PEOPLE CAN BUILD THEIR OWN FUTURE
2006 was another productive year in Focus’ engagement in local, regional, and international struggles.

The year began with our participation in the historic January 9 mass action in Chiang Mai, Thailand by thousands of civil society activists that stalemated the US-Thailand Free Trade Agreement.
RECLAIMING THE REGION
Joy Chavez

As globalised resistance to neo-liberalism con tinued to grow in the past decade, social movements and civil society started to discover the region as an arena of struggle and as a staging point for alterna tives. In the late 1990s, the Hemispheric Social Movements Network (HSSN) was established as an expression by social movements to the United States' determina tion to dominate the continent with the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Carrying a strong critique of neo-liberal globalisation and c ognito strategies, HSSA campaigning defeated the FTAA and inspired similar regional initiatives to counter the ill effects of globalisation.

The region, through regional associations or projects, has been found to accommodate, support and advance the neo-liberal agenda, while failing to maximize the potentialities of regionalism for the people. Increasingly, calls for reclaiming the region to advance genuine people's cooperation have been made. The convening of people's summits to parallel official meetings of regional associations and to provide a venue for movements to discuss issues of regional import is widely practiced. To counterbalance and challenge the official Summit of the Americas, the Southern African Development Community meetings (SADC), and the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation meetings (SAARC) as well as the South African People's Solidarity Network (SASPEN) and the South Asia People's Assembly (People's SAARC) organize open gatherings of peoples and movements that assert the people's claim on the region and their demand to develop truly regional alternatives.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) People's Assembly (APA) has been convened since 2000, but unlike the People's Summits in South America, Southern Africa and South Asia, the APA is not movement-led and does not have a clear anti-neo-liberal platform. It was only in the last two years that broader civil society advocacy and engagement with ASEAN have emerged, with the convening of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC) and the formation of the Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA). Working Group on ASEAN. These new initiatives focus on opening up ASEAN as an institution and as a space, as well as on the drawing up of agendas to put at the regional level.

The APA WG on ASEAN, in particular, monitors and continues to assert people's right to the space as ASEAN formalizes its modes of operation and embarks on the building of the ASEAN Charter. In the region, several initiatives also put for positive agenda on an ASEAN Social Charter, an ASEAN Instrument on Migrant Workers, an ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism, etc. These initiatives interact in many ways with the ACSC and the SAPA.

Regional associations and regionalist projects are generally state-centred and inaccessible to people. Not enough information is shared and little space is provided to civil society to engage, participate or protest. As a result, advocacy at the regional level is still at its early stages and has yet to reach the level of organisation and coordination achieved by the global campaigns and movements. But it is an important step on the road to globalisation.

As a potential source of alternative power and policy, regional movements are a challenge. Early attempts at integrating learnings from regional struggles have not been consolidated through the People's Dialogue on Alternative Regionalisations and Globalisation, a project supported by the Alternative Information and Development Center (AIDC), Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Económicas (BASE), Red Mexicana de Acción frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC), Focus on the Global South and the Transnational Institute (TNI). It hopes to foster the building of alternatives through intra-regional and inter-regional solidarity between peoples.

Linking different regional movements for cross-fertilization of learning and solidarity also becomes a challenge. Organisations, as well as facilitate relations with and between their governments. Conflicts to open ASEAN's challenges to effect fundamental changes in the currently dominant global economic system and build a people's agenda. The People's Dialogue of the People's Dialogue links social movements and civil society groups from South America, Southeast Asia and Africa.

In 2006, Focus did more systematic work on alternative regionalism, introducing a new layer of analysis, campaigning and struggle. Much of the work was grounded in the work of the Working Group on ASEAN (SAPA). Focus participated in the consultation processes by the Emergent Persons Group (EPG) and the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on the ASEAN Charter, one of the many initiatives of the SAPA. In particular, Focus took the lead in formulating the SAPA WG on ASEAN submissions to the EPG and the development of positions for the consultation of the HLTF. The report was submitted to the ACSC II national processes, the drafting of the program of the ACSC II and the final version of the conference statement. With help from colleagues at the TNI and the HSA, Focus also facilitated the attendance and participation of Jovenes de Abya Yala from South Africa, Maureen Santos from Brazil and Brid Brennan from the Netherlands to join the session on alternative regionalism.

The work on ASEAN helped ground Focus' work on alternative regionalism. Various presentations, materials and articles were written. A dossier on ASEAN titled Reviving Southeast Asian Regionalism, was published in December 2006.
The FLOSS movement is linked to every movement for social and economic justice and with every movement for the control of resources and for reclaiming the commons. FLOSS deals with the access and control of information and the tools of information. Information is the backbone for the fight for rights, for the distribution of messages, for the globalisation of struggles. If we do not have the control over the tools and means of communication, information is always at risk of being hacked and manipulated. FLOSS is a means to take back control over information and the tools of information which are the basis for asserting our rights.

The FLOSS movement within the Asian region is vibrant but has yet to gain mass appeal. Most Asian countries have Linux support groups and have active open source communities which regularly translate and localise open source distributions. There are signs that the movement will soon become a force to reckon with. The Government of Kerala (India) announced last year that the government offices in the state will soon use an open source Linux distribution. Few national governments have taken explicit positions on the issue. In the Philippines, civil society groups organise regular Linux boot camps to spread the open source message. The struggle is huge, the movement is against some of the most powerful corporations in the world, and the fight is getting uglier. In Thailand, for instance, the previous government under Thaksin undermined a locally produced Linux variant for use in schools, and opted instead for a watered down version of Microsoft. There has been no movement to change this situation in the present regime.

Focus' contribution to the movement is not technical. Our input has been to propagate the message, to expose civil society groups to become part of the open source movement as a political weapon. We in Focus have internalised the struggle against monopoly capitalism, an expression of which is our shift from proprietary software to Linux derived called Ubuntu. Our website runs on open source CMS Joomla and is hosted on a Linux system.

At the WSF in Nairobi, Focus, along with the International Social Group Network, was part of an initiative to popularise the open source idea. We had a working demonstration of open source tools on ten laptop computers for people to use so they could see the ease of use and range of options available. We also encouraged people to shift from Microsoft windows. There was a one-day seminar on the politics of open source which was extremely well-received.

A software distribution is a bundle of a specific software for a collection of multiple software – even an entire operating system, already compiled and configured. It is generally the closest thing to a turnkey form of an open source code for a software.

The concept of 'free' does not only mean free in the monetary sense but also the lack of boundaries to modification, change and development according to the needs of the community.
The experience of the Stop the New Round (SNRR) campaign in 2000 showed that, beyond the unity in the call to stop a new round of negotiations in the WTO, the members of the SNRR coalition differed in the specifics and stresses of the longer-term reforms they would like the government to adopt. It was this realization that spurred Focus to initiate a process aimed at achieving a higher level of understanding and integration of experiences and expectations that transcends personal and sectional interests and helps build a broader reform agenda.

Hence, the Development Roundtable Series (DRTS) was formed. Inspired by the World Social Forum process, the DRTS is a platform or venue for different interest groups in the country to come together, collectively discuss, and resolve dilemmas on development issues and policy-making and see how conflicting interests fit into a common policy platform. At the time of the negotiations and the DRTS seeks to reach consensus on concrete policy recommendations on a broad range of development issues.

Like any relevant project, the DRTS seeks to respond to the times. One of the objectives of the DRTS is to address the need for policies that incorporate broad aspirations of different sectors and to generate widespread and deep support for crucial policy reforms. The DRTS recognizes the failure of the government to integrate marginalized groups into the formal policy-making process, which has always been managed by a few public and private elites, and the limitations of state-sponsored dialogues which are too often long discussions on issues sanctioned by the state.

Committed to an inclusive and democratic process, organizers have conducted extensive consultations with different groups in setting the DRTS’ objectives and methodology. The preparatory work in 2004 yielded five thematic areas: Trade and Industrial Policy, Foreign Policy, Water Resources and Services, Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, and Food and Agriculture. A parallel Mindanao roundtable was later created in 2005 upon the request of Mindanao-based organizations and in light of the diversity and complexity of issues specific to Mindanao.

The process is marked by substantial flexibility—no thematic area shares the same methodology. Aside from the process-oriented character of the DRTS, the common thread among the different thematic working groups is the concern that the Consolidation of the most specific, most reasoned and most practicable political positions, and second, advocacy to draw the broadest constituencies around these positions.

The DRTS takes pride in the broadness of the groups taking part in it, and in the process of expanding its membership. Currently, the thematic working group members of the DRTS include a wide spectrum of actors: non-government organizations, peoples organizations, social movements, and political blocs alike, allied in the realization that the quest for alternatives is a common goal not only of like-minded groups.

The DRTS proved to be a most timely undertaking as, over the past three years, the search for alternatives has become more urgent, fuelled by a growing sense of discontent on the current political system.

It is amidst this disillusionment, in the shrinking democratic space in Philippine politics today, and with a recognition of the need to build credible alternatives, that the DRTS hopes to provide new forms of mobilization, expression, engagement and collective alternatives-building. The challenge, and the difference of the DRTS in the breadth of its initiatives, is to craft alternatives in an inclusive and participatory manner so that no single vested interest prevails. It hopes to respond to a need to forge alliances, rebuild old alliances, and overcome divisions in order to talk about our aspirations as a people and debate on the kind of reforms and changes we want to see in the country. In the process, the DRTS hopes to create not only opportunities to build alternatives, but also to carve out spaces to reclaim democracy.

