See Box 3)

The US Bases Campaign is developing strongly, with a widespread grassroots base of local and national peace and anti-bases campaigns. At present, more than 100 groups are active in an email list established to connect the various campaigns. Focus helped organise a day-long meeting on the US bases campaign during the WSF in Mumbai in January, and in the late months of 2003, Focus staff were active in facilitating the preparations for this event which was a success beyond all expectations. (See Box 4)

Finally, Focus was very committed to helping organise the Anti-war Assembly of the WSF and facilitated the conference calls for the 14-member planning group. Again, the defining character of this process is that activists and campaigns from all continents in the North and the South worked together to plan and prepare a common event to strengthen international networking and campaigns. Many of the participants from the Jakarta meeting were involved in this project. It was an unequivocal success, and many participants commended Focus for helping to bring this about. A full report of the WSF Anti-war Assembly is Box 5.



Anti-war march, Manila, February, 2003

A WAR ON THE CHILDREN, NOT ON SADDAM

Report of the Asian Peace Mission to Iraq,

13-18 March 2003

In justifying its war on Iraq, the United States has swung between claiming that the country harbors weapons of mass destruction and terrorists to saying that its president is a brutal tyrant who needs to be deposed in order to 'liberate' the Iraqi people.

The first reason is obviously a non-starter given that the case for this justification was built on forged documents, plagiarized dossiers, and exaggerated intelligence. No less than the UN's chief inspector Hans Blix has openly accused the US of fabricating evidence; even the FBI and the CIA were reported to have protested against the distortion of their intelligence reports. Clearly, the UN weapons inspection process has led to and still continues to lead to the disarmament of the country. There is no reason to stop it now.

An Asian Peace Mission, composed of civil society leaders and parliamentarians, went to Iraq on the eve of war not only to express Asian solidarity with fellow Asians, but also to see for themselves the real condition of the Iraqi people and the possible effects of war on the population.

The team was headed by Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, chair of the Committee of Human Rights of the Philippine House of Representatives. Its members include Rep. Hussin Amin, also of the Philippine Congress, representing Sulu province where US troops are planned to be sent for actual combat; Dita Sari, a labor leader from Indonesia and recipient

of the prestigious Magsaysay award; Walden Bello, executive director of Focus on the Global South, a regional policy research and advocacy center with offices in Manila, Mumbai, and Bangkok; and Zulfiqar Ali Gondal, a Member of Pakistan's National Assembly.

The team came out of Baghdad hours before the deadline of the US ultimatum convinced of at least one thing: This will not be a war against Saddam Hussein. This will be a war against the Iraqi people, half of whom are children. They have been suffering from an ongoing war, waged in the form of economic sanctions, and their suffering will only be exacerbated by another war.

Moreover, the oft-debunked yet still oft-repeated analogy between Saddam Hussein and Adolf Hitler that is used to exaggerate the threat of Iraq – and to justify the war – does not stand. Germany in Hitler's time was the most advanced industrialized nation in the world. The mission members found out for themselves that Iraq, contrary to popular depiction, is a country that has been effectively brought down to its knees. It is a ravaged nation.

“Are these the people you are planning to kill?”

The team arrived in Damascus on Thursday, March 13, but – after hours of waiting at the airport – only managed to fly into Baghdad Friday night.

After the parliamentary members' courtesy



call on the Speaker of the Iraqi national assembly in the morning of March 15, the peace mission immediately took off for the Al Mansour Children's Hospital to see for themselves some of the worst effects of the ongoing embargo against the country.

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War in 1991, the United States, working through the United Nations, prohibited Iraq's importation of products that they fear could be used for the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction. In practice, this has meant that thousands of sick children have been denied access to medicine and medical services. According to the United Nations, up to half a million children have died as a direct result of the economic sanctions.

At the hospital, the peace mission visited Salah, a five year-old leukemia patient who is only waiting for certain death. His life could have been saved had he undergone radiotherapy but the chemicals needed have been effectively out of reach because of US fears that these might be used for producing nuclear weapons. Cases of cancer after have increased considerably after the United States used depleted uranium in attacking Iraq during the Gulf War.

The mission also met Murtazan, a three year-old child suffering from lymphoma who may yet survive but only if his treatment continues – an uncertain possibility given the arbitrary and often delayed approval of requests for medicine.

According to Dr Murtada Hassan, the shortage in drugs has been a catastrophe for Iraqi children. Before the sanctions in 1989, an average of only 56 in 1000 children under five years old died every year. In 1999, that number more than doubled to

131 per 1000 children. At Dr Hassan's hospital alone, two to three children now die every week because of different kinds of cancers and complications.


"I feel very sorry when I go to the ward and stand beside my patient," Dr Hassan told the mission members. "I can do nothing for him simply because the drug is not available."

Dr Hassan, who cannot even afford to buy updated medicinal books – much less attend international medical conferences – toured the mission members around the hospital. Economic pressures caused by the embargo, he explained, have meant deteriorating hospital facilities. Of the eight elevators, only two works. There is no Internet connection.

With only a limited number of air-conditioners working, Dr Hassan said most hospital rooms would become unbearably hot once summer comes and temperature hits as high as 60 degrees centigrade. And Al Mansour is already one of the country's premier hospitals. Conditions are so much worse in most of the other hospitals.

Dr Hassan pointedly observed how the US, with its use of depleted uranium during the war, caused the sickness of thousands of Iraqi children. Now, with its enforcement of economic sanctions, it is preventing their treatment and, in effect, ensuring their painful death.

After meeting the children who are yet to die in the cancer ward, the mission were guided to the hospital's art room where Dr Hassan showed the paintings and craftworks of those Iraqi children who have already died. Hanging on the wall were pictures of young Iraqi patients, accompanied with the question, "Mr Bush, are these the people you



are planning to kill?” At one point, Dr Hassan, took some pictures displayed on the shelves, saying, “This one, we lost last week. That one, we lost a month ago.”

Healthy enough to die

The peace mission then proceeded to the headquarters of the UNICEF in Baghdad. There, the UNICEF representative to the country, Dr. Carel de Rooy, briefed them further on the condition of Iraqi children. The picture he painted was dire and bleak. Iraq has one of the world’s worst child mortality rates in the world. In the last decade, it had the greatest increase in mortality rates – worse even than those of the poorest countries in the world. This does not come as a surprise given that the incidence of preventable diseases has increased by more than 100% since 1990. Five million Iraqis lack access to safe water. Eighty percent of them eat too little. Of the women, three out of five are anemic. The percentage of children under five who are chronically malnourished is, in de Rooy’s words, “absurdly high.”

De Rooy stressed that the sanctions are not solely to blame. “But the sanctions have hurt and they have hurt tremendously.” At the root of the Iraqis’ woes, de Rooy conceded, is the economic embargo.

In response to the impending war, the UNICEF is making sure that the Iraqis will at least be healthy enough to resist the sicknesses that war will bring, de Rooy said. If the US attacks power installations and water and sewage treatment plants again, as they did in 1991, the result will be catastrophic in terms of hygiene and the spread of diseases.

What the UNICEF would be doing, in other

words, is – given the strong possibility of a widespread outbreak of diseases – merely to make sure that the children will be healthy enough to die.

The real terrorism

After visiting the sick and the dying, the mission went on to visit the dead.

In February 1991, as the US-led coalition began pounding Baghdad with bombs, scores of families hid at the Al Amiriya bomb shelter in the hope of surviving the war. The thick walls of the structure proved to be no protection.

Around 4am on February 12, a daisy cutter bomb launched by the United States fell on its roof, bore a three-meter hole through floors, and exploded. Four hundred and seven people, most of them sleeping women and children, were instantly killed. It is a number that current US State Secretary Colin Powell – asked in 1991 about how many civilians were killed in the war – is “not terribly interested in.”

The pictures of these 407 war crime victims now line some of the halls of the Al Amiriya shelter, now a museum that preserves the way the place looked like in the aftermath of the bombing. The walls are still black from the ash and the soot. The big gaping hole through the roof and floors has become its central attraction. Mangled and bent wires and rods snake across the pillars. Dark and thick bloodstains forming the outline of the bodies of the victims still mark the floors.

In that instant when the bomb exploded, a mother who was cradling her baby was violently thrown off against the wall, leaving a visible outline reminiscent of “Madonna and child” against the black canvas of the wall.



“This is the real terrorism,” remarked a visitor who was moved to tears by pictures of the roasted charred bodies recovered after the bombing.

In the evening, the mission paid a courtesy call to Abdul Razzaq Al-Hashmi, former ambassador to Germany and France, who argued that the economic sanctions and the threat of war have turned Iraq into a giant refugee camp where people do nothing but eat and sleep.

More self-reliant

The following day, March 16, the mission started the day by visiting the Iraqi Ministry of Health. Dr Umaid Mubarak, the Minister of Health, elaborated on the effects of the embargo and the war. He recounted how the offices of the health ministry was among those that were bombed as military targets during the previous war. For some reason, drug stores and medical dispensaries were also destroyed.

Mubarak riled against the unfair and unjust manner by which the sanctions were being enforced and the process by which the Oil for Food Program was being implemented. Under this program, Iraq is allowed to sell its oil then use its revenues for buying what it needs. But what it needs only a special UN committee virtually controlled by the United States can determine.

Iraq can only make requests for certain items, including medicines, subject to the approval of this special committee. This process has not only been tedious; it has often been capricious. Requests for certain items which could theoretically be used for chemical weapons but which are absolutely necessary for certain medical treatment have been turned down. As much as \$5.2 billion worth

of requests for goods and medicine— earned by Iraq in the form of oil revenues— still have to be delivered to people in dire need of them.


Despite this, Mubarak told the mission that the Iraqi people have not only managed to get by, they have also been forced to be more self-reliant and self-sufficient. “We have become different Iraqis since 1991,” he said.

Like Tybalt

At the Baghdad University, the peace mission members saw for themselves the academic community’s defiant resolve not to let war get in the way of their education. On the eve of war, there were classes as usual. Students were milling on the school’s corridors, playing volleyball on the grounds, or – in one class – studying William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. The team walked into this English literature class and spoke with around fifty, mostly female, college students to ask them what they thought of the coming war.

The students knew what this war was about and what it was not about. They knew their history by heart. On US President George Bush’s pronouncements that they’re bombing Iraq to liberate them, one student retorted, “That’s what those who wanted to conquer Iraq through the centuries all said.”

The US and its allies hope that the suffering wrought by the embargo and the war will compel the Iraqi people to rise up against Saddam Hussein. Instead, they’re only solidifying their support for him. This was evident in the way student after student expressed their support for the regime and their disgust for Bush. “He’s like Tybalt,” one student, alluding to a character in *Romeo and Juliet*, was moved to say.



Professor Abdul Sattar Jawad said that while some buildings in the university were bombed in 1991, he and his students still see the school as their refuge. He recounted how, back then, a Ph.D candidate was defending his dissertation even as bombs were falling down elsewhere in the city.