Building Alternatives in the Philippines

Julie de los Reyes and Mary Ann Manahan
Development Roundtable Series Thematic Areas

The DRTS on Trade and Industry seeks to address the lack of understanding and communication between the various actors in the Philippine industrial sector, which translates to national trade and industrial policies that do not sufficiently address the needs of certain actors and that fail to stimulate substantial growth in the Philippine economy. By facilitating dialogue and negotiation between these actors, the DRTS on Trade and Industry aims to come up with an honest reappraisal of the Philippines' trade and industrial policies, with the overall objective of charting new paths for the country's economic development that takes into account the interests of the Philippine industrial sector as a whole. Consistent with the DRTS' commitment to complement and supplement existing research, the Thematic Working Group (TWG) decided to focus on the following strategic gaps and issues: privatization, debt and national competitiveness, micro-enterprises and informal sector, overseas employment (as an economic sector), and international agreements and alternatives.

DRTS on Water and Services

Philippine water districts are beleaguered by a set of recurrent, readily identifiable issues whose resolutions have been difficult to achieve because of policy gridlocks and opposition from vested interests. The commonality of these "paradigmatic situations," which include salt water intrusion, industrial or agricultural contamination, and dilapidated infrastructure, also implies common experiences on the part of the affected actors. The DRTS on Water and Services will come up with alternative solutions by providing an opportunity for the affected actors to draw and consolidate ideas from their shared experiences while at the same time building a constituency of organizations that will engage in policy dialogues with relevant government agencies, elaborate and validate feasible alternatives to water resource management, and mobilize for institutional reform.

DRTS on Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the Philippines has often been guided by the interests of its political elite. Foreign policy decisions are seen as the exclusive domain of politicians, diplomats, the military, and the business sectors, and are often enacted not with the interests of the Filipino people in mind, but in a way that benefits these sectors and individuals the most. The DRTS on Foreign Policy will provide a venue for articulating the collective interests of the Filipino people, as well as an opportunity for a broad and united constituency to come up with thoroughly-scrutinized, specific, and practicable recommendations for Philippine foreign policy.

DRTS on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

Agrarian reform remains to be one of the most important programs which aims to transform relations and redistribute wealth and power in the rural areas. But Philippine efforts at agrarian reform have so far fallen short of expectations, if not failed, at redistributing wealth and control of land and support services, which are the sources of livelihood for the country's rural poor. Almost eighteen years into the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), land—and, consequently, economic and political power—remains firmly entrenched in the hands of a few elites. The DRTS on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development recognizes that the shortcomings of the current agrarian reform program stems in part from a concerted effort of the country's landowning political elite to keep attempts at reform in check, and that pushing for the implementation of a genuine agrarian reform program will require a similar alignment of forces in favor of it. The process will create such an alignment by fostering the participation of all sectors in favor of agrarian reform in an atmosphere conducive to inputs from all concerned sectors. It will also provide a space for an organized, systematic documentation, reflection, and consolidation of learnings on agrarian reform advocacy in the Philippines to firm up arguments and clear policy positions on agrarian reform in preparation for the 2008 post-land acquisition and distribution scenario.

DRTS on Food and Fisheries

The Development Roundtable Discussion Series on Food and Fisheries will address the need to look at the country's past and current food and agriculture policies, in particular on food security and the future of its small food producers. The process hopes to serve not only as an eye-opener, but as a venue that could compel the right people to undertake the necessary actions. Although the process is mainly a venue for discussion and dialogue, it could also result in forging negotiated arrangements between people towards mutual survival. The DRTS on Food and Fisheries will attempt to produce results—concrete policies, practices, initiatives—that promote mutual benefit, uphold sustainable production of food resources and bridge the contradictions between the different sectoral and political agendas.

DRTS on Mindanao: Food and Agriculture

The formation of the Mindanao TWG was a result of a strong request from Mindanao-based organisations. The TWG will serve as a conduit for parallel processes to be held in Mindanao along the lines of the five themes. The Mindanao Food and Agriculture thematic will examine the nature of the food and agriculture problems and contrasts facing Mindanao, with particular focus on issues unique to the region. This includes conflicting land-uses between commercial versus food crops and fishery development, role of the tri-people culture and ethnic differences on the food security and agricultural movement in Mindanao; low agricultural and fishery productivity and unstable food supply situation; and armed conflict, food security and sustainable agriculture.
A new stage in the evolution of the global justice movement was reached with the inauguration of the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in January 2001.

The WSF was the branchchild of social movements loosely associated with the Workers' Party (PT) in Brazil. Strong support for the idea was given at an early stage by the ATAC movement in France, key figures of which were connected with the newspaper Le Monde Diplomatique. In Asia, the Brazilian proposal, floated in June 2000, received the early enthusiastic endorsement of many others. Focus on the Global South. Porto Alegre was meant to be a counterpoint to "Davos," the annual event in a resort town in the Swiss Alps where the world's most powerful business and political figures congregate annually to spot and assess the latest trends in global affairs. Indeed, the highlight of the first WSF was a televised transcontinental debate between George Soros and other figures in Davos with representatives of social movements gathered in Porto Alegre.

The world of Davos was contrasted with the world of Porto Alegre, the world of the global rich with the world of the rest of humanity. It was this contrast that gave rise to the very resonant theme "Another world is possible."

There was another important symbolic dimension: while Seattle was the site of the first major victory of the transnational anti-corporate globalization movement -- the collapse amidst massive street protests of the third ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization -- Porto Alegre represented the transfer to the South of the center of gravity of that movement. Proclaimed as an "open space," the WSF became a magnet for global networks focused on different issues, from war to globalization to communalism to racism to gender oppression to alternatives. Regional versions of the WSF were spun off, the most important being the European Social Forum and the African Social Forum, and in scores of cities throughout the world, local social fora were held and institutionalized.

The Functions of the WSF

Since its establishment, the WSF has performed three critical functions for global civil society:

First, it represents a space -- both physical and temporal -- for this diverse movement to meet, network, and, quite simply, to feel and affirm itself.

Second, it is a retreat during which the movement gathers its energies and charts the directions of its continuing drive to confront and roll back the processes, institutions, and structures of global capitalism. Naomi Klein, author of No Logo, underscored this function when she told a Porto Alegre audience in January 2002 that the need of the moment was "less civil society and more civil disobedience."

Third, the WSF provides a site and space for the movement to elaborate, discuss, and debate the vision, values, and institutions of an alternative world order built on a real community of interests. The WSF is, indeed, a macromosaic of so many smaller but equally significant enterprises carried out throughout the world by millions who have told the ideologues, the cynics, and the "realists" to move aside because, indeed, another world is possible...and necessary.

Social Forum at the Crossroads

Walden Bello *

[Image 0x-0 to 1080x540]
Direct Democracy in Action

The WSF and its many offspring are significant not only as sites of affirmation and debate but also as direct democracy in action. Agenda and meetings are planned with meticulous attention to democratic process. Through a combination of periodic face-to-face meetings and intense e-mail and Internet contact in between, the WSF network is able to mobilize events and arrive at consensus decisions. At times, this could be very time-consuming and also frustrating, and when you were part of an organizing effort involving hundreds of organisations, as we are Focus on the Global South were during the organizing of the 2004 WUF in Mumbai, it could be very frustrating indeed.

But this was direct democracy, and direct democracy was at its best at the WUF. One might say, parenthetically, that the direct democratic experiences of Seattle, Prague, Genoa, and the other big mobilizations of the decade were institutionalized in the WUF or Porto Alegre process.

The central principle of the organizing approach of the new movement is that getting to the desired objective is not worth it if the methods violate democratic process, if democratic goals are reached via authoritarian means. Perhaps Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatistas best expressed the organizing process has no future if its hostile military is the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army) peremptorily itself as an armed military structure, it is headed for failure. Failure as an alternative set of ideas, an alternative attitude to the world. The worst that could happen to it apart from that, would be for it to come to power and install itself there as a revolutionary army. The WUF shares this perspective.

What is interesting is that there has hardly been an attempt by any group or network to "take over" the WUF. The movement has no future if its hostile military is the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army) peremptorily itself as an armed military structure, it is headed for failure. Failure as an alternative set of ideas, an alternative attitude to the world. The worst that could happen to it apart from that, would be for it to come to power and install itself there as a revolutionary army. The WUF shares this perspective.

What constitutes "open space"?

The WUF has, however, been exempt from criticism, even from its own ranks. One in particular appears to have merit. This is the charge that the WUF as an institution is not anchored in actual global political struggles, and this is turning it into an annual festival with limited social impact.

There is, in my view, a not insignificant truth to this. Many of the founders of the WUF have interpreted the "open space" concept as a liberal fashion, that is, for the WUF not to explicitly endorse any political position or particular struggle, though its constituent groups are free to do so.

Caracas versus Nairobi

This is why the 7th WUF held in Nairobi was so disappointing, since its politics was so discredited and big business interests linked to the Kenyan ruling elite were so brazen in commercialising it. What many of the WUF delegates were actually saying was that a leading explorer of the natural resource wealth of Latin America was busy trumpeting itself as a friend of the Forum. There was a strong sense of going backward rather than forward in Nairobi.

The WUF is at a crossroads. Hugo Chavez captured the essence of the conjunction when he warned delegates in January 2006 about the danger of the WUF becoming simply a forum of ideas with no agenda for action. He told the participants that they had no choice but to address this question and clarify the purpose of the WUF. They must have a strategy of "counter-power". We, the social movements and political movements, must be able to move into spaces of power at the local, national, and regional levels.

Developing a strategy of counter-power or counter-hegemony need not mean lapsing back into the old hierarchal and centralized modes of organizing characterized of the old left. Such a strategy can, in fact, be based on horizontal and decentralized organizing that can bring to bear the creativity of the organizers represented in the WUF have excelled in advancing their particular struggles. Articulating their struggles in action will mean forging a common strategy while drawing strength from and respecting diversity.

After the disappointment that was Nairobi, many long-standing participants in the Forum are asking themselves: Is the WUF still the most appropriate vehicle for the new stage in the struggle of the global justice and peace movement? Or, having fulfilled its historic function of aggregating and linking the diverse counter-movements spawned by global capitalism, is it time for the WUF to fold up its tent and give way to new modes of global organisation of resistance and transformation? *

* This article was first published by Foreign Policy in Focus (FPF), a joint project of the International Relations Centre (IRC, online at www irc-online.org) and the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS, online at www.ips-dc.org).
The 20th century has shown the limitations of both the state and the market as guarantors of justice and peace.

Shaping a New Politics for the 21st Century

Nicola Bullard
Challenges for the global justice movement

Beyond governments and the international institutions are the thousands of social movements, NGOs, trade unions, associations and collectives that make up the global justice movement or the ‘movement of movements’. More than any government, these social forces — which encompass the full ‘progressive’ spectrum from autonomists to social democrats — are challenging domination by big power and big money and, insofar as national governments are showing a willingness to challenge the G8, the WTO, the IMF and the financial markets, it is due largely to pressures from below.

In the past ten years, the global justice movement has exposed how power works in the international system and resisted the drive to corporate globalization. The strategy has not been to accumulate power in the traditional sense of political parties or trade unions (although this still happens, it seems, with less and less impact) but to build broad-based and plural networks of women, trade unions, social movements, farmers, consumer, environmental and community organisations, researchers, independent media and so on, working in alliances on issues such as water, trade, privatisation, debt, global warming and corporations. This new ‘methodology’ has enabled the global justice movement to act locally and globally, to share analyses and strategies, and to shift public opinion and discourse. Although it is worlds away from the politics of traditional vanguard parties or centred power structures, this way of working is not without its problems: there are tensions between different organisational ‘traditions’, networks can be opaque, ‘power’ relations are rarely acknowledged although they certainly exist, and consensus is not always democratic. However, the experiences of these networks and campaigns shows that perhaps it is possible to change the world, not by taking the power but by re-defining the power, and sometimes that means re-defining the power even within our own movements.

But there are many challenges facing the global justice movement, not least the difficulties of making a global and systemic impact when confronted with national concerns and priorities. I see three challenges ahead. The first is to develop an analysis and critique of the financial and corporate world in the same way that we have been able to build a comprehensive and grounded critique of the international institutions and the key global powers. Financial markets and transnational corporations are defining the world in which we live: national and international law, economic policies, production and distribution chains, consumption patterns, and even the democratic institutions of our countries, are influenced, if not shaped, by the decisions made in boardrooms and stock markets. This is no longer the exclusive privilege of the North; with every edition of the Fortune 500 we have proof that there are large corporations — individuals and mega-corporations — in North China, India and Russia. This challenges the global justice movement to develop a more sophisticated critique, which does not depend on old North-South divides, but understands that capitalism is now truly globalised.

The second challenge is to popularise, without simplifying, our analyses and critiques in ways that empower the so-called ‘ordinary’ people to understand the deep transformations that are taking place in their societies and, most importantly, to resist them. The right wing, racist, nationalist and fundamentalist movements and political parties have been much better at this than the left because they are willing to play on people’s insecurities and emotions, offering simple solutions to complex problems.

Yet the global justice movement does have an alternative vision of how society could be, a society of solidarity and cooperation based on tolerance and diversity and there are many small but significant signs that this world could be constructed. The World Social Forums are a sign of our resistance and optimism. The dozens of international coalitions working on issues like trade, drugs, water, privatisation and debt, show the movement’s capacity to create new ways of organising. The successes of these campaigns show that it is also possible to change public opinion and, with the ancient ideas of gift and counter-gift as the basis for economic cooperation. All these are expressions of the potential of a global movement which is able to act both locally and globally, surpassing the limitations of national identity and politics, ideologies and hierarchical structures, surpassing even the logic of profit and ownership.

The 20th century has shown the limitations of both the state and the market as guarantors of justice and peace: the third challenge for the global justice movement is to create, through intellectual work and practice, the emancipatory paradigm for the 21st century. It will not be written in a single political manifesto or in an academic journal (the days of truth being handed down from above are over) but it will evolve from praxis, reflecting the diversity and pluralism of the multiple real and potential alternatives to the current one.

Without over-estimating the benefits or difficulties of horizontal or consensus, we have the elements to break with the ‘old politics’ of hierarchy and centralisation, and to build a ‘new politics of inclusiveness, consensus and diversity. These values and practices are the seeds of a radical new democracy.
Contemporary China's Emerging Movements for Social Justice

Dorothy Guerrero
China continues to shake the world. Its re-emergence as a leading force in the global economy and its growing influence in the international community are increasingly felt by both the older industrialized economies and the South. China also continues to challenge common perceptions of political economy. Everyone who is concerned about China, those who live within or outside its borders, are grappling with the central paradox of understanding an authoritarian state fostering a free-market economy while espousing socialism.

Unfortunately, the economic leaders in many developing countries focus only on China’s employment of a trickle-down type of development model that relies on foreign investments and job creation through massive infrastructure projects and sweatshops that are forcing laborers to work for 60-70 hours a week when they talk about emulating China to attain their own economic growth.

They fail to grasp that China’s economic take-off was also aided by its use of economic policies such as protectionism, targeted investments, financial supports, etc. Many also neglect the fact that the Chinese people enjoy guaranteed access to land, education and basic services which is rarely Ending now. Those that are beguiled by China’s impressive growth rate and the way it compressed 150 years of market capitalism into three decades commonly underestimate the impacts of China’s catch-up development track, which is now causing huge social and environmental problems to its people.

In international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the regional development banks, China is increasingly asserting its voice and power. As well, China’s export and guarantees agencies, particularly China EximBank and Sinohuar, are now playing a crucial role in fostering the rapid expansion of Chinese trade and overseas investments and the China EximBank is now the world’s third largest export credit agency. China’s emergence as the new source of financing is felt not just by its Asian neighbors but also in Africa where it is one of the main sources of goods and finance. China is funding mines, dams and many big infrastructure projects in the continent.

In the United Nations, China has veto powers in the Security Council. When the UN needs peacekeepers, it is turning increasingly to China, which is now the 10th largest contributor to missions. Its insistence on a “G7 plus China” position also poses as an important new message. China’s positioning on various issues like global warming, arms reduction, peace and security, etc reflects or shifts the consensus in the South. China has proven that it could also use its growing influence to hold tempting political carrots to its allies.
Activism in China is not generally at the level of individual activism that inspires a small group of volunteers. This is because the space for political organization remains very limited. In the last few years, concern about the growing disparity between the living conditions of the rural and urban dwellers has prompted the Party to introduce reforms in order to raise sentiments that could potentially challenge the legitimacy of its governance.

Local farmers protest loss of land to land developers, in a bid to keep their jobs, and as a result of the “mass incidents” in security programs, especially in areas like housing, healthcare, and education. It is estimated that over the last couple of years, there have been over 60,000 “mass incidents” reported.

The Chinese Public Security Ministry reported that more than 67,000 “mass incidents” occurred in 2006 alone.

Considering the political environment in China, such reports of public protests reflect a significant change in the political landscape. It is a sign that people in China are no longer happy with the current trajectory of economic growth; they are now clamoring for that growth to be more equitable and to address their lives positively. Due to the country’s past isolation and limits in the political environment, many of these emerging groups do not lack their local struggles with other domestic issues and global campaigns. Focus is making efforts to link these local struggles and activists to the relevant networks and relevant local justice movements at the regional and global level.

Focus is examining many of these issues, producing up-to-date analysis, as well as facilitating discussions that deal with the many aspects of China’s new role in the global political economy.

During the second ASEAN Civil Society Conference that was held in Cebu City in December, Focus organized a workshop on China’s relationship with the ASEAN and its member countries.

There are real, remarkable and significant Chinese initiatives that are seeking to promote social justice in China.

There are real, remarkable and significant Chinese initiatives that are seeking to promote social justice in China. Focus on the Global South is relating with the groups mentioned above, as well as the many newly emerging groups such as local networks that are seeking to work on issues that concern the operations of international financial institutions, transnational corporations, etc. We cooperate with them through sharing of information, insights and views from abroad about China’s global economic and political role, nature and direction of economic development inside China and how this is driving China’s economic role abroad.


PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Develop the framework of our engagement and partnership with progressive Chinese NGOs/institutions, social movements and individual activists.

Contribute in the realization of positive changes in China through assisting progressive civil society organisations there.

Engage Chinese activists, progressive academics and journalists in the global justice movement.

Produce, in cooperation with progressive groups and individuals in China, analyses and assessments of political and economic trends that can be used for national or international campaigns.

Help/facilitate linkages and relationships between Chinese organisations and groups from other parts of Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Main activities in 2006

International Course on Globalisation, Social Justice and Civil Society in Bangkok, October 1-22

Public Seminar on China and Globalisation in Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, in October

China visit and discussions with local groups in Kunming, Beijing and Shanghai in April and in Beijing in November.

Workshop on China and the ASEAN in Cebu City, Philippines, December
In 2006, Focus remained actively involved in numerous efforts by peoples' movements and civil society alliances to defend peoples' rights to resources, food, employment, housing and public goods and services. Prominent among these are movements for food and water sovereignty, integral redistributive land and agrarian reform, the rights of forest dwellers and indigenous communities to their territories, and the rights of urban poor communities to affordable and quality housing and services. Focus has worked in various coalitions to build and support popular campaigns against policies and measures that enable the expansion of corporate power into the economy, society, environment and politics.

Food, Land, Water: The Elements of Life
Shalmali Gutta and Mary Ann Manahan
In Cambodia, Focus has documented the growing crisis of land and resource alienation and the violent repression of those who resist. The private law enforcement authorities, in concert with private land grabbers, are seizing and destroying tilled land all over the country. Focus has helped organize national and regional meetings of affected communities and civil society organizations on issues such as industrial rice plantations. ADIB involvement in natural resource management is again influencing the presence and influence of land and natural resources. Focus is also supporting the formation of informal local networks committed to preventing land grabs and reclaiming stolen lands.

In the Philippines, rural rights movements and advocates for agrarian reform are confronting a big challenge as the future of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), one of the country’s recent landmarks in the struggle for land and social justice, hangs in the balance. The law that extended additional funding for CARP implementation explicitly mentions that funding for the agrarian reform program will continue until 2008 only. With 2008 fast approaching, questions are being raised within the government, to the government, and among potential agrarian reform beneficiaries and agrarian reform advocates as to whether CARP will be cut off and shored up after 2008. On top of this, the remaining lands to be distributed are the most contentious—commercial farms and plantations owned by big landowners and corporations in the Visayas and Mindanao regions. Mining companies and agribusiness also threaten the access and control of communities, rural poor and landlords to their land.

There is an emerging social unrest in the countryside as big landowners and their employees disregard the Philippine laws and engage with complete impunity in a wide range of criminal activities that seriously undermine the effective access of rural poor communities to land and productive resources. The Philippine state, on the other hand, is failing abjectly to fulfill its obligations to respect, protect and uphold the human rights of the rural poor, despite being a signatory to the various relevant international human rights conventions. The rural rights movements and advocates of agrarian reform, human rights and social justice are waging extremely difficult struggles to defend the lives, rights and access to resources of the rural poor.

Against this backdrop, Focus started to actively engage in the national policy debate on agrarian reform through action research, mobilizations, roundtables and fora, networking, policy and legislative engagement. Building its stock knowledge and new information on emerging issues on land, Focus continued to work with peasant organizations and agrarian reform groups in the country such as the Alyansa ng mga Mabilis at Magbubukid at Manggagawa (AMMM), Pamalakaya, Kasarinlan ng mga Kabahayan sa Komunidad, UNIRKA, and Kilusang Agrarian Reform Movement. It actively participated and supported the campaigns against the criminalization of peasant struggles. This included participating in international fact-finding missions, organizing press conferences and meetings, solidarity work, and disseminating materials in the forms of multimedia presentations on the increasing agrarian-related human rights violations. Finally, as part of its commitments, Focus facilitated the linkages between groups in the country and regional/international movements such as La Via Campesina.
"We pledge to...support peoples’ movements and organisations across the region in their efforts to reclaim people’s democracy, sovereignty, self-determination and self-rule to create a better world." (1)
The National Alliance of Peoples Movements (NAPM) organised its biennial convention in Bangalore from May 30 June 2, 2006. The convention issued a call against the World Bank and ADB and promised more intense campaigns across the country. The ADB-supported Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission was rejected by the NAPM and was identified among the key battles for the coming year. Focus was invited as a resource group on IFIs and WTO issues for the convention.

In September the radar was turned on the World Bank. Focus, along with the IFIs and Social Action Forum (ISAF), organized a two-day strategy meeting in New Delhi on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Over 40 activists participated in the meeting and pooled their collective knowledge for strategising against the institutions and for supporting alternatives to development financing and governance.

Later in the month, several Indian activists joined thousands of others from across the world at Batam, Indonesia to convene the International Peoples Forum (IPF) vs the IMF and the World Bank. This was the peoples counter-event to the IMF/World Bank Annual Meeting in Singapore from September 19-20.

The 3rd Annual Conference of the National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers (NFFFFFW) was held in November 2006 in Ranchi, the capital of Indian state of Jharkhand. Hundreds of delegates deliberated on diverse issues ranging from community control of forests, environmental politics and livelihoods, privatization of forests and the role of IFIs. The conference issued a moratorium on the entry of IFIs and bilateral donors such as the World Bank, ADB and the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) into the forestry sector through projects such as monoculture plantations in poplar and eucalyptus. As an ally and supporter of the NFFFFFW, Focus participated in the conference and assisted with the press and media activities.

On December 8, 2006, the ADB’s India Country Director Tadashi Kondo and Kerala’s Resident Commissioner Inderjit Singh signed a loan agreement in New Delhi for the US $316.1 million Kerala Sustainable Urban Development Project (KSUDP). The loan is expected to usher in a wide-ranging urban sector reforms in Kerala. The ADB loan also kicked off a major political battle in the state. Several eminent citizens, progressive political parties, unions, social movements, environmental groups and activists came together under the banner of ‘Kerala Anti ADB Loan Campaign Committee’ to expose the anti-democratic and anti-development nature of the loan and to show that there is indeed a political and economic alternative to the ADB. Focus did a first level analysis of the conditionality in the loan, which was widely used by the campaign in both English and Malayalam, the local language.

The campaign committee has filed a writ petition in the Kerala High Court challenging the constitutional validity of the loan and has also held several public meetings across the state informing people about the need to stop this loan. Focus worked with the campaign committee on an open letter to the Kerala Chief Minister V.S. Achuthanandan urging him to reject ADB loan and use the controversy around the loan to forge a new vision on urban development for the state. The letter, which identified several alternative democratic sources of development finance, was endorsed by over a 100 groups from across the country.

The successes in 2006 show that popular pressure, demonstrations and other actions coupled with the use of democratic channels can provide real opportunities to change the rules of how governments and societies engage – or not – with IFIs. India has access to alternative sources of development finance, economic expertise and institutional capacity to be able to reject both the ADB and the World Bank. What is absent is political will from a central government that is as committed to neo-liberal economic policies as the IFIs and which uses IFI conditionality and policy reforms as cover to channel public and common resources to corporate India. An urgent task before peoples’ movements and civil society organisations is to build a sufficiently broad and strong social and political base across the country to bring the Indian Government under democratic control, and ensure that it works for the good of the majority of its people, rather than for a handful of domestic and foreign private interests.

See http://www.asianpeoplesforum.net/twiki/tiki-index.php?page=HyderabadPledge
(1) Excerpt from ‘The Hyderabad Pledge; ADB Quit Asia and the Pacific’. May 6, 2006. Signed by over 115 groups from across Asia at the conclusion of the 39th Annual Governors Meeting (AGM) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Hyderabad, India.

(2) The PF is a broad and diverse collective of over 100 social movements, struggle groups and civil society groups from across India and Asia, including the National Hawkers Federation, National Fishworkers Forum, Planchimda Solidarity Committee, New Trade Union Initiative, National Alliance of Peoples Movements, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Indian Social Action Forum and National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers. Focus on the Global South is PF Organising Committee member.
Mumbai continues to have one of the highest priced real estate in the world. This fight over land has intensified over the years and housing remains the most contested of issues in the city. The Government of Maharashtra in late 2006 bought out a draft housing policy for the state and invited suggestions from the public on the policy. The draft policy of the government reflected the corporate interests that control real estate and housing. Focus on the Global South took the initiative to mobilize urban activists, planners, architects and activists to prepare detailed comments on this policy to the government.

India’s continued push towards liberalization of its economy and of basic services such as health, education and water made its impact felt on urban India. With government spending on these sectors declining over the years and the slow withdrawal of the state from these services, basic services in Mumbai are being gradually pushed beyond the reach of the common people.

One of the basic services that is currently under attack in Mumbai is water. The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (Mumbai Municipal Corporation) has a grant from the Population and Infrastructure Advisory Fund (PIFA) a consortium that includes the World Bank is funding a 30 million rupees study on water supply in K-East Ward of Mumbai. Though local government officials and the World Bank, which is the implementing agency for the grant insist that there is no privatisation involved, the contract involving Castalia, the consultant, and the World Bank shows the contrary.