Jawad thinks the idea that Iraqis will be cheering out of the streets and welcoming their “liberators” when they arrive in Baghdad is wishful thinking. He says that the embargo has definitely affected the educational system by making it difficult to import books and by making it impossible for him to attend international academic conferences.

Jawad, who lectures on American writers like William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald, said he’s finding it increasingly difficult to teach his students to distinguish between American culture and American aggression. In the face of a hailstorm of bombs, he asks, “How can I convince my students that American culture or democracy is good?”

But he is convinced and, it seems, so are his students. Asked whether the books they’re studying shows that the United States is inherently aggressive and violent, the students were unanimous in saying “No.” All of the students agreed that continuing to go to school is their strongest statement in showing their resolve not to be dampened by the threat of war. Staying at home, they said, is already a sign of despair and surrender.

International solidarity

After the visit to the university, the mission went to the Press Center at the Ministry of Information building where scores of international news organizations have set up offices and have even put up camps to monitor the situation in Baghdad. During the press

conference attended by reporters of media outfits from Europe, Canada, and the Middle East, the mission discussed their objectives for coming to Baghdad at this critical time.

Rep. Etta Rosales stressed that the mission hopes to express a strong message of Asian solidarity to their fellow Asians, the Iraqi people. Rep. Hussin Amin emphasized that his district in Mindanao may soon be the next target of American military deployment. Zulfiqar Gondal answered questions about the sentiment of the Pakistani people regarding the war. Dita Sari shared the Indonesian people’s sympathy for their fellow Muslims who will be most affected by the conflict.

The press conference was broadcast that evening on Iraqi and Arab television, enabling the team to accomplish one of its primary objectives: to convey the message of Asian solidarity directly to the Iraqi people in their hour of need.

Afterwards, some of the mission members went to Baghdad’s Freedom Square to attend the unveiling of a giant anti-war mural painted by famous Korean artist Choi Byung Soo. There they met other peace delegations from Mexico, Japan, and Korea. At one point, the mission was approached by a man struggling to say in English that Iraqis were very happy to have all of them in their city.

In the evening, the team organized an Asian Solidarity Night to gather and discuss with representatives of many of the other foreign contingents who have gathered in Baghdad to oppose the war. They shared their findings, insights, and plans with peace activists from as varied a set of countries as Australia, Ukraine, Russia, Italy, Canada, Sweden, South Korea, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.



They also used the occasion to formally acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Kathy Kelly from Voices in the Wilderness, the organization that has been sending batches of Americans to Baghdad, including some 9–11 victims; Han Sang Jin of the Nonviolent Peaceforce–Korea; Wadah Qasimy and Hasan al–Baghdadi of the Iraqi foreign ministry; and Fahdi Hefashy, honorary consul of the Philippines to Syria; and Grace Escalante, Philippine consul general to Iraq.

Some of the foreign delegates who were in Iraq plan to stay on even during the war. They give themselves just a twenty per cent survival rate in case war breaks out. A number of them are determined to camp out as “human shields” to protect military targets such as hospitals, bridges, power installations, and water treatment plants. Bombing these sites is considered a war crime.

Evacuation

The program of activities was independently designed and discussed by the mission members – not imposed or pre–arranged by the Iraqi government. In between the events, the mission had the chance to interact with Iraqis from all walks of life – taxi drivers, waiters, government employees, shopkeepers, policemen, etc. These interactions were spontaneous and random – not guided by minders from the Iraqi government.

By the night of March 16, the Palestine Hotel, where the mission and many other foreign journalists and peace activists were staying, was abuzz with the news of Bush’s final ultimatum to the United Nations and Saddam. Not a few delegates were seen openly shedding tears and bidding goodbye to those who were leaving and those who were staying.

The team was originally planning to stay on until the night of March 17 – possibly even the 18th – but by this time, it had been announced that the flight back to Damascus had been cancelled. The price of renting vans for overland trips across the border had more than tripled and there was less and less assurance of securing one as staff of embassies, UN agencies, as well as Iraqis scrambled for vehicles. The evacuation of Baghdad began even before the mission arrived but accelerated on the night of March 16, the even of the US ultimatum on Iraq to disarm.

It was for these reasons that despite their intent to continue their fact–finding mission, the mission was forced to pack up and leave the following morning, heeding the urgent and insistent advice of the Philippine consul general. On the road to Damascus, the mission encountered cars ferrying families fleeing to safer ground and forming long queues at the gasoline stations.

As the team was leaving the country at the Iraq–Syria border, the team chanced upon and talked with a group of volunteers from Morocco, Algeria, Palestine, and Syria who were entering Iraq to fight the United States and its allied troops. After a grueling 15–hour trip, the peace mission arrived in Damascus on March 18 then left for Manila, Jakarta, and Karachi the next day.

The mission promised to bring the message of the Iraqi people back home to their respective countries: This is not a war against terrorists. This is not a war against Saddam. This is a war against the Iraqi people, especially the children who make up half of the population.



Mission members:

Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, Head of Mission, Akbayan! party-list representative to the Philippine House of Representatives and chair of the Committee on Human Rights

Prof. Walden Bello, executive director, Focus on the Global South (Mumbai, Bangkok, Manila)

Zulfiqar Ali Gondal, Member of Pakistan's National Assembly

Dita Sari, labor leader from Indonesia, Magsaysay awardee, 2001

Rep. Hussin Amin, representative of the first district of Sulu, Philippine House of Representatives

Jim Libiran and Ariel Fulgado, reporter and cameraman from "The Correspondents," a television documentary show

Herbert Docena, Research Associate, Focus on the Global South



INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION AND MILITARISM

International Peace Conference

19-21 May 2003 in Jakarta

JAKARTA PEACE CONSENSUS

We the undersigned, peace and justice activists representing social movements and networks from 26 countries in Asia, Europe, Australia, Africa, Latin and North America, have come together in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Over the last three days we have voiced our outrage at the escalating military aggression led by the US government, most recently against Iraq.


We declare the war and invasion of Iraq to be unjust, illegal and illegitimate and call on the international community to condemn this US-led aggression. We demand an immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Iraq and that Iraqis be allowed to determine their future in line with the principle of self-determination. This conference calls on all governments to withhold recognition from any regime set up in Iraq by the US occupiers.

We propose to the peace and justice movements the establishment of an international Peoples' Tribunal to pass judgement on the perpetrators of the war and investigate war crimes. The war allies must take political, moral and economic responsibility for their crimes. This includes the payment of war reparations directly to the Iraqis, who should administer the reconstruction of their country independently of the control of foreign corporations, the World Bank, the IMF and UN. Similarly, permanent members of the UN Security Council must take responsibility

for the effects of more than 10 years of sanctions. We call for the scrapping of all Iraqi debt. At the same time we note the hypocrisy of the US government in calling for this cancellation to serve its objectives, while demanding payment of onerous debts from all other developing countries.

While tanks and bombs destroyed Iraq, in nearby Palestine the US-backed Israeli armed forces continued to murder, harass and incarcerate the Palestinian people in measures reminiscent of Apartheid South Africa. We commit ourselves to the international struggle for the end of the colonial occupation of Palestine, and call for the dismantling of all Israeli settlements and the right of return for all Palestinian refugees. We condemn the continued US interference in Palestine and demand the recognition of Palestinian national rights as a precondition for a just and therefore lasting peace in the region.

We see the invasion of Iraq as part of the on-going economic war against peoples of the South. Under the rules of the IMF/World Bank and WTO our world is becoming increasingly unjust and unequal. The WTO meeting in Cancun, Mexico, in September will be another forum at which the leaders of the imperialist world will plan their strategies. They are plunging the world into a series of wars in the quest for oil, for economic and political hegemony and to ensure the subjugation of the working class and impoverished masses.



In the name of fighting “terrorism” the US government has created the indefensible concept of pre-emptive war. Beneath this banner it has attacked Afghanistan yesterday, Iraq today, while tomorrow’s targets may be Syria, Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba or any other nation that is seen as opposing the US government’s political and economic interests.

We note with concern the growing militarisation of the world, which is expressed both in open and covert wars and the proliferation of US military bases, increasing military expenditure and military operations. We also oppose acts of aggression, whether they be against the people of Aceh, Mindanao, Kashmir or Kurdistan. In this atmosphere of militarism, police harassment of marginalised communities, migrants and ethnic minorities is escalating. We call for global disarmament. In particular we demand the decommissioning of all nuclear weapons. We support the call for the Middle East to become a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, not least in Israel, the state with the most destructive capacity.

We resolve to continue to build the international peace and justice movement, which showed its strength so dramatically on 14–16 February, 2003, where millions marched against the war in Iraq.

Our principles include building a genuine internationalism from below, where we establish a new international community based on equality and democracy. While our work is international, we will also challenge our own national governments where their policies contribute to war, militarism and neo-liberalism. We oppose war in all forms whether open, declared, interstate war, war against social movements, economic war against the poor peoples of the world or war

against political activists and opponents of the dominant order. We aim to maintain the broadest possible unity among our diverse organisations including organisations from the Islamic community, environmental groups, and movements opposing racism and sexism. Our work will be linked to the growing social and class movements resisting neo-liberal globalisation, as war through guns and bombs is only the bloodiest expression of domination by neo-liberalism and imperialism.

We believe that a world free of war, exploitation, inequality, poverty and repression is possible. We see the reality of this alternative visible within the the growing movements of youth, women, workers, students, migrants, the unemployed, human rights and peace and justice activists and citizens who are bringing their spirit, energy and work together in the fight for genuine peace based on global justice for all the world’s peoples.

We call upon all organisations, social movements and persons who share our analysis and plan of action to join our common efforts oriented towards the creation of a worldwide Solidarity Network for Global Peace at a future time, particularly during the meetings in Evian (G-8 summit), Cancun (WTO-Conference), the regional Social Forums and the next World Social Forum in Bombay.

WORLD TRIBUNAL ON IRAQ

PLATFORM TEXT

Istanbul, October 29 2003

Origins of the project

The idea that had sprung up in several places around the world of organising an international tribunal against the war in Iraq, was discussed and in principle supported at the Anti-War Meetings in Berlin, Jakarta and Geneva, Paris and Cancun. The Jakarta Peace Consensus made a declaration committing itself to the realization of an international war crimes tribunal. The Networking Conference (European and Cordoba Networks for Peace and Human Rights) organized by the Bertrand Russel Peace Foundation in Brussels also devoted time and space for the discussion of the issue and the idea received broad support.

The working group formed at this networking conference in Brussels on 26/27 June, 2003, discussed the idea and possibilities of convening an international tribunal to investigate and establish the crimes perpetrated against the people of Iraq and humanity. The group in Turkey was entrusted with the task of acting as the secretariat and clearinghouse, carrying out the coordination in close contact with the groups in Brussels, Hiroshima, New York, London and others.

The meeting of the Coordination Committee in Istanbul on October 27-29 2003 decided upon the concept, the form and the aims of the project.

The legitimacy of the project

A war of aggression was launched despite the opposition of people and governments all over the world, yet there is no court or authority that will judge the acts of the US

and its allies. If the official authorities fail, then moral authority can speak for the world.