Resistance to this move is growing in the city leading to the formation of a coalition Mumbai Paani, an initiative of individuals, groups, organisations and social movements to address concerns and intervene in the ongoing privatisation of water in the city of Mumbai. Initiated in late March 2006, the group has slowly expanded to include the City to Pedestrian Group, community groups, non-governmental organisations, research organisations and larger people’s groups and networks. Focus on the Global South is one of the initial and key members of this growing campaign.

Urban policy in India is a subject matter of the State government. But the Government of India launched two schemes in late 2005 to cover all urban areas in India – Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns and the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. These schemes have a “carrot and stick” policy of money for reforms. Reforms which are the centrepiece of this approach include financial, governance, legislative reforms and those concerning the urban poor. Advocating private-public partnership in all projects including basic services, the thrust of the approach is toward removing constraints in the operations of free market in land. There is growing resistance to this vision of cities as engines of growth. Focus’s role in this resistance is as facilitating, as part of MPAC, the evolution of a people’s alternatives to current vision of cities and providing a strong critique to this model. This exercise is critical to the development of resistance to the present urban development paradigm.

The widening of the chasm between the have and the have nots – whether urban and rural, intra-urban or interurban – has become the hallmark of the “post-reform era.” Class has become the defining identity in urban India today and one that determines all aspects of life. Mumbai, the urban capital of India, epitomizes this.

* Our comrades and friend Minu Jose died on 19 April 2007. We continue this work in her memory, inspired by her example.
2006 was a very turbulent year for Thailand, with great political tensions. The most popularly elected Prime Minister of all time, Thaksin Shinawatra, was faced with the nationwide campaign to oust him after the sale of his family’s shares in the huge public company he had built, Shin Corporation, to Singapore’s state-owned holding company Temasek. Demonstrations continued for several months in Bangkok and other urban areas, on occasion attracting more than 100,000 people. The People’s Alliance for Democracy (PAD) was led by a media czar, a veteran politician and leader of a radical Buddhist movement and three social movements activists from the democracy campaign, trade unions and a teachers’ union. Democracy was the focal point of the opposition forces. Also joining the PAD were wide range of civil society groups, including public sector trade unions, farmer groups such as the Alternative Agriculture Network, People living with HIV, FTA Watch and anti-privatisation coalitions, etc. It is important to note that significant number of people were middle-class urban people who had been, until then, largely politically inactive.

Although Thaksin was not able to satisfactorily clear the accusations of corruption and the alleged misuse of power, he still enjoyed significant support from the rural sector, especially from his base in the North and Northeast and from the direct beneficiaries of his community-level credit expansion policies. Moreover, he had full support from the police force and maintained his strong influence over government officials. Thus a deep division emerged in Thai society, between pro- and anti-Thaksin groups in both the rural and urban areas.

Thailand: State of Uncertainty
Chanida Bamford, Jacques-chai Chomthongdi and Sajin Prachason

For FTA Watch, a coalition of NGOs, academics and social movements campaigning against free trade (of which Focus Thailand is a member) and many other progressive groups, Thaksin’s regime was a threat to the sustainable and equitable development of the people. His destructive approaches and policies, including FTAs, privatisation, undermining the independent institutions of governance, to say nothing of persistent human rights violations, had to be challenged openly through democratic means. And for FTA Watch particularly, joining the PAD was also considered as an opportunity to debunk the myths of free trade. More importantly, a lot of participating civil society groups saw the need for the public to think about broader agendas of social and political reforms, rather than concentrating on specific corruption cases.

In the midst of fear of impending violent clashes between the pro- and anti-Thaksin groups, the smooth military takeover on September 19 was a welcome relief to many Thais. Many hoped that the removal of the controversial Prime Minister would help improve the political, economic and social situation, since the coup leaders were perceived by the media as honest people with no political ambition. However, although there were no violent clashes between Thaksin’s supporters (including some sections of the armed forces) and his opponents, the general situation remains very doubtful. Firstly, Thaksin remains popular among the rural population and his political canvassers maintain their loyalty. Many believe that Thaksin will be able to return and regain political control. While remaining outside the country, Thaksin has effectively used his wealth and connections to undermine the new regime. Secondly, the new political elites, who were installed in the cabinet and the legislative assembly by the coup leaders, have increasingly distanced themselves from a number of academics, activists, NGOs, and social movements that were keen to see progressive changes. The lack of genuine economic and political reforms has failed to mark a change from the Thaksin era. Moreover, while the government has adopted what appeared at first glance to be a softer approach regarding the problems in Thailand’s three southern provinces, violence keeps escalating with no sign of resolution. At this point, the government remains fragile. There is no indication of political and economic stability in the near future and there are even rumours that a new coup is looming, possibly by the same junta, to consolidate their power and adopt, this time, a harsher approach.
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND NGOS BLOCK FTA

When the storm of national politics began to gather strength, the NGOs and social movements had an important but more complicated role to play. In the first week of the year, the biggest mass mobilizations to date against free trade agreements took place in Chiang Mai. More than ten thousand activists and members of various social movements rallied outside the hotel where the sixth round of the Thailand-US FTA negotiations was being held. At one point, demonstrators stormed into the hotel at which point panicked negotiators fled out the service doors at the back of the hotel. That official meeting turned out to be the last round of the Thai-US negotiations. This was two months prior to the birth of the PAD, and it happened in Thaksin’s home town, Chiang Mai. Central to this mobilization was FTA Watch.

While FTA Watch was successful in bringing the Thailand-US trade negotiations to a grinding halt, it has also played an important role in raising broader debates about free trade into the public arena. While free trade capitalism is now well-established in the minds of the Thai elite and the majority of the population are not aware of its implications, signing a trade deal is no longer a piece of cake. When Thailand joined the WTO a decade ago, the parliament took no more than five minutes to ratify the accession, and since then no FTA has ever been presented for parliamentary scrutiny or debate. Under the current chad-champ government, however, the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (UTEPA) took nearly six hours of the National Legislative Assembly debate largely due to the successful campaigns of FTA Watch which raised the level of public awareness and forced the legislative assembly to take note of some of the contentious issues in the agreement, such as trade in waste and intellectual property rights.

Similar to FTA Watch, the anti-privatisation campaign has gained significant momentum over the last year. In mid-2006, a group of NGOs was able to put the privatisation process on hold, and even reversed, through legal means. This has been seen as a significant Administration Court cases of the year. Again, public education and mobilization was the crucial factor behind this. It is worth noting that what people may see as a successful resistance is, at least in the Thai experience, the result of a long process of studying the issues, working with the media and parliamentarians, raising public awareness, and good information exchanges with social movements.

FTA and privatisation are only parts of the bigger picture. Thus, there is an attempt to link these issues to the need for genuine public participation in policy-making. As a starting point, FTA Watch is now pushing for a Negotiation and Agreement Making Bill by engaging movements, NGOs, academics, and

the public. The proposal of this Bill, increasingly known as the ‘People’s Bill on Trade Agreement’, has gained some momentum already and has started a broader debate on the need for participatory democracy.

2006 also brought dilemmas and divisions to Thai civil society and social movements. A number of progressive academics, journalists, activists and political groups criticise the PAD for its increasingly repressive stance. There is growing concern that the more progressive faction of the PAD pull out of the alliance. This division became more obvious following the September 19 coup. Although everyone denounced the coup, one camp was more willing to participate in any process related to the coup while the other camp, larger in number, critically engaged in some policy issues particularly in the constitution-drafting process. FTA Watch and the majority of the anti-privatisation coalition have taken the later approach. Whether this division will lead to serious consequences or is not difficult to evaluate at this stage. Still, it is fair to state that it has not, thus far, resulted in any irreversible damage within the civil society sector.

Only one month after the coup and still under martial law, from October 21 to 23, 2006, a wide range of Thai civil society groups, totalling more than 70 and including both camps mentioned above, came together to organize the first Thai-Saudi People’s Forum (TSF). Around 20,000 people participated in several dozens of workshops and panel discussions under the overarching theme of “An equal world is possible” with a one-day social movements assembly on “Social and Political Reforms” being a prominent feature at the forum.

TSF proved to be useful in terms of cross-network information exchange. For example, FTA Watch held a series of “Alternative Economy” workshops, where people from a variety of networks, such as anti-poverty, alternative energy, anti-free trade campaign, consumer campaign, trade unions, farmers, members of provincial chambers of commerce, and so on, discussed alternative approaches both at the macro and micro levels. Nonetheless, there was rather a commitment and strong signal that this process will continue even if there were a second TSF. Indeed, there was no clear sign or decision about whether there would be a second TSF. It was evident that different groups which were involved in TSF continue to push for reform, but this happens in a more fragmented fashion.

In sum, civil society groups have contributed significantly to shaping what happened in Thailand in 2006 but whether or not that contribution has strength- ened Thai democracy remains debatable. However, a significant amount of much attention was given to national politics, compared to other dimensions of the society. Hence, different voices and concerns from the grassroots seemed to be overshadowed by the political conflicts at the national level.
PEACE
and people's security

Movements Changing the Course of War
Herbert Docena
The Birth of Peace Mumbai
Varsha Rajan Berry
2006. Iraq is fully pacified, ruled by a US-handpicked government. Its state-owned companies are now fully privatised and its oil resources taken over by the big oil companies. Over fourteen US military bases are spread out across the Tigris and Euphrates. Afghanistan, too, has been stabilized; its gas deposits booked in foreign corporations' accounts as future income for decades to come. The occupation of Palestine continues, the land is fragmented and a 12-meter concrete wall divides communities into isolated Bantustans controlled by the Israeli military. A new government has been installed having surrendered the right to return. Lebanon's south is under Israeli occupation and their soldiers guard the capital. Iran, meanwhile, had just been attacked; tens of thousands lay dead across the land. A new Middle East is born.