Our legitimacy derives from:

- * taking this initiative owing to the failure of official international institutions to hold accountable those who committed grave international crimes and constitute a menace to world peace;
- * being part of the worldwide anti-war movement which expressed its opposition to this invasion;
- * the Iraqi people resisting occupation;
- * the duty of all people of conscience to take action against wars of aggression, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other breaches of international law;
- * acting on the basis of the struggles of the past to develop systems of peaceful co-existence and prevent future aggression and breaches of the UN Charter;
- * giving voice to the voiceless victims of this war we are articulating the concerns of civil society as expressed in the most active parts of the social justice and peace movements;
- * bringing the principles of international law to the forefront.

Our legitimacy will be earned through the process of achieving our aims.

The tasks of the tribunal

The first task of the tribunal is to investigate the crimes committed by the US government in launching the Iraq war. In spite of the world movement that condemned this war and against all international legislation the US government forced its premeditated war-

strategy upon the world. Moreover the US-government requests impunity and puts itself above all international laws and conventions.

The second task is to investigate allegations of war crimes during the aggression, crimes against occupation law, genocide and crimes against humanity. These may include the sanctions, the use of illegal weapons which kill over generations, such as uranium weapons.

The third task is to investigate and expose the broader context of the New Imperial World Order. The tribunal would therefore consider the doctrines of “pre-emptive war” and all its entails: “benevolent hegemony”, “full spectrum dominance” and “multiple simultaneous theatre wars” In this process the tribunal will investigate the vast economic interests that are involved in this war-logic.

The tribunal will, after examining reports and evidence, listening to witnesses (Iraqi and international) and hearing victims, reach a decision.

The aims

In organising this International Tribunal we pursue four fundamental aims.

1. Our first goal is to establish the facts and to inform the public about crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes during the occupation, about the real goals behind this war, about the inspiration of the American politics and the dangers they present for world peace. This is especially important to contribute in breaking the wall of lies diffused by the war-coalition and their imbedded press.
2. For the peace movement and the global anti-war protest, the tribunal presents an opportunity to continue mobilisation. The tribunal should not remain an academic

endeavour but should be backed by a strong international network. Anti-war and peace movements, which carried out the big mass movements against the attack on Iraq have in principle adopted the idea of indicting the aggressors and turning this into a campaign.

3. We consider the tribunal as a continuing process. The investigation of what happened in Iraq is of prime importance to restore truth and preserve collective memory against the constant rewriting of history. We have to challenge the silence of the international institutions and impress on them to fulfill their obligations to international law. In judging the recent past our aim is to prevent illegal wars in the future. In this process the tribunal can formulate recommendations on international law and expand notions of justice and ethical-political awareness. It can contribute to break the tradition of victors' tribunals and give a voice to the victims of the war. In doing so we support the demand of large parts of world public opinion and the Iraqi people to end the occupation and restore Iraqi sovereignty.
4. The International Tribunal initiative wants to inscribe itself in a broader movement to stop the establishment of the new imperial world order as a permanent state of exception with constant wars as one of its main tools. The Tribunal can bring a moral, political and judicial judgment that contributes to build a world of peace and justice.

Form of the tribunal

The general plan is to hold an independent world tribunal with: associated events, associated commissions of inquiry, commissions of investigation, hearings and specific issue tribunal sessions in various countries, culminating in a final tribunal session in

Istanbul. So far, there will be hearings in Brussels and Hiroshima. Other proposals at the moment include New York, Copenhagen and Mexico. Associated events will be held in London and Mumbai.

Being confronted with the paradox that we want to end impunity but we do not have the enforcement power to do so, we have to steer a middle way between mere political protest and academic symposiums without any judicial ambition on the one hand and on the other hand impeccable procedural trials of which the outcome is known beforehand. This paradox that we are just citizens and therefore have no right to judge in a strict judicial way and have at the same time have the duty as citizens to oppose criminal and war policies should be our starting point and our strength.

Although these commissions of inquiry will be working in conformity with an overall concept that will apply to the whole tribunal (spelled out in the Charter), the hearings will also have some autonomy concerning format. By approaching the Iraq case from as many angles as possible (international law, war crimes, occupational law, political and economical analysis'), we strengthen our common objective to end impunity and resist the imperial wars. In this way the hearings will mutually enforce each other and all the findings will be brought together in the final session in Istanbul. In order to be as inclusive as possible, we will support and recognize all endeavors to resist impunity. The project will endorse and support the efforts to bring national authorities and warmongers to national (like the complaint

against general Tommy Franks in Belgium) or international courts (ICC). Timing

The core series of hearings will start on Wednesday April 14 2004 in Brussels and end in final tribunal session in Istanbul that will start on March 20 2005, second anniversary of the start of the war in Iraq. These will be preceded by intensive inquiries, networking and campaigning.

Appeal to the national and international movements

We address an appeal to all organizations and individuals to support this project.

We invite organizations to endorse and participate at various levels. They could:

1. Undertake to organize a hearing or an associated event.
2. Host a hearing.
3. Contribute by contacts, names of people who would qualify to take part in the various components of the tribunal and establish the initial contacts with those people.
4. Contribute names & contacts of persons and organizations of expertise who are already researching into the various aspects of the crimes and violations in question.
5. Undertake to follow up with the preparation of certain reports and make them available for the use of the tribunal.
6. Build a web page in as many languages as possible and constant flow of information.
7. Undertake to organize the local campaigns around the tribunal.
8. Contribute financially towards meeting the expenses involved in realizing this tribunal.



REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL US BASES CONFERENCE

*World Social Forum 2004 Mumbai, India
17 & 20 January 2004*

By many accounts and according to the feedback from many participants, the international anti-US bases conference during the World Social Forum 2004 in Mumbai was highly successful and very promising. It brought together 125 participants, including many long-time and new anti-bases campaigners, from as many as 34 countries. It provided a space for people to share their experiences living with US military presence and present their own local struggles to confront it. More importantly, the conference gave them an opportunity to put their heads together and begin thinking about a joint and collectively coordinated global campaign against US bases.

Held during the WSF, an annual gathering against corporate-driven globalization and war, the conference allowed the activists to contextualize the anti-bases movement as part of a broader global movement against neo-liberal globalization and imperialism. With this conference as the first step, the potential from bringing together anti-bases activists around the world is now being realized.

Highlights

The conference is a continuation of the process of initiating and launching an international campaign against US foreign bases.

It gathered 125 participants from 34 countries, with many community-based anti-bases campaigners as well as representatives from other movements and campaigns such

as environmental and human rights groups, anti-IMF-WB and anti-debt campaigners, as well as from the women's movement.

The conference had two sessions: The first cast the issue of US foreign military presence and the campaigns against as part of the larger process of corporate-driven globalization and the resistance to it. In this session, the US' motives for stationing troops and military hardware abroad was assessed. Twenty panelists from around the world shared their experiences struggling against US bases over the years.

In the second session, the group began discussing what the objectives of the network should be, what specific projects need to be undertaken, and how best to work together.

As priorities, it was suggested that the group refines the meaning of "US military presence", continue to monitor US bases around the world, as well as map the growing resistance to them. For the network to mobilize more people, a website was deemed necessary and the list-serve must be expanded. Participation in the March 20 Global Day of Action was highly encouraged. The best date for an International Day of Action against US Bases is still being debated.

Certain political and operational questions began to emerge: To what extent should the campaign focus exclusively on US bases? Should the perspective be anti-imperialist or antimilitarist?



Would it be strategic to focus on key sites of struggle? What would be the value-added of an international network?

To thresh out these issues and to plan further, a larger and longer gathering was proposed to continue the process of launching an international campaign.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

January 16-21, 2004


Mumbai, India

February 15, 2003 will from henceforth be remembered as the day of the biggest global mobilization in history. Around eight to fifteen million people poured out into the streets in hundreds of cities around the world to protest against the war on Iraq. It is a war that has brought to fore the links between corporate-led globalization and militarisation: the same forces and motives driving neo-liberal globalization are the same forces driving war and with the same effects of destruction and misery on the powerless. As a result, it is war that has forced the convergence between the peace movement and the anti-corporate led globalization movement where they have been previously separate. In many cases, it was the former that provided the organizational base, the networks, and the analyses to the anti-war cause. Both movements have been broadened and reinvigorated as a result. A global peace and justice movement is born.

This emerging movement was the product of extensive organizing at the grassroots level and coordination at the international level. Before and after the war on Iraq, various significant anti-war strategy meetings and conferences were held in Florence, Cairo, Chiapas, London, Jakarta, Geneva, and

Genoa. But for geographical and financial constraints, most of these gatherings were small relative to the movements' very broad constituency and not very representative relative to the movement's diversity. In these dangerous times, there is an urgent need to bring together the largest and most representative assembly of anti-war and anti-corporate globalization activists to date. The war on Iraq has seen the emergence and strengthening of a global peace and justice movement; it is now time to discuss and decide on how this movement should move forward.

The coming World Social Forum (WSF) in Mumbai affords us this opportunity. The WSF expects to draw around 100,000 delegates from India and up to 10,000 delegates from around the world – most of them deeply committed and actively involved in both the anti-war and anti-neoliberal globalization struggles. The WSF offers the most practical possibility for advocates to gather in one space, imagine themselves as part of something bigger, and think together and debate on the movement's next steps. As such, being a once-a-year event, all efforts must be taken and no stones should be left unturned to ensure that this event becomes



the biggest and most representative meeting of anti-war movements to date.

The WSF Anti-War General Assembly should be an occasion for analyzing and debating the current global conjuncture as it relates to militarisation and globalization and for assessing the nature and experience of the antiwar movement in the run-up to the war. More importantly, the Assembly could be a venue for discussing the movements' priorities and strategies and come out with a detailed and concrete plan of action for its campaigns and projects for the coming year. Given that some of these campaigns have since been conceived, the Assembly could also be an occasion for launching anti-war projects such as the International People's Tribunal on Iraq and the international campaign against US bases.

Holding the event in the WSF should serve to further underscore the fusion between the so-called traditional peace movement and the anti-neoliberal movements that made up the mass of the anti-war movement in many countries. As one of the possible major events of the WSF, the assembly should also address what some observers have pointed out as the WSF's preoccupation with corporations and neoliberalism without much heed to the militarization that accompanies these forces. Hence, by ensuring that previously "traditional" peace movements are invited and welcomed to the event, the Assembly could serve to broaden and strengthen the movement further. By articulating the links between militarization and corporate-led globalization, the Assembly could also serve to sharpen the movement's focus and analyses.

It is clear, that this peace movement is up against the strongest and most militarist regimes in history. The so-called "war

against terror" promises to be an unrelenting offensive. World defense expenditures are also on an increase, as is nuclear proliferation and new missile systems. In this context, it is necessary to sustain the movement, link it with other social and progressive movements, broaden the base, and move forward. For this, a meeting of activists and peace movement organizers—the largest and most representative possible—is of critical and of urgent importance.