Emboldened by its success, the United States sets its sights and trains its guns on North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, Somalia...Using its newly won sources of hard power, the United States proceeds to buttress the globalised economic system and prepares to launch yet more wars and interventions to export its brand of "democracy" and "freedom." A new world is about to be born.

The above is more or less what the US government, the neo-conservatives championing it and their allies around the world, envisioned would happen as a result of the wars launched after 9/11. That it did not come to pass reflects the state of resistance in 2006 and how this resistance has so far successfully managed to thwart the birth of a new world order built on brute force and aggression.

Movements Changing the Course of War
Herbert Docena

Structural factors, of course, posed limits to US ambitions. Any overextended military can only do so much despite its overwhelming power and resources. But it is not hard to imagine what could have happened if the world's peoples had passively accepted the United States' and its allies' efforts to radically remake the world on their terms.

What could have happened, for instance, if a global anti-war movement did not emerge to protest the invasion of Iraq? Governments around the world would have lined up to bankroll the war, send in troops, and provide the much needed legitimacy to prop up and prolong the occupation. Perhaps anti-war protests would have been held almost every day in hundreds of cities worldwide due to people protesting against the war, exposing the lies, marching on the streets and, in some instances, voting out their governments. What could have happened if the Iraqi people simply sat back, watched, and consented as the United States proceeded to install their preferred government, rewrite their laws, construct bases, privatise their economy, and take control of their oil?

What could have happened if the Palestinians grew weary, gave up, and walked away from their more than fifty-year struggle to reclaim their rights as a people? What could have happened if, in the face of the daily Israeli bombardment of August 2006, the Lebanese acquiesced and threw their hands up in the air? What could have happened if, in the mid-term elections of 2006, the American electorate had taken to calling for more Republicans to US Congress and give President George Bush the signal to proceed as he pleases?

In 2006, resistance to war and occupations deepened, advanced, and consolidated worldwide as evidenced by the unyielding opposition to the triple occupation of Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan; the victory of the Lebanese national resistance during the sudden aggression; and the growing rejection by the American people of the US project in the region. In Iraq, the resistance movements have managed to foil the US aim of pacifying the country, thereby frustrating its larger plans in the region. Despite efforts to starve their government of funds and blackmail them into renouncing their democratic choice, the Palestinians continue to oppose the expansion of settlements, the building of the apartheid wall, and any proposed resolution that forces them to forfeit their rights and demand for justice.

Globally, growing public opposition to the occupations has forced government after government to withdraw from the "coalition of the willing" occupying Iraq and Afghanistan. In Italy, for example, the anti-war movement has succeeded in pushing for the exit of Italian troops from Iraq and the demand for the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan gaining momentum. Around the world, support for the Palestinian cause is growing; a movement for boycotts, sanctions, and divestments against Israeli apartheid is gaining traction. Churches, unions, social movements and other civil society organisations are organizing such campaigns in their countries on a global scale. Campaigns against US-led wars and legislation enacted as part of the "global war on terror" are challenging the erosion of civil liberties and widespread human rights violations globally. Seeking to stop and prevent wars before they start, a dynamic international network is targeting the very machinery of global militarization by advocating the abolition of foreign military bases and other infrastructure used for wars of aggression and domination.

In Asia, little-known struggles for self-determination and against "internal" colonialism continue. Suppressed and brutalized by the Indonesian government for decades, the people of West Papua continue to fly their "Morning Star" flag. Betrayed by Manila, harassed by hawks in the military, and denounced by the "war on terror," the Moro and other indigenous peoples in Mindanao in the southern Philippines continue to try to overcome their differences and the weakness of their leaders to press for a measure of self-rule. In the south of Thailand, the uneasy truce between Bangkok and the local Muslim majority erupted into a deadly conflict following heavy-handed intervention from the Thakshin government in 2003. While the political demands of the Muslim population have not been expressed in a unified way, the conflict carries both Islamic identity and separatist sentiments. What is clear, however, is that the military response is not effective.
Within these global, national, and local movements for peace, justice and self-determination, there continue to be vibrant and intense debates over ideology and strategy. For example, to what extent, on what grounds, and in what ways should secular progressive movements engage with Islamic movements that are arguably the strongest political forces resisting imperialist repression across West Asia? Given the imperialist struggle to establish a wedge among the forces arrayed against it, how can the progressive movements engage with Islamic movements without shedding their principles and without endorsing the other side’s reaction ary positions, such as, for example, their views of women, gays, and lesbians or their views on democracy and religious freedom? How should the movement respond to the Islamic movements’ own critique of progressive notions of secularism and spirituality? What is the spectrum of Islamic political movements and how should the progressive movements deal with their pluralism and diversity? These questions are increasingly being raised more often among activists through a resolution or a consensus on the arrow has yet to emerge. But that they have become current topics of discussion—in a way that they were not years back—only indicates the heightening awareness among the different forces resisting the imperialist offensive.

As left-wing governments take power in Latin America, another focus of debate is in what ways should the movements engage with these governments to change the global order? Should they be on push for populaire and just solutions to the occupation of Palestine and Iraq, for instance? For some in the movement, Venezuela’s and Cuba’s own militaristic policies, while acknowledged to be a response to the threats they face, must continue to be questioned and challenged. Across borders, the age-old differences among anti-imperialists and anti-imperialist pacifists on the question of violence have not disappeared, but neither have they served as barriers that could not be crossed, if needed. As evidenced in the formation of an anti-imperialist network that embeds both wings of the anti-war movement, in the campaign against the Trident nuclear weapons in the UK, or in the nascent campaign against the Ballistic Missile Defense in Eastern Europe, leftists and pacifists can and should work together more closely than they have since perhaps the end of the Cold War.

As self-determination struggles re-assert themselves over many places in the South, the question of “nationalism” is also being increasingly interrogated. In the Philippines, for instance, where the leftist tradition has strong autonomous undercurrents as a legacy of the long anti-colonial struggle, the unresolved Merdeka/Muslim question is forcing a rethinking of the ideas of nationalism and solidarity at a time of increasing militarization and political crisis. While distrust and division between the Philippine left and the forces remain, initiatives in recent years are bridging the gap but more needs to be done.

The decision to resist— and to continue to resist—is a continuous choice. In summary, February 17, 2003 anti-war protests—the largest globally co-ordinated demonstrations in history—would not have been possible without the relationships and structures of coordination built through the years with the emergence of anti-globalization movements. Opposed forces were since, as expressed in various global campaigns, would not have continued in their scale and dynamics without the contacts and organization built through the world Social Forum process and other anti-war networks. Collective actions, in turn, come out of debates and discussions informed by knowledge and analysis generated through these networks.

Since May 2003, when Focus took the lead in convening an important anti-war gathering in Jakarta, Indonesia has been active in organizing gatherings and initiatives that seek to build links across movements divided by geography and issues. Noting the weakness in ties between the movements and the people of West Asia, Focus in 2004 also organized a landmark conference in Beirut, Lebanon that brought together anti-war and anti-globalization activists with fellow activists in that critical region. Since then, Focus has followed up on this with annual anti-war assemblies at the World Social Forums.

Building on all that has been achieved, work continued in 2005. Focus began preparing for a conference that will bring Iraq civil society together with their counterparts outside Iraq to work on concrete projects aimed at ending militarism from the top down, and supporting struggles to end occupation and overcome sectarian divisions. Throughout the year, Focus also continued its efforts as a partner in the project to build an international network for the abolition of foreign military bases, by contributing to preparations for a conference on the US military base in Okinawa in March 2007. At the same time, Focus continued to research and disseminate information and analyses on various dimensions of global arm politics in the hope of engaging the movements in debates on how to move pacifism is a work in progress, just like our work of movement-building efforts in the Philippines, India, and Indonesia.

While keeping its focus on West Asia, Focus shifted more of its attention to South and Southeast Asia, the region considered by the US as the second front in its global “war on terror,” and experiencing an intensifying regional and political competition involving India and China and ongoing homegrown self-determination struggles. Focus is building longer-term relationships with local organizations and on research projects documenting and analyzing US military intervention in the region, as well as the dynamics of the escalating conflicts in Mindanao, southern Thailand, Burma, as well Sri Lanka, Kashmir, and Nepal.

Programme objective
Roll-back militarization and military intervention in Asia

KEY ACTIVITIES FOR 2006

January 7: World Social Forum Anti-War Assembly, Caracas, Venezuela
January 26- February 7: Field research and interviews on the US “war on terror”, Solo and Zamboanga provinces, Philippines
February 13: Forum on the US-Philippines Visiting Forces Agreement, Manila, Philippines
February 14: Mobilization against the Visiting Forces Agreement, Manila, Philippines
February 16: Forum with Mindanao People’s Peace Movement, Manila, Philippines
February 24-26: Conference on Peace and Justice in South Asia, Mumbai, India
March 2: Mobilizations against US President George W. Bush’s visits to India, Mumbai
March 5-7: Budh Purnima Conference, New Delhi, India
March 20: Mobilizations to mark Third Anniversary of Invasion of Iraq
May: European Social Forum Anti-War Assembly, Athens, Greece
April 24-26: Fact-finding mission on extra-judicial killings in Central Luzon, Philippines
June: World Peace Forum, Vancouver, Canada
June 4-8: Conference on Oil, Debt and Global Finance, Italy
July 8-8: August 3: Preparatory meetings for the 2007 International Conference for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases, for the World
August 12-16: International Peace Mission to Lebanon
September 3-5: Asia-Europe People’s Forum, Helsinki, Finland
September 7-10: Preparatory meetings for the 2007 International Iraq Civil Society Conference, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
September 23: Forum on “Internal” Conflicts in Southeast Asia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
November 16-19: International Conference in Support of the Resistance, Beirut, Lebanon
November 24-26: Mediterranean links: Meeting of civil society organizations for promoting peace, social justice, human rights and democracy, Rome, Italy
November 25-28: The Asia-Pacific Consultation of Movements against US Military Bases, Tokyo, Japan
December 7-8: Conference on People’s Foreign Policy, Mumbai, India
December 10-12: ASEAN Civil Society Conference, Cebu
The Birth of Peace Mumbai
Varsha Rajan Berry

The World Social Forum held in Mumbai in January 2004, galvanised several Mumbai organisations and individuals to come together to help organize the event, organize and participate in the thematic plenaries and workshops and be part of a global movement against imperialism, neo-liberal economic policies, war, militarisation, nuclearisation and discrimination of all forms. An international event of this scale and nature provided a unique platform for local Mumbai groups to discuss and debate issues across countries and regions and build solidarity and organic linkages with similar organisations, movements and individuals for continued action on common issues. Peace and justice has been one such issue that has required continuous attention particularly in light of the growing escalation of conflict and violence worldwide and the strengthening of the anti-poor neo-liberal policies and imperialistic designs of the rich countries.

Closer home, the tenuous peace processes in the South Asia region, the US role and, importantly, the marked shift in India’s nuclearisation and foreign policy requires strong and determined civil society protest and action against all forces that destabilise our region and impede the progress towards peace and justice. The Indian Prime Minister’s July 2005 visit to the US and Britain marked a perceptible shift in India’s foreign policy. The Indo-US nuclear deal and the increasing cooperation with the apartheid state of Israel is a betrayal of India’s claims of non-alignment, our long-standing support for the Palestinian cause and our quest for an independent nation. The stand taken by the government of India on the Iran issue at the International Atomic Energy Agency is a clear departure from an independent foreign policy.

India’s growing military ties with the US, its joint military exercises with US troops and huge arms trade with Israel (India is now Israel’s largest customer for arms and defence equipment) will have serious ramifications not only on India’s independent and sovereign status but for all of Asia in terms of security, trade and development. It is also a massive setback for the overall objective of disarmament. The Indian Government has aligned with the US-UK-Israel axis and become part of the Global War on Terror, which has become the excuse for an illegitimate war against ordinary people of Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Lebanon and potentially any nation that does not toe the Washington line.

The organisations and individuals from Mumbai that came together during the WSF 2004, have resolved to continue to keep themselves updated on these issues, on the developments in South Asia, to sharpen their own positions and to link up with friends and colleagues across the nation, in Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and globally for coordinated civil society vigilance, protest and action on these issues. This collective of Mumbai organisations and individuals link together under the banner of Peace-Mumbai. This is a broad-based and open collective that links with national, regional and international campaigns and activities on peace and justice issues. Besides NGOs, civil society organisations and individuals, the collective is open to other sectors (political parties, movements, issue based networks and others) that wish to join civil society actions and processes for peace and justice.
Peace Mumbai constituents have been engaged in various activities around the issues of peace for the past couple of years but the "international Conference on Peace and Justice in South Asia" organized in Mumbai in February 2006 under the aegis of Peace Mumbai was the first event of such scale to be organized after the WIP in Mumbai 2004. The conference brought together delegates from Mumbai and various corners of Maharashtra, from other parts of India, from Jammu Kashmir and the Northeast, from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. A few delegates came from the US, Europe and from across the globe. The event was about building solidarity and cutting across borders to forge a greater South Asian identity based on common cultural roots and heritage. However, the participants realized that a strong sense of unity can only be achieved through a democratic, peaceful, demilitarized and nuclear weapons-free South Asia. The conference deliberated on key issues such as: Can there be a South Asia that is based on peace and justice rather than war and injustice? Can there be a different framework going beyond national chauvinism and various forms of religious and communal identities, affirming the unity of being South Asian? What are the alternative paradigms that civil society can provide?

The Conference adopted a resolution and opened up immense possibilities for developing a collective South Asian campaign effort on peace and justice.

Following the Conference, Peace-Mumbai as a collective has continued to meet regularly. The following activities have been taken up:

Coming together on various events and activities around the anti-war week in March of every year.

Organizing activities and planned events to commemorate Hiroshima and Nagasaki days in August.

Launching a citywide campaign called "Mumbai in White" along with schools and colleges as a response to the train blasts in Mumbai in July 2006.

Sending a fact-finding mission to Sri Lanka along with the support of our local Sri Lankan hosts in September-October 2006.

Sending a mission to Malegaon in Maharashtra as a response to the bomb blasts there.

Organizing a conference on "India's Foreign Policy and its Shift" in December in Mumbai 2006.

The December conference resolved that India’s foreign policy should be focused on developing friendly ties and strengthening equitable regional cooperation. For lasting peace, Asian solidarity and regional cooperation is crucial at the political, cultural and economic levels. The people of India need to be aware of the perils of the shift in policy being pursued by our Government. There is a need for discussion and dialogue in the international context as to how India should respond and as to what kind of foreign policy we need to adopt that is keeping with India’s historical legacy of independence, sovereignty and solidarity.

Peace-Mumbai continues as an open collective. Decision-making is collective and consensual. A core group works towards providing continuity in sustaining the collective and taking its decisions forward. Peace-Mumbai intends to strengthen its collective process of analysis, decision-making and organisation. It intends to provide a platform for individual groups and persons to link on peace and justice issues and to develop local leadership for advocacy and action for South Asia engagements on peace and justice issues.

Constituents of Peace Mumbai
APROD, BUILD, New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI), PEACE, CODA, Yusa Bharat, CENAT, Salkina, Vidrohi, Action Aid International, Shodhan Weekly, Peoples’ Media Initiative, Communist Party of India (CPM), Communist Party of India Marxist, Jan Morcha, Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP), National Alliance of Peoples Movements (NAPM), India Center for Human Rights and Law (ICHR), Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE), Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA), National Youth Federation (NYF), Pakistan-India Peoples Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFDP), Bombay Urban Industrial League for Development (BUILD), Focus on the Global South, India, Indo-Pak Youth Forum for Peace, Media for People, Vikas Adhyayan Kendra (VAK), Akshara, Documentation Research and Training Center (DRTC), Explorations, Initiative, Institute For Community Organisation and Research (ICOR), Movement for Peace and Justice (MPJ), Jamat-e-Islam Hind, Bombay Aman Committee.
Fighting Free Trade, Imagining Alternatives
Mary Lou Malig

Waves of Resistance: Small Fisherfolks in the Anti-Globalisation Movement
Joseph Purugganan

India’s Farmers take on Corporate Agriculture
Askar Jafri

Dateline Geneva
Aileen Kwa
At the 6th Ministerial of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Hong Kong in December 2005, the big trading superpowers, with the help of Brazil and India, were able to pull out a deal at the last minute, which, if fully implemented, will be severely detrimental to the majority of the world’s peoples. The deal in Hong Kong gave the multilateral institution new momentum. 2006 therefore began with an intensified campaign to stop this deal and to prevent the conclusion of the so-called Doha Development Round.

By July 2006 however, the WTO talks collapsed and the Doha round was declared comatose. This was hailed as the best possible outcome for developing countries. Social movements, national campaigns and people the world over then celebrated this collapse as a victory for the majority of world’s peoples.

The trade campaign then dedicated more energy and resources in to pushing for alternatives to the WTO and to free trade. At the same time, it intensified the national, regional and international campaigns against bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). The Focus trade campaign also continued its work on exposing and resisting war-driven free trade and the corporations that benefit from it. This work was done together with the Defending and Reclaiming the Commons program.

Fighting Free Trade, Imagining Alternatives
Marylou Malig
Strategic objective:
To stop and roll-back corporate-led globalisation so as to be able to create the space for building alternatives to the current system.

Major activities in 2006
Meeting with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group after Hong Kong, January 2005, Geneva
This was a meeting organised by the ACP Secretariat in Geneva after the Hong Kong Ministerial. Focus was asked to present the role of LDCs, discussions on services negotiations in Hong Kong and the implications of Annex C.

Various WTO Strategy Meetings, Polycentric Social Forum January 24-31, Caracas, Venezuela
Together with the Hemispheric Social Alliance and OWNFs, Focus participated in various strategy meetings on the WTO during the Polycentric Social Forum held in Caracas, Venezuela. The meetings aimed to analyze the results of the Ministerial and find ways of working together in the campaign to prevent the conclusion of the Doha Round.