Assembly working group

Work on the Assembly began last September. At first there were just a number of groups but with a concerted effort at reaching out to others, the working group became highly representative of the anti-war movement. It has organizations from almost all continents, many of the largest anti-war coalitions, the social movements and also many key and strategic groups working against corporate globalization

Members of the working group: Anti-War Coalition, South Africa Salim Vally; Asian Peace Alliance Nighat Said Khan; Asian Peace Alliance-Japan Toshi Ogura; ATTAC Japan Yoko Akimoto; Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament-UK Kate Hudson; Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace-India Kamal Chenoy/ Achin Vanaik/Anuradha Chenoy; Focus on the Global South Mary Lou Malig/ Herbert Docena/ Nicola Bullard/ Varsha Berry; Global Exchange/ United for Peace and Justice US Paul Le Blanc; Hemispheric Social Alliance Gonzalo Berr?n; International Civil Campaign for the Protection of the Palestinian People (CCIPPP) Nahla Chahal; Italian Movements of the European Social Forum Paola Manduca/ Luciano Muhlbauer; Peace Boat, Japan Nami Yamamoto; Red Mexicana de Accion frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC)/ Serapaz



Miguel Alvarez Gandara/ Hector de la Cueva; Social Movements Network Diego Azzi/ Gustavo Cudas; Stop the War Coalition–Greece Petros Constantinou; Stop the War Coalition–UK Chris Nineham

The Assembly was a self-organized event registered with the World Social Forum. It had the following component events:

Conference on US Occupation of Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan: A major conference at the WSF it helped set a more informed political context for the all-day strategy meeting the next day.

Closing Conference: The Anti-War Assembly held jointly with the Social Movements a final conference of the Activists Assembly.

It announced and affirmed the movements' decisions on its plans and priorities and produced a common declaration.

Solidarity March: Led by the Asian anti-war movement, several anti-war coalitions marched together during the closing march of the WSF.

The Strategy Session: There was a whole day Strategy Session where there were open discussions and debates on the movements' strategies, plans, and priorities.

Activists' Assembly: open meetings among anti-war activists, social movements, NGOs, etc. in attempt to deepen the links among them and coordinate their actions.



2003 | Trade

In 2003, the main focus of the trade campaign was the derailment of the Fifth Ministerial of the World Trade Organization in Cancun, Mexico.

Together with social movements, trade unions, national coalitions and international networks, the Focus trade team worked on the derailment of the Cancun Ministerial. It implemented a multi-pronged campaign strategy: monitoring governments in Geneva, providing high quality and timely research and analysis for national and international networks, coordinating with national movements, particularly in Asia, and helping organize mass mobilizations around the globe.

National

At the national level, Focus supported, encouraged and played a key role, in the national campaigns to derail the WTO.

In the Philippines, Focus helped initiate a national coalition named Stop the New Round! Coalition. The coalition had a diverse and representative membership from fisherfolk to farmers movements to trade unions, policy analysts, the academe and trade campaigners.

The coalition brought together a very wide and diverse range of groups, movements and people who have not

previously worked together on trade issues. It implemented a multi-pronged strategy, demanding disclosure from government, and calling for public debate on governments negotiating positions on agriculture and the new issues. Alongside direct engagements with government, the coalition also worked on mobilizing public opinion by conducting workshops, seminars, debates and teach-ins in 21 provinces all over the country. During the week of the ministerial, the coalition sent some representatives to Cancun to step up the pressure on the government delegates and to monitor and report back to the capital. A series of provincial and regional discussions and mobilizations were also initiated by SNR! broadening the campaign constituency to well over 5,000 people nationwide. The coalition spearheaded the mobilization for the global day of action against the WTO with a big demonstration of around 10,000 to denounce further liberalization in agriculture and the new issues.

In Thailand, Focus worked with an NGO working group called Thai Action on Globalization to carry out the campaign. A series of seminars was organized in Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Songkhla and Bangkok to raise public awareness on the WTO issues. The



campaign also brought the issues of the WTO and trade liberalization to the attention of formal institutions of national governance, particularly the Senate and the Human Rights Commission. Focus Thai staff were invited to join various seminars and radio programs organized by progressive senators. The campaign culminated in a public hearing session was sponsored by the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee in which trade negotiators from the Ministry of Commerce shared views on the issues of the AoA, TRIPs and new issues with NGOs and academics and answered questions from the audience. The session was videotaped and later aired on national television.

Focus' allies in the trade program expanded visibly this year due to an effort to reach out to the state enterprise trade unions. The September 9 march on the US embassy and the EU office saw over 500 state enterprise workers joining over a thousand farmers, people living with AIDS, urban slum residents, students, academics and NGOs.

As part of the overall strategy to "derail" the WTO ministerial, the India Programme worked on national and international actions that would help it achieve this objective.

The Asian Social Forum was the first

major platform to launch the campaign and Focus invited S. N. Menon, the chief negotiator within the Indian Commerce Ministry to debate with the central trade union leaders, Walden Bello and with other activists from social movements.

The India Programme actively participated in programmes of 'WTO Virodhi Jan Abhiyaan' (Coalition of Peoples' Movements Against the WTO). Working with this Coalition, Focus organized a western region meeting of social movements, trade unions and peoples struggles against the Cancun Ministerial Conference in May 2003. This meeting received solidarity support from All India Trade Union Congress, CITU, All India Peoples Science Network, National Alliance of Peoples Movement (NAPM) Land-Water-Forest Movement of Maharashtra, Youth for Unity & Voluntary Action (YUVA) and other prominent groups in the western region of Maharashtra.

Focus wrote on these issues in the local newspapers and spoke in various public meetings. In August 2003, Focus and Oxfam India organized a one-day seminar involving participation of NGOs from all over India in Delhi. This seminar was followed by an open debate with Parliamentarians from the Congress, the Samajwadi Party and the Communist



Party (Marxists). The open debate was to understand the opinions of these respective parties on WTO issues.

While we approached September 2003, the India Programme along with the Land-Water-Forest Movement in Maharashtra chalked out the details of a 'padyatra' (foot-march) to be organized in four districts of Western Maharashtra during the four days of the Cancun Ministerial Conference of the WTO. In preparation, Focus prepared two-pager briefs on the dangers of Agreement on Agriculture and of the WTO for small farmers and farm labourers. This foot-march took place during the Cancun Ministerial and more than one thousand farmers participated. A detailed memorandum of demands was handed to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, whose electoral constituency is Solapur, where the march started.

Besides being involved in these national actions, the India team provided information on the positions being taken by India and other countries in their respective capitals and in Geneva, to the Our World is Not for Sale (OWINFS) Network list serve.

GATS letter

Focus along with Manthan and Equaltions launched a letter campaign demanding transparency and accountability with respect to the positions being taken by the Ministry of Commerce (Government of India) on services under the auspices of GATS negotiations. This letter was endorsed by more than five hundred panchayats from Kerala and Tamil Nadu, by consumer organizations, by move-

ments such as the NAPM, by a number individuals and NGOs predominantly from Western and Southern parts of India. This letter was also taken to farmers by translating it into Marathi, Hindi and Tamil.

Throughout the year, Focus conducted workshops across India with workers' unions, farmers groups and civil society organizations on the state of the impending negotiations in Cancun, and the importance of halting further negotiations in the Ministerial Meeting. Focus also established links with leading newspaper and television networks in local and English languages, and distributed updated information and analyses of the issues at stake in Cancun, and the proceedings of the Ministerial Meeting while it was going on. Focus staff participated in local and national rallies against the Cancun Ministerial, and contributed towards making the key controversies in the WTO negotiations public through articles in the press, and speaking on radio and television programmes.

Regional

In the run up to Cancun, Focus worked with movements, national coalitions and trade activists around the region. It was involved in popular education activities and mobilizing in many countries including Japan, Indonesia, Korea, India, Timor Leste, Thailand and the Philippines.

Focus organized a Regional Briefing for Cancun in Bangkok, Thailand in August 19-20, 2003. The two-day briefing provided an up to date preparation for



Cancun, including the state of play of negotiations, country positioning and analysis of the agenda and draft declaration. Trade analysts, some of them based in Geneva, gave first hand reports of the state of negotiations, helping people "read between the lines" and prepare accordingly.

The event also had space for the many different sectors present to give their analyses on the different issues in Cancun. This briefing contributed to the raising of regional awareness and the building of common strategies and actions. This proved to be very useful, and an Asian caucus formed and met regularly throughout the Cancun ministerial. After Cancun, there was an agreement to have a regional strategy meeting on trade in 2004.

International

At the international level, Focus worked with international coalitions, in particular the "Our World is Not for Sale" (OWINFS) network, the "agri-trade" group and the Social Movements International Network.

The international campaign began at the Asia Social Forum in Hyderabad, India and then the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil. In both Forums, Focus staff were involved in various seminars, debates, workshops, panels and press events to contribute to building the campaign to "derail" the Cancun Ministerial. Focus put out publications, analysis and creative campaign materials such as a "Derail the WTO" t-shirt, which was widely worn at the forums.

After the ASF & WSF, Focus continued

to be involved with the international campaign to derail the WTO. It was involved in the two preparatory strategy meetings in Mexico months before Cancun. In the second meeting, which was attended by many of Latin America's social movements and farmers groups, including the Hemispheric Social Alliance, the call to derail the WTO was issued and subsequently endorsed by movements and organizations worldwide. (See Box 6)

Members of the Focus trade team also helped in various preparatory activities in Mexico and other places such as teach-ins, public debates and newspaper articles and interviews. Focus' public education and press work also included the launch of a Focus-Zed published book "Behind the Scenes at the WTO: The real world of international negotiations" coauthored by Fatoumata Jawara and Aileen Kwa. The book highlighted the anti-democratic and secretive functioning of WTO negotiations, and the centrality of coercion and arm-twisting tactics by the major powers to manufacture 'consensus'. With the support of several NGOs, it was launched in seven cities before the Cancun Ministerial-Bangkok, London, Geneva, Riva del Garda (Italy), Stockholm, Sydney and Cancun. The book and its message was also sent out to many developing country trade missions in Geneva, as well as to several Ministers and Heads of States ahead of the Ministerial. The level of press interest the book received must also be credited to the participation of the former Ambassador to the Dominican



Republic in Geneva, Federico Cuello, in the various book launches. Like a handful of other Ambassadors, Cuello, in 2002 was recalled to his capital as a result of US pressure because of his insistence on development-friendly positions in the negotiations.

Key elements of the campaign

The last year has been a particularly fruitful one in terms of lessons for campaigns. Of special importance are national, regional, and international coalition building; strategic mobilizations; the "inside-outside strateg"; and creative media work.

National campaigns directed at governments to dissuade them from supporting or caving in to liberalization were essential to the success in Cancun.

Focus' role as a regional intermediary, or networker, helping to articulate national campaigns into a regional campaign was greatly appreciated in the Cancun campaign. We will continue this function in the lead up to the next ministerial. At the international level, we will channel energies from the national and regional levels to the international work through various mechanisms and coalitions.

The international mobilization at the site of the Cancun conference was central to the success of the Cancun campaign. Focus will contribute to the buildup and staging of the mass actions in the venue of the next ministerial by, among other things, sending an advance team to that country and assisting local organizers prepare the ground for the mobilizations like we did in Mexico.

The inside-outside strategy, or the articulation of global mass actions with lobby work in Geneva and of lobby work and political action within the Ministerial venue with grassroots mass actions outside was very successful in Cancun. We will try to achieve the same coordination of these various dimensions of struggle in the venue of the next ministerial.

Innovative media work and popular education marked the Cancun campaign. The Focus video "The WTO: Why is it Bad for You?" was a successful tool for mass mobilization, being viewed either in CD or VHS format by audiences throughout the world. It was translated by various movements and national coalitions and is now available in 11 languages. Thai, Bahasa, Khmer, Hungarian, Spanish, Korean, French, Japanese, Filipino, Cebuano, Arabic and soon Chinese.

Post-Cancun

The collapse of the 5th Ministerial of the WTO in Cancun, Mexico was a victory for social movements and trade activists campaigning against an expansion of the WTO's power. As the Economists said it "dealt a body blow to the already short on credibility organization."

Reactions and analysis have varied as to how this collapse will effect the region but one thing was clear: the importance of keeping the offensive against the weakened organization.

In Thailand, the Philippines, Korea and



other countries in the region, the obvious impact was the renewed push by the US and the EU for bilaterals and regional trade agreements.

Immediately after Cancun, Focus joined various groups in raising the issues of trade liberalization and the role of the US in APEC before the APEC Summit in Bangkok in October. Later, a new Thai civil society coalition, FTA Watch, was formulated with Focus as founding member, in order to conduct studies and raise public awareness on the issues arising from of the Thailand-US bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) negotiation.

In the Philippines, the SNR Coalition held post-Cancun assessments and forums to discuss the various views and strategize how to move forward with the campaign.

The monitoring work in Geneva, providing civil society with critical analysis of the negotiations continues and remains an important component of the campaign, especially given the post-Cancun back-lash by the US and EU to undermine developing country unity and resolve.

The year ended with the decision to continue to maintain the offensive to keep the WTO off its tracks.



Rally against the WTO, Bangkok, September, 9, 2003

DERAIL THE 5TH MINISTERIAL OF THE WTO

Call of the Hemispheric and Global Assembly against the FTAA and the WTO

Mexico City, May 11-12, 2003

We, the participants in this historic Hemispheric and Global Assembly against the Free Trade of the Americas and the World Trade Organization, held in Mexico City on May 11-12, 2003, declare our intention and commitment to derail the Fifth Ministerial of the World Trade Organization that will take place in Cancun in September of this year.

The WTO Ministerial will take place in the context of escalating US military aggression against the peoples and nations of the world. Washington's invasion and occupation of Iraq is simply the latest and most outrageous case of the Bush administration's unrestrained unilateralist foreign policy.

The WTO is war by other means. The WTO represents the most ambitious effort to resubjugate the economies of the countries of the South to serve the interests of transnational corporations. The neoliberal, free-trade paradigm incarnated in the WTO subverts the interests of people both in the South and the North. Its legacy is greater poverty, inequity, gender inequality, and indebtedness throughout the world. It has also accelerated the destruction of the global environment.

Today, the WTO, along with the other mechanisms of corporate control, notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, are suffering an historic crisis of credibility and legitimacy. Against the massive misery they offer, global civil society is coming together to forge creative alternatives to bring about a truly just global order. Against a future of war, injustice, and

permanent crisis offered by the US, European Union, and the institutions of corporate rule, global civil society offers a future of justice, peace, and solidarity.

But even as the WTO institutionalizes stagnation, injustice, and poverty, Washington is busy attempting to forge more corporate chains to subjugate the South by intimidating the governments of Latin America to sign on to the Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA).

Enough. We say eight years of the WTO is enough. We say the last thing Latin America needs is the FTAA.

We declare, instead, that another world is possible; and inspired by this vision, we call on as many people as possible from throughout the world to come and join us in Cancun in the week-long People's Forum for Alternatives to the WTO on Sept. 9-14, 2003.

We also call on people and movements in all countries to launch massive united and coordinated demonstrations on Sept. 9, the Day of Global Action against the WTO, and on Sept. 13, the Day of Massive Demonstrations against Globalization and War.

United, the vast majority of the peoples of this planet say:

***NO TO WAR
END THE TYRANNY OF FREE TRADE
AND THE WTO
NO TO THE FTAA
ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE***



2003

Finance & Development

In 2003, activities in the Finance and Development programme took a bit of a backseat as organisational energies were largely focused on the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancun. Although monitoring and research in finance and development issues were conducted as planned, attempts were made to link these with trade issues related to the WTO and the negotiations in Cancun.

Workshops, Seminars and Conferences

The year started with the Asia Social Forum (ASF) in Hyderabad, India, where Focus co-organised and participated in a number of events on debt, privatization and trade issues. In collaboration with the Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD), Focus co-organised workshops and seminars on water and electricity privatisation, and the role of export credit agencies in project finance. Focus also played a prominent role in the conference on Third World Debt organised at the ASF by Jubilee South and the APMDD, including assisting in developing the programme and contributing speakers.

At the World Social Forum, again in collaboration with the APMDD, Focus co-organised seminars on water and power sector privatization and export credit agencies. These seminars provided spaces for movements, activists and

researchers to share experiences, learn from each other and develop joint strategies for future actions. In all these events, Focus highlighted the role of trade and investment liberalisation, export led production models and the WTO regime in the creation of debt and loss of economic sovereignty.

At a regional level as well as at national levels, Focus staff presented papers and analyses in conferences, seminars and meetings on financial, economic and development issues.

The Focus Philippines Programme worked with networks tackling specific issues in which IFIs were involved. In March, Focus worked with the Bantay Tubig Water Vigilance Alliance to make the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector operations arm of the World Bank, disclose information about an investment mission to look into the Maynilad case, the first case of water utilities privatization in the country. Focus coordinated with groups based in Washington DC, specifically the Bank Information Center, to obtain information on the mission, to signal to the IFC office in Manila that the network knew whereof it spoke. The IFC met with the network but with a big caveat that for "security reasons", details of the mission could not be disclosed. The Philippines Programme



also joined the Kuryente coalition against the power sector privatization, specifically focusing on the role of the IFIs in the privatization effort. Focus also produced a series of articles on the failings of the power privatization, with special attention to the role of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

In July 2003, at the invitation of the Burma Refugee Council (BRC) based in Chiang Mai, Thailand, Focus staff facilitated a workshop in Mae Hong Son (Northern Thailand, on the Thai-Burma border) on the global economic issues facing Burma. Among the topics covered were agricultural policies and international trade. Specific attention was given to the role of multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the ADB, as well as the WTO. Alternative development approaches were also explored. About 40 researchers, development workers and pro-democracy activists attended the workshop from Burma.

On another occasion in Chiang Mai, Focus contributed to the Women's Development Course under the sponsorship of the Women's League of Burma by teaching 2-day sessions on the impact of globalization on women to members of the Women's League from various different ethnic groups.

In India, Focus staff participated in public meetings and workshops organised by local movements, unions and organizations on the privatisation of water and power, and the role of the World Bank and ADB in pushing neoliberal reforms.

The Nimad Malwa Kisan Sangathan and other organizations that are part of the Coalition of Peoples' Movements in the state of Madhya Pradesh in India carried out a number of actions against the privatization of the power sector and the ADB at various levels. In support of these actions, Focus prepared a paper on the ADB's involvement in macroeconomic planning and project/programme financing at the national and sub-national levels. This is now being translated in Hindi and will be used as popular literature to be circulated among farmers and activists.

Also in India, in the state of Maharashtra, the World Bank has been pushing the State Government to legislate the Maharashtra Infrastructure Support and Development Act (MIDAS) to pave the way for large-scale privatization and commercialization of State level infrastructure. A careful reading of the draft shows that the proposed Act is similar to what was passed in the state of Andhra Pradesh in 1996. Focus prepared a briefing note in Marathi (the local language in much of the state) demystifying the draft of the proposed legislation. This paper was circulated among state level legislators and activists in Maharashtra. Focus has also played an active role in preparing updates on World Bank policies and programmes for the Peoples Campaign on Land, Forest and Water Rights.



The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

World Bank and International Monetary Fund IMF policies were critically examined in a paper prepared by Focus staff on the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and the IMF's Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF). Titled "A Poor Package for Poverty Reduction," the paper was published by the Austrian Journal of Development Studies in their May issue, which focused on poverty reduction strategies and programmes in the nineties. The same paper was presented in the PRSP colloquium in Namur, Belgium in late January.

Focus' work on the World Bank and IMF also attempted to highlight the "policy coherence" across the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs), whereby the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) continue to push developing countries to "harmonise" their national policy regimes towards unilateral trade liberalisation and WTO compliance. In the months leading up to the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancun, Focus staff conducted briefings for national and regional movements and civil society organisations on the role of the World Bank and IMF in attempting to shape trade negotiations in the WTO, as well as national trade policies in the Asia region.


The Asian Development Bank

Due to security concerns over the US' war on Iraq, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) cancelled its Annual Governors' Meeting (AGM) that was

supposed to be held in Istanbul in May, 2003. Instead of the usual pageantry of a large AGM, the ADB opted for a one-hour "business-only" meeting in late June in Manila. Focus, together with the Philippine Working Group on the ADB and the regional NGO Forum on the ADB, co-organized a series of activities that included a whole-day public forum on "Policies of Plunder: The Role of the ADB in the Philippines," a press conference, and a mass mobilization in front of the ADB headquarters in Manila. These events were widely covered in the media, with Focus staff figuring in print and radio interviews. Focus also produced the pre-print version of the Focus ADB Dossier "The ADB and Policy: (Mis)Governance in Asia." The articles in the dossier were run as a series in the Focus on the Philippines e-newsletter, and as a special edition of "Focus on Trade."

The United Nations

In 2003, Focus also made a concerted effort to link its work on International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the United Nations (UN) system. The Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) requested Focus to organise and convene a civil society dialogue to accompany a meeting of finance ministers from the Asia and Pacific on the first two Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The civil society dialogue brought together representatives from a range of organisations and peoples' movements to discuss the causes of extreme poverty and hunger, the success and failures of governmental



attempts to address them, and the role of IFI led financial and economic reforms in furthering poverty and hunger. The dialogue was extremely lively and informed, and resulted in a comprehensive discussion paper and position statement on the issues of MDGs, poverty and hunger. Focus also produced a dossier of papers on these issues titled: "Anti Poverty or Anti Poor, The Millennium Development Goals and the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger." UN-ESCAP was pleased with the results of the dialogue and papers, and has discussed the possibility of follow-up actions in 2004. One suggestion for follow-up action is to convene a regional meeting on the World Bank-IMF's poverty reduction strategies and their impacts on the MDGs.

Focus also participated in the Asia Region Consultation Meeting of the UN High Level Panel on UN-Civil Society Relations in October. The meeting was organized by CONGO (Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with

the United Nations) Working Group on Asia (WGA) and hosted by the Asian Forum on Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia), a regional non-government organization based in Bangkok. The meeting discussed and made recommendations to the two Asian panel members on the issues of the UN's and civil society's roles in global governance and how to make them more effective.

Timore Leste

An important component of Focus' Finance and Development programme that was further developed in 2003 was the work on Timor-Leste. Since late 2001, Focus had developed a close working relationship with some leading officials in the Government of Timor-Leste's National Directorate of Planning and External Assistance Coordination in the Ministry of Planning and Finance. Past activities had been limited to collegial support to this Directorate on critically analysing the policies of bilateral donors, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In 2003, Focus formalized this relationship by placing a staff person in Timor-Leste to help develop research capacity among Timorese officials and civil society groups on monitoring donor and creditor programmes. Titled the "Rolling Think Tank" (RTT), this initiative brought together officials from various ministries and local civil society organisations to study and analyse the impact of donors and creditors on national development.



The first study conducted by the RTT was on the World Bank-led Community Empowerment and Local Governance Project (CEP). Based on a similar project in Indonesia, the CEP sought to disburse funds directly to village and sub-district levels in order to promote economic development. However, by by-passing government, as well as traditional leadership structures, the CEP created a parallel and unaccountable system of economic governance. Further, the internal rules of the CEP resulted in the financing of local activities that favoured cash economy transactions over local development priorities. The RTT team gathered information about the project through document analyses, interviews and site visits, and prepared a report that was accepted and released by the Timor-Leste Government. By November, 2003, the RTT was ready for its next project: an examination of the impact of borrowing under donor, World Bank and ADB conditionalities may have on Timor-Leste's economic sovereignty.

In addition, Focus staff continued to provide analytical support and training as required to members of the RTT, local civil society organisations and other government formations. Focus developed links with the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CVAR) -- a commission set up to address the human rights violations committed in the country from the Portuguese exit in 1974 until the destruction and violence following the August 1999 referendum for independence from Indonesia. Focus also facilitated the visit of activist-scholar Eric Toussaint in March to speak on the

issues and concerns around borrowing, especially from the IMF and WB, before government, the academe, and civil society audiences. Focus also assisted in the planning and implementation of the first meeting of a "High Level Mechanism" (HLM) to develop strategies for monitoring the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP). The HLM meeting brought together government and civil society to discuss Timor-Leste's development priorities, the challenges they have faced in working together and possible ways to overcome these challenges.

In all its work in Timor-Leste, Focus has been careful to not allow itself to become a barrier between local civil society and the Timorese Government. Where possible, Focus has encouraged and supported government and civil society to work together, and at the very minimum, maintain regular dialogue with each other.

In July, together with the Philippine-based Initiatives for International Dialogue and the University of the Philippines' Third World Studies Center, Focus organised a lecture-forum on "Post Conflict reconstruction: Lessons Learned from a New Country, that focused on Timor Leste's experiences in dealing with the IFIs. Ms. Emilia Pires from the National Directorate of Planning and External Assistance Coordination presented the Timorese experience.



Post-War/Post Conflict Reconstruction

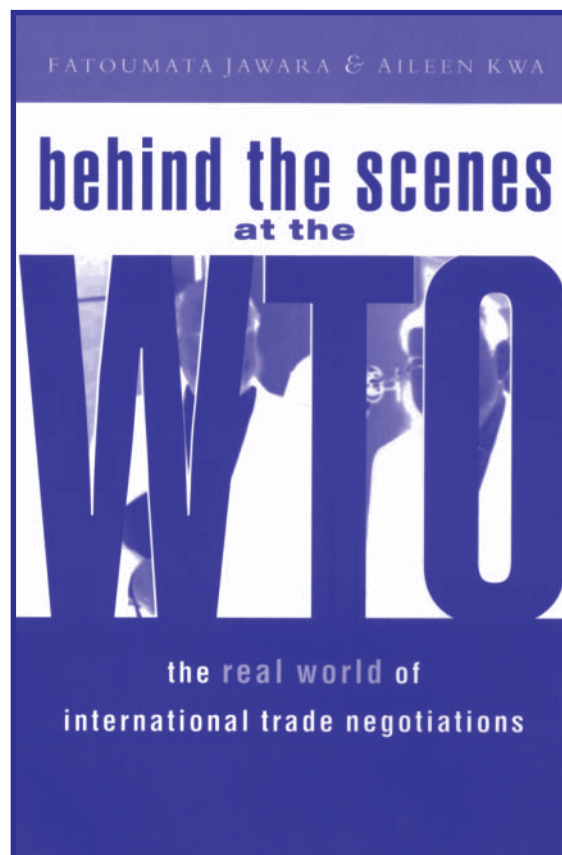
Another important area of work that started to take shape in 2003 was Focus' monitoring of post-war and post-conflict reconstruction. For over four years, Focus has monitored donor, UN and IFI-led reconstruction programmes in mainland Southeast Asia and Timor-Leste. In 2003, Focus also started to monitor and investigate the reconstruction of Iraq, in particular, the United States (US) Government's neo-liberal economic programme for the country, the extraction of Iraq's oil by US corporations, and the farming out of security, physical, financial and social infrastructure contracts to US approved corporations. In a programme review meeting in December, 2003, Focus staff agreed that experiences from all these countries should be brought together into a critical examination of reconstruction as a neo-liberal development paradigm. This will be pursued in 2004-2005.

2003

Trends & Analysis

Two major research projects were completed in 2003; an assessment of ten years of the WTO in the Philippines entitled and a book on the decision-making processes in the WTO. "Multilateral Punishment: The Philippines in the World Trade Organisation 1995-2003" by Walden Bello (June 2003) and "Behind the Scenes at the WTO" by Aileen Kwa and Fatoumata Jawed (Zed

Press, 2003). Both were completed in time to make an important contribution to the campaign to derail the WTO and provided solid research and policy analysis to highlight the negative impacts if the WTO agreements on a "typical" developing country and the undemocratic wheeling and dealing inside the WTO.



cover of the book behind the scenes at the WTO.



In addition, Focus continued to publish regular analysis and updates in Focus on Trade, Focus on the Philippines, in dossiers and occasional papers.

Progress on the "Political Islam" book was slow as the research and case studies were still being finalised. The commitment is to publish the book by September 2004.

Other projects signaled in the 2003-2005 work plan, such as the China project and the activist research network, were slow to take-off due to lack of staff and the pressing urgency of other issues, especially the WTO and Iraq campaigns.

Our overall assessment of the first year of the Trends and Analysis programme was mixed. On the one side, Focus continued to provide important and up to date policy analysis in some key

areas, especially linked to the trade and peace and security campaigns. However, we also identified some problems in realising the programme as outlined. First, we felt that the work plan was too ambitious and broad. Second, we noted that it is difficult to balance the deadline-driven rhythm of campaign work with the longer horizons of research. However, we agreed that our "research base" is a priority and must be continually replenished given that one of Focus' key functions is to provide research and policy analysis. Obviously, identifying new staff to focus principally on research and enabling other staff to "free-up" some time for research and writing is key and this will be addressed in 2004. In addition, we will redefine the focus of the Trends and Analysis programme in 2004-2005 to a more realistic and narrower set of projects, more closely linked to our campaigns.



2003

Alternatives

In 2003, Focus started to consolidate its work on alternatives through its new Alternatives Programme. While some of the activities in this area, such as participation in the World Social Forum and the Land Research Action Network were already part of Focus' core programme work in the past, some new activities were also initiated in 2003.

Towards Alternative Food Systems

In mid-2003 Focus started a project aimed at operationalising food sovereignty. Initiated by La Via Campesina (an international farmer's movement), the concept of food sovereignty has become a rallying call for a growing number of civil society groups and officials from governments and international organisations in their critiques of agriculture liberalisation and trade. However, what food sovereignty encompasses in terms of concrete policies, practices and institutions is still debated. Focus' participation in this debate stems from the understanding that the demand for food sovereignty has thus far been carried mainly by farmers' organisations, and needs to gather broader societal support to have political impact. Focus' political objective in this debate is to remove the jurisdiction of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) over food and agriculture.

After discussing the possibility of working on a comprehensive alternative agenda on food and agriculture, Focus decided that the initial phase of the project should seek to understand and clarify the proposals being promoted and practiced by various groups already engaged in these issues. Focus' approach in this phase has been to gather farmers, workers and consumers organisations to discuss the kind of food policies that they want to see in place locally, nationally and internationally. While many of those organisations are united behind the struggle against neo-liberalism, they do not always share the same picture of what they are fighting for. In the case of food and agriculture, they can even become antagonistic. Various groups in society compete for land, public budgets, markets, price controls and wages to meet their diverse needs. Based on their respective contexts, the proposals that they forward for alternative policies may not necessarily be compatible.

Focus organised an exploratory round table at the World Social Forum in Mumbai in January 2004, titled: "Building Food Sovereignty in a World Without the WTO; Workers, Farmers, Urban Poor: Do we have any common interests?" Participants at the round table included speakers from the Italian Federation of



Food workers, the Movimento Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST) in Brazil, the Hawkers' Union in Calcutta (India), the Workers Solidarity of Northern Sumatra in Indonesia, the Fair Trade Alliance in the Philippines, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied worker's Association (IUF) and from Focus. All in all, about 50 people attended the round table.

The round table helped Focus to identify the main issues for future work and brought out the importance of building alliances at national levels. Therefore, Focus decided to hold similar round tables/meetings at the national level in 2004 in Thailand, Philippines and India in order to develop a better understanding of the alternative food and agriculture systems that various groups are advocating.

Parallel to the round table process, Focus also conducted some research on the urgent need for alternative food systems in Thailand. This research is in the process of peer review and is likely to be released in 2004.

The Asia Social Forum

The Asia Social Forum (ASF) was held in the city of Hyderabad in India in January 2003. The ASF was a regional forum organised according to the principles and charter of the World Social Forum (WSF), and sought to bring together movements, organisations, networks and persons across Asia organising against neo-liberal globalisation, war, patriarchy, caste based discrimina-

tion and communalism. Approximately 25,000 people participated in the ASF, the majority of them from India. The ASF was a landmark event in India as it brought together peoples' movements, mass organisations and other civil society organisations for perhaps the first time in several years to share strategies for alternatives to the current trends of corporate led globalisation, neoliberalism, militarisation and religious sectarianism.

Focus played a central role in the process of organising the ASF and in mobilising national and regional participation in the ASF. Focus India staff were involved in the ASF Secretariat and the main organising committee. Focus mobilised funds for a delegation of 20 people from six Southeast Asia countries to attend the ASF and for five speakers/resource persons from Argentina, Bolivia, South Africa and Cuba to come and share their ideas and experience with their Asian counterparts.

Focus also organised a number of events at the ASF, many in collaboration with national and regional groups and networks such as Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA), the Peoples Movement for Land, Forest and Water Rights, the National Alliance of Peoples' Movements (NAPM), and the Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development. Focus co-organised the conference on Alternatives at the ASF in collaboration with the National Alliance of Peoples Movements (NAPM) and the All India Peoples' Science Network (AIPSN). The Alternatives Conference was extremely well attended, and provided a platform

for discussion about peoples' alternatives to neo-liberal and corporate led globalisation. Focus was also active in pulling together the conference on debt organised by Jubilee South and the APMDD (Focus is a member of both networks).

Focus' involvement and experience with the ASF was rewarding in several ways. By being centrally involved in organising and mobilising, Focus was able to build new alliances and deepen existing ones, both in India and regionally. Participation in ASF events prompted members of the Focus organised regional delegation to organise follow-up events in their own countries (Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia) on trade, globalisation, etc. All of these deepened Focus' understanding of struggles and movements against globalisation in Asia, as well as helped Focus understand how

to better contribute towards building a strong movement for alternative development approaches in the region. Focus was also able to develop good working relationships with several organisations and movements who would become central to organising the WSF 2004 in Mumbai.

The World Social Forum

In 2003, Focus was involved in the World Social Forum (WSF) through three processes: 1) the WSF 2003, which was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil; 2) The WSF International Council (IC), of which Focus is a member, and; 3) Preparation for the WSF 2004, scheduled to be held in January 2004 in Mumbai, India.

Most of Focus' efforts in 2003 were directed at the Asia Social Forum and it was decided to have a more "low key" approach to the Third World Social



Participants dancing at the Asia Social forum, Hyderabad, India, January 2003



Forum in Porto Alegre, 23-27 January 2003. We also decided that it would be important for Focus staff to "experience" the WSF knowing that it was most likely that the 2004 WSF would be held in India and many of our staff would be deeply involved in planning and logistics.

In the lead-up to the WSF Focus was involved in briefings for Thai and Filipino participants. In previous years, Focus had made great efforts to raise funds for activists from the region to participate in the WSF, however it seems that many of the local groups, at least in Thailand and the Philippines and other countries in the region, such as Indonesia and East Timor, are now directly engaged with the WSF process and Focus' role as a "facilitator" is less important. We did however support a few participants and assisted with the accommodation and logistical arrangements for many others. This included helping provide translation for Thai speakers during the WSF and organising field visits to the landless movement, the MST, following the WSF.


In addition to the workshops already mentioned, Focus organised a debate, together with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), entitled "Trade unions and social movements: new alliances against new forms of capitalism?" The auditorium was full and the debate well received.

In addition, Focus was very active in the Social Movements Assembly, the anti-war events and the activities of the "Our World is Not for Sale" (OWINFS) network. In particular, Focus used these

venues to support the proposal for an international day of action against the war on Iraq on 15 February 2003 and to push for an international campaign to "derail" the WTO ministerial in Cancun. Both proposals were included in the final call of the Social Movements Assembly.

WSF International Council

Focus continues to be an active member of the WSF International Council. At the IC meeting following the WSF 2003, Focus supported strongly the proposal to hold the 2004 WSF in India. At the meeting of the IC in Miami in June, Focus made several proposals including suggesting that there should be a general assembly of all registered delegates at the conclusion of each WSF to evaluate and guide the process of the WSF. This proposal was not agreed by the Council, however we will continue to pursue this in other meetings of the IC. In addition, we will continue to push for greater openness of the International Council-both in terms of information and participation and greater transparency in the finances and preparations for each year's World Social Forum. At the Miami Council meeting, "commissions" were established on Content, Methodology, Finance, Expansion, Strategy and Communications. Focus is active in the Strategy, Expansion and Finance commissions. Overall, the IC remains a frustrating but fascinating process as we seek to find the tools and structures that will allow us to move forward in ways that energise the WSF process, rather than institutionalise it. In 2003, Focus was represented on



the International Council by Walden Bello, Meena Mennon and Nicola Bullard.

Land and Agrarian Reform

The most significant activity in this area was the Asia Land Meeting (ALM), which was jointly organised by Focus, the Thailand Land Network, and the Land Research and Action Network (LRAN). Initially scheduled for late April, 2003, the ALM was shifted to December, 2003 because of the SARS epidemic scare that resulted in difficulties in travel to and within Asia. The meeting was then rescheduled and held from December 13-16, 2004.

The ALM focused on land struggles and agrarian reform, primarily in Asia but also in South Africa and Latin America. The meeting brought together activists and representatives from land and agrarian reform movements from Asia, South Africa, Brasil and Columbia, and from the Institute for Food and Development Policy (Food First), FIAN and La Via Campesina. Through a combination of workshops and field visits, participants discussed the major threats to progressive land and agrarian reform, shared experiences of successful strategies to achieve progressive agrarian reform, and planned collaborations among their respective movements and campaigns. No statement was issued from the meeting, although presentations made at the meeting were collated and distributed to participants at the end of the meeting. The meeting's proceedings are now being put together in a more comprehensive report by the Thailand

Land Network and will be published shortly by Focus.

Following the regional meeting, LRAN held an internal network meeting to review the LRAN project and to formulate direction for future work based on the results of the regional meeting and international developments relevant to LRAN's core mandate. These results are outlined in the Focus Alternatives work-plan for 2004-2005.

Community Currency

The Community Currencies Project, which was earlier a joint project between Focus and Thailand's Local Development Institute, became part of an action research project of the Institute of Resource Management for Development. The entire project was funded by the Thailand Research Fund and involved a target of 10 communities. Focus was responsible for continuing with the experimental work in Kud Chum community and initiating it in another community. This action research project ended in December 2003 with a final report to be completed in 2004.

A book by Bernard Lietaer entitled "the Future of Money" was translated into Thai by Focus and will be published and distributed by a local publisher in 2004. The book argued for the establishment of alternative currency systems to complement the national currencies, a necessity in the current context of financial liberalization, and provided descriptions of the existing systems.



2003

Communications

Focus' strategy of effective outreach of information has involved a combination of traditional methods of information dissemination and the harnessing of new technologies towards a larger audience.

The website (www.focusweb.org)

The Focus website has been one of the main platforms of Focus' communication strategy. In 2002, the website was made dynamic and more interactive through a database driven backend running on open source products. However, there was a felt need to reorganise the site o better serve activists and researchers. With this in mind, a complete overhaul of the site was undertaken. The test site has undergone a series of revisions and changes to better reflect the needs and requirements both of visitors to the Focus website as well as the Focus' own campaign and programme needs. Each campaign and programme area will now host its own site, thereby enabling visitors to have specific information available at a glance rather than having to search for documents. Additionally, the site is meant to be interactive, in that visitors can post comments to articles, create their own accounts with the site, which will enable them to receive updates from the site as and when they uploaded. The Thai programme site is completely in Thai, providing Thai activists, students and researchers, documents in Thai.

It is hoped that activists, students, researchers and others will find the new site a stimulating experience. The overhauled site will soon replace the existing site. Translation of Focus material is now available in Thai, Bahasa Indonesia, Arabic and Spanish.

Publications

Focus on Trade

Focus on Trade remains Focus's flagship electronic bulletin. It has become a 'must read' for activists, researchers, and academics alike. The readership of the Bulletin has gone beyond the 6000 mark and still growing. The Spanish edition, "Enfoque sobre comercio", has a distribution of 1,500 and it is also translated into Bahasa Indonesian and distributed in printed and electronic versions. Additionally, Focus on Trade is distributed widely by organisations and groups in the printed form (Focus on Trade is available in PDF format on the website for producing print-quality printouts). Focus on Trade annual is now being produced. Focus on Trade is edited by Nicola Bullard.

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Focus on the Philippines

In 2003, 49 issues of FOP came out dealing with a broad range of topics, reflecting current events and important issues of the day. Articles on the US and its quest for Empire dominated 2003 FOP, followed closely by articles on globalization and the World Trade Organization. By the end of 2003, FOP had around 600 subscribers from the Philippines and abroad. Marylou Malig was the moderator/editor of FOP in 2003. The task was transferred to Joseph Purugganan of the Philippine office in January 2004.

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Multilateral Punishment: The Philippines in the WTO, 1995-2003, Walden Bello, Stop the New Round Coalition and Focus on the Global South
Power Politics in the WTO, Aileen Kwa, May 2003
Anti Poverty or Anti poor?: The Millenium Development Goals and the eradication of extreme poverty and Hunger, November 2003
Los nuevos conquistadores: de como la OMC y la agroindustria nos roban soberania alimentaria, Redes Uruguay and Focus on the Global South, September 2003

Books

Behind the Scenes in the WTO, Aileen Kwa and Fatoumata Jawara, Zed Books

Videos

WTO: Why is it bad for YOU
This video was produced as part of Focus' "derail the WTO" campaign aimed at the 5th WTO ministerial in Cancun. The Video was an overwhelming success. It was translated into eleven languages. The video is available in many formats ranging from VHS, VCD, DVD and mini DV. At the last count Focus office itself had distributed more than 800 VCDs and 200 VHS versions of the video. This does not account for



innumerable reproductions of the video in the different languages.

ISBN

In the Philippines, Focus registered for an ISBN with the National Library to ensure proper documentation and cataloguing of Focus' published materials in universities and other libraries. The Philippine Programme is now starting to actively place Focus materials in key universities and other institutions in the country.

Media Work in Thailand, Philippines and India

2003 was very good for Focus in terms of media work and media relations. While the basic ingredient remains 'good material', staff in Manila, Mumbai and Bangkok have developed links with a wide array of media practitioners.

As a member of various network activities and coalitions, Focus has gotten good media coverage. For example, Bantay Tubig Water Vigilance Network, of which Focus is a part, got 10 press stories, while the Philippine Working Group on the ADB got six during the AGM week alone (June 27-July 1). In the Philippines, the biggest media exposure Focus got was with the Stop the New Round! Coalition where Focus staff were quoted and interviewed in dozens of print, radio and television news stories throughout 2003.

In Thailand, the Globalisation Working Group, of which Focus is a member, is frequently cited in the media.

In all countries and internationally, Focus staff participate in dozens of press conferences and interviews and radio interviews and Focus is frequently contacted by the media for comment and analysis.

The Asian Social Forum gave the Focus India programme us a platform to build our network and associates. Focus's dossiers, other publications, reports and campaign t-shirts were available during the ASF and sold at nominal rate, which the people could afford. They were very popular and we were able to reach the people in large numbers.

Although the India programme did not have a concerted communications strategy towards derailing the Cancun Ministerial Conference of the WTO, they campaigned on critical issues such as services and agriculture in the following ways:

1. Focus, together with Equations and Mamthan, launched a sign on letter demanding suspension of GATS negotiations and asking for transparency and accountability during the formulation of Indian positions on GATS. This sign on letter was translated in three regional languages (Tamil, Marathi and Telegu) and was presented to the Prime Ministers Office.
2. In order to raise awareness amongst people on how WTO was impacting agriculture, the India Programme produced a two pager in Marathi



language that answered basic questions that would arise in the mind of a farmer on WTO issues relevant to agriculture. This was widely used during the "padyatra" that the campaigns in Maharashtra organized during the Cancun Ministerial Conference of the WTO.

3. During Cancun ministerial of WTO, Focus sending out reportage of political actions of Cancun, which provided inputs to the televised debates between civil societies and corporates in India. The 'Cancun diary' written by Raghav Narsalay was carried on other websites and also in the Marathi Daily Mahanagar and sent to other print media. During Cancun Shalmali Guttal was engaged by NDTV to participate in a live debate. The local Marathi channel E-TV (Marathi) and other prominent local channels were providing live and telephonic interviews of focus staff from Cancun.

In the context of the IF'Is programme the India programme with the help of the Land-Forest-Water Movement in Maharashtra published a critical reader friendly analysis of the "Maharashtra Infrastructure Development and Support Act". This analysis was widely distributed to campaigns working on natural resources and local self-governance issues.

During the year the Peace and Security team brought out twelve posters on "Impact of War" in English, which are

part of the 24 Poster series having 12 Posters in Hindi brought out by ASPBAE together with Focus India Programme. In these posters Focus tried to cover issues relating to impact of war on children, health, women, environment and development. The posters were successful during the events organised by Focus and other organizations in different colleges and schools in Mumbai. The posters were very well received at the World Conference in Japan and also in Pakistan and were covered in both electronic as well as print media.

Raghav Narsalay runs a fortnightly column in the Marathi daily newspaper 'Mahanagar'. This allows Focus to reach out its critical analysis of issues around natural resources, on policies being pushed by international financial institutions and on issues relevant to the WSF-2004.



2003

Organization & Administration

This was the first year of the implementation of the new team structure for planning and carrying out work in the three campaigns (Trade, Finance and Development, and Peace Building and People's Security) plus three programmes (Trends and Analysis, Alternatives, and Communications) and the expanded management team of the whole organization.

Team Structure

At the beginning of the year, every staff member was asked to select at least one of the campaigns and at least one other program in which he/she would like to work. Most of them elected to work in three or more areas. The executive director and two senior associates lead the teams. Since members of each team were based in three different country offices, regular communications were carried out through e-mails and issues that needed consultation and consensus were taken up in conference calls. Later in the year, board members also joined the e-mail list-serve of the campaigns/programs of their choice.


At the full staff retreat at the end of the year, a brief assessment of the team structure showed that the staff were satisfied with the team structure in general. The Trade team was particularly successful because there was a good mix of people from the national,

regional and international levels enabling work to be coordinated while being carried out at all levels. The other active team was the Peace Building and People's security team. It appeared that action-oriented campaigns with clear targets have created the synergy which invigorated the entire staff member. There were still questions whether all the campaigns and programs could be carried out at the same level of energy by everyone. It was clear that priorities would have to be established for the work in 2004-2005.

Management team

The expanded Management Team encompassed the team leaders, country program coordinators (Thailand, India, Philippines), and finance manager. The management teams responsibilities was to oversee overall political orientation of the organization, staff recruitment and appraisal, fund-raising and communications with donor organizations and board members. The management teams are in constant touch by e-mails and held meetings and conference calls as necessary.

The management team carried out appraisals of all staff member during the second half of 2003 before renewing their two-year contracts. Each staff was first asked to appraise his/her own



performance and review the current job description. Two management team members then met with each person to share their views and to agree on the new job description.

Staff updates

Benjamin Moxham from Australian Volunteer International was nominated to Focus for the position of volunteer research associate starting from April. His main work is with the Timor Leste "rolling think tank" and on the reconstruction project. In March, Shalmali Guttal relocated to Bangalore, India, as an interim coordinator of the India programme for two years. Marco Mezzera who relocated to Italy has finished his research paper and left Focus in April. Chirawatana Charoon-patarapong ended her contract with Focus in May.

There has been a lot of staff movement in the Focus Philippines office. Marylou Malig and Herbert Docena transferred to the Bangkok office from September 2002 to June 2003. The Manila office recruited two new staff: Joseph Purugganan to do campaign liaison work with the SNR! Coalition for Focus from February to October, then as a regular research associate after. Mary Ann Manahan joined the team in March as a research assistant focusing on common property resources and the land reform (LRAN) project.

Administrative

In end-May the Philippine office completed the registration process with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Focus has also officially registered with the social security and tax offices in Manila. The India programme is in the process of registering as a representative office of Focus on the Global South.

Finance

The Manila office also contracted a new accountancy firm, Melicor Briones Villareal and Co., Certified Public Accountants, to audit its accounts. To augment resources transferred from Bangkok, the Philippine office also started to raise funds for Philippine-based activities. However, the majority of Focus funding is raised centrally and administered through the Bangkok office where the finance manager, Praphai Jundee, oversees the finance and budget for the three Focus offices and all programme areas.

Board updates

There was a Board Meeting in April 28-29, 2003 at CUSRI, Bangkok. Dr. Surichai from the Center for Social Development Studies, Chulalongkorn University was elected to be the Board Chair and Alejandro Bendana, Centro de Estudios Internacionales, Nicaragua accepted the Vice Chair position. At the moment, the Focus Board comprises 14 members and three advisors. The new board member comprising Boua Chanthou from Cambodia, Jayati Ghosh from India, Somchai Homla-or from Thailand, A.H. Nayyar from Pakistan, Surichai Wan'Gaeo from Thailand and Yoon Youngmo from Korea. They have their term from 2003-2006. All board members have a 4-year term, and eligible for re-election for a second term.

Board Members

Walden Bello

Executive Director

Focus on the Global South

Alejandro Bendana

Centro de Estudios Internacionales

Managua City, Nicaragua

Boua Chanthou

Padek

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Jayati Ghosh

Centre for Economic Studies & Planning

Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi, India

Somchai Homlaor

Asian Forum for Human Rights and
Development (Forum-Asia)

Bangkok, Thailand

Kamal Malhotra, Senior Advisor

United Nation Development Programme
(UNDP)

New York, USA

Abdul Hameed Nayyar

Sustainable Development Policy Institute

Islamabad, Pakistan

Peter Rosset

Center for the Study of the Americas
(CENSA)

Berkeley, USA

Dita Sari

FNPBI

Jakarta, Indonesia

Suwattana Thadaniti

Director, CUSRI

Chulalongkorn University

Bangkok, Thailand

Nguyen Van Thanh

Director of the Center for Development
Study and Outreach

Vietnam Peace and Development Founda-
tion

Hanoi, Vietnam

Surichai Wun'Gaeo (Chair)

Center for Social Development Studies

Chulalongkorn University

Bangkok, Thailand

Yoon Youngmo

Korea Labour & Society Institute (KLSI)

Seoul, Korea

Advisers

Victor P. Karunan

United Nations Children's Fund

Bangkok, Thailand

Martin Khor

Director, Third World Network (TWN)

Penang, Malaysia

Amara Pongsapich

Chulalongkorn University

Bangkok, Thailand

Staff 2003

Aileen Kwa

Anoop Sukumaran

Ben Moxham (volunteer)

Chanida Bamford (part time)

Chirawattana Charoonpatarapong (till
May)

Herbert Docena
Isabelle Delforge (part time)
Jacques Chai Chomthongdi
Joseph Purugganan
Joy Chavez
Lou Torres
Mary Ann Manahan
Mary Lou Malig
Mayuree Ruechakiattikul
Meena Mennon
Minar Pimple (part time)
Nicola Bullard
Praphai Jundee
Raghav Narsalay
Ranee Hassarungsee (part time)
Shalmali Guttal
Sonila Shetty
Soontaree Nakaviroj
Varsha Berry (part time)
Walden Bello

Core Funders 2003

11.11.11 Belgium
ActionAid Asia Regional Office, Thailand
Christian Aid, UK
Community Aid Abroad (Oxfam
Australia), Australia
CORDAID, the Netherlands
Development and Peace, Canada
Ford Foundation, USA
HIVOS, the Netherlands
Inter Pares, Canada
NOVIB, The Netherlands
Oxfam America, USA
Oxfam GB, East Asia Regional Management
Centre, Thailand
Oxfam HK, Hong Kong
Oxfam Solidarity, Belgium
Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), USA
The United Methodist Church, USA
Mr. Boyd Reimer, Canada (individual
funder)

The following organizations supported for the conferences and specific projects.

Asia Land Meeting

Action Aid and Food First

Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum

UNESCAP

Book "Behind the Scenes at the WTO"

Novib

Iraq Peace Mission

ATTAC Japan, Oxfam Hong Kong,
Oxfam Solidarity Belgium and TNI

Jakarta Peace Conference

Action Aid, Inter Pares, Novib, X minus
Y and TNI

LRAN Project

Food First/Ford Foundation

Regional Briefing on Cancun

Oxfam GB, Oxfam Hong Kong

World Social Forum IV

Action Aid, CORDAID and Inter Pares

Focus on the Global South **
Comparison of Budget, Income and Expenditure
As on December 31, 2003

	(1) Budget	(2) Income	(3) Actual Expenses	(1)-(3) Variance Budget-Act.Expenses	(2)-(3) Variance Income-Act.Expenses
Alternatives Program	91,000.00	71,626.58	79,443.24	11,556.76	(-) 7,816.66
Global Trends&Analysis	86,600.00	55,776.40	63,094.29	23,505.71	(-) 7,317.88
Peace & Security Campaign	99,700.00	89,823.62	98,311.82	1,388.18	(-) 8,488.20
Trade Campaign	130,400.00	129,015.62	137,036.66	(-) 6,636.66	(-) 8,021.04
Financial & Development Campaign	80,800.00	56,592.36	65,557.66	15,242.34	(-) 8,965.30
Communication	112,900.00	64,508.49	69,672.88	43,227.12	(-) 5,164.39
Admin.& Organisation Development	121,900.00	86,573.73	94,378.05	27,521.95	(-) 7,804.33
ASF/WSF	80,700.00	63,080.51	68,787.18	11,912.82	(-) 5,706.67
Conferences: Jarkata conference (Deficit Cost support by Focus)- Peace&Sec.	-	-	12,287.87	(-) 12,287.87	(-) 12,287.87
WTO Meeting -Cancun, Mexico - Trade campaign	35,000.00	6,522.67	24,370.00	10,630.00	(-) 17,847.33
ASF/WSF - (Deficit cost support by Focus)	35,000.00	-	35,889.98	(-) 889.98	(-) 35,889.98
ASF Hyderabad&WSF III	-	-	-	-	-
Professional fee	-	322.55	-	-	322.55
Bank Interest income	-	1,954.78	-	-	1,954.78
Other income	-	3,770.48	-	-	3,770.48
Gain or Loss on Exchange	-	22,255.72	-	-	(-) 22,255.72
Total	874,000.00	607,312.07	748,829.64	125,170.36	(-) 141,517.57

Note

* Yr.2003 1 USD.= 43.00 BHT. (same rate as we used in Work Plan)

** Does not include India & Philippines funds direct through their country.



Contacts

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