Meeting with the ACP Group on Agriculture, February 2005, Geneva
Focus participated in a brainstorming / strategising meeting of the ACP group on agriculture negotiations. We gave an input on the strategies for the group, particularly focusing on the Group’s need for more attention on the disguised export subsides in both the US and EU farm programmes.

Meeting with the ACP Group of Domestic Regulation, February 2005
The ACP Group wanted to prepare a paper for submission in the Domestic Regulation negotiations. Together with other experts, Focus provided an analysis for the ACP’s consideration and presented this to the group.

Regional Trade Strategy Meeting, February 28-March 1, Bangkok, Thailand
It was a re-grouping of the movements and coalitions after the Hong Kong Ministerial to discuss and analyze the results of the Ministerial and to plot the next steps forward in order to prevent the bad deal from Hong Kong from being implemented and the Round from being concluded at the end of 2006. This meeting also aimed to strengthen the alliances among the groups and movements in the region.

This meeting followed from the previous successful regional meetings in Bangkok in 2003 and 2004 and also followed on the success of other region-wide meetings in 2005 such as the Colombo meeting and the strategy meeting in Busan, Korea. This meeting aimed to continue this regional process and strengthen it.

Various WTO Strategy Meetings, European Social Forum, April 4-7, Athens, Greece
Together with the Seattle to Brussels Network and other members of OWNFs, Focus played an active role in the strategy meeting on the WTO held during the European Social Forum in Athens, Greece. The meetings planned for, among other things, possible actions in Geneva and elsewhere.

OWNFs Strategy Meeting and Dialogue with Developing Country Negotiators, WTO General Council Meeting, May 15-17, Geneva, Switzerland
OWNFs organized a strategy meeting on the WTO from May 15-16 and a Dialogue with WTO Delegates from developing countries. The strategy meeting discussed the latest developments in the three major issues of Agriculture, Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) and Services. The meeting aimed to update the participants on the latest in negotiations so as to inform the strategies and planned actions. The dialogue with developing country negotiators was aimed to give a space for movements and civil society to have an open debate and dialogue with their delegates and pressure them to listen to the calls of the people.
Waves of Resistance: Small Fisherfolks in the Anti-Globalisation Movement

Joseph Purugganan

Fishers' Voices

The fishers' actions in Hong Kong sent out a clear message against the WTO and the Doha Negotiations on how the voices and interests of marginalized sectors like the small or artisanal fishers are ignored in the negotiations. The fisheries sector, where millions of small fishers across much of the developing world derive their livelihoods, has been lumped together with industrial goods like jewellery, clothes, and electronics in the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations. The ambitious NAMA agenda being pushed by trade super powers like the United States and the European Union is totally unmindful of the sensitivities inherent in fisheries production and trade and the growing vulnerability of small fishers across the globe.

The colorful fluvial protest of the fishers’ in Hong Kong was thus a strong statement from an un-represented sector in the negotiations not just for the recognition of their rights to secure their livelihoods but of their vigilant and militant opposition to the WTO and the agenda of corporate globalisation.

Geneva 2006

The militant protests in Hong Kong however were not able to stop the WTO from inching closer to a new multilateral trade deal. The Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting came out with a declaration that among other things laid the timetable for the conclusion of the round by 2006. Against the looming conclusion of the Doha Round, the fishers from Southeast Asia began contemplating a repeat of Hong Kong, this time right at the doorstep of the WTO – a fluvial protest action in Lake Geneva, a stone’s throw away from the WTO headquarters.

The idea was to bring the spirit of resistance that was so evident in Hong Kong to Geneva. An added dimension was that instead of renting big boats as had happened in Hong Kong, the fishers themselves built the boats for the fluvial protest. So far close to four days and nights, the fishers, with support and assistance from local activists, labored to produce four small fishing boats, unlike anything that has ever sailed across Lake Geneva.

A few days before the scheduled protest in Geneva, the talks were indefinitely suspended. This news was warmly welcomed by farmers and fishers groups who came to Geneva geared up for a last ditch effort to stop the conclusion of the round.

On July 27 2006, the protest action by “land and sea” took place in Geneva. The small boats that were created by fishers just days before launched the action. The fluvial protest was complemented by a march led by farmers from Via Campesina. The farmers and fishers protest in Geneva coming on the heels of the suspension of the Doha talks, drew attention to the need for governments across the globe to start the process of reflecting on and drawing up alternatives to the WTO.

The global resistance to the WTO and to the free trade agenda continues to gain strength as groups and networks across the globe consolidate and build stronger linkages among their respective campaigns. The experience of the small fishers of Southeast Asia, with their campaign to let their voices be heard, has shown that at the heart of this global resistance are the struggles of people and communities for better lives.
India’s economic surge is the big story today: analysts cite the soaring Bombay Stock Exchange Sensex figures (which recently crossed the 13,000 point mark), economic growth of 9% for 2005-2006, booming foreign direct investment, foreign exchange reserves at an all-time high ($187.21 billion in February 2007) and increasing number of cellular phone users (crossed 115 million in February 2007). But economic development that benefits the upper and middle classes is diametrically opposite to the grim reality in much of rural India where millions of people are unable to access even two square meals a day and lack basic human amenities such as health, education, electricity and even potable water.

Given the distressing situation in rural India, farmers’ movements in India have a lot to deal with. The last two decades have seen protests, rallies, sit-ins and hunger strikes by the farmers’ movements against the neo-colonialist policies and the persistent government apathy towards bringing rural misery. The increasing suicide among farmers is a manifestation of the acute agrarian suffering. In just the first four months of 2007 around 350 farmers committed suicide in six districts of Vidarbha region in the state of Maharashtra. Farmers are also taking their lives in other states, such as Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. The Indian peasantry, the largest body of surviving small farmers in the world, is facing extinction.

**The three basic factors which are responsible for pauperizing rural communities and transforming the positive economy of agriculture into a negative economy for farmers are increasing costs of production, declining prices of commodities, and rising consumer prices.**

The three basic factors which are responsible for pauperizing rural communities and transforming the positive economy of agriculture into a negative economy for farmers are increasing costs of production, declining prices of commodities, and rising consumer prices. And all these factors are rooted in the neo-colonialist policies of agricultural liberalization, trade liberalization and corporate globalization. Liberalization in the agriculture sector brought in the deregulation of the seed industry and the entry of the chemical-responsive seeds of Monsanto, Dupont and Syngenta, the shift from farm-saved seeds to seed monopolies, the monocultures; opening of the private wholesale grain markets by agri-business like ITC and Cargill, shrinking subsidies; and a rapid increase in cost of production. Moreover, the unfair rules of multilateral global trade further aggravated the distress with depressed global and domestic prices thus denying Indian farmers adequate remunerative prices.

The shift from “food first” to “trade first” and production of food grains for export has exposed Indian farmers to the volatile world commodity market and unrestricted competition from outside. The removal of quantitative restrictions (QRs) from 1,429 tariff lines in 2000-2001 under WTO commitments and unilateral trade reforms by the Government of India opened the floodgates for dumping of cheap subsidized food grains from developed countries into local markets. This placed small-scale, self-reliant farmers in competition with western industrial agriculture. Consequently the import of edible oil increased from 1061.99 thousand tonnes in 1995-96 to 5250.2 thousand tonnes in 2003-04, cotton imports increased from 2.92 thousand tonnes in 1996-97 to 253 thousand tonnes in 2003-2004, and sugar imports increased from 29 thousand tonnes in 1996-97 to 932.3 thousand tonnes in 2004-05. This caused sharp declines in farmgate prices in India and subsequently led to a decline in farmers’ incomes and increased indebtedness, which then triggered large-scale suicides by farmers. Within 10 years of the WTO’s establishment, India went from being a net agricultural goods exporting country, to a net food importing country.
The introduction of genetically modified (GMOs) seeds such as Bt cotton caused further misery among poor Indian farmers due to increased cost of production and large scale GM crop failure. Many were thrown out of farm and farming. The growing unemployment, reduced incomes, increasing consumer prices and shrinking public distribution system for food grains are causing unprecedented reduction in the per capita availability of food grains for the rural poor, causing acute hunger and malnutrition. The National Sample Survey Organisation report, released on December 27, 2006, on Level and Pattern of Consumer Expenditure 2004-05 reveals that about one third of India’s rural population (or over 200 million people) survive on less than Rs 12 per day.

Faced with capital-intensive, trade-driven and corporate-controlled agriculture, several farmers movements emerged to deal with these new threats. The significant movements of the owner-cultivators or farmers that surfaced, during this period, include Karnataka Raja Raghunath Sabha (KRRS) in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu Farmers Association in Tamil Nadu, Kisan Sangharsh Samiti in Madhya Pradesh and Bhiyani Kisan Union (BKI) in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana. They challenged the widened exploitative relations between the self-reliant agrarian society system, on the one hand, and industrial/ international/ western capital on the other. They argued that the state and central governments are failing rural populations and that in their rush to attract high-end foreign investment, information technology companies and other rapid growth industries, the governments have neglected the needs and aspirations of farming communities.

These farmers’ movements have not only challenged the obvious agents of neo-colonialism—for example Monsanto, Cargill and MacDonald—but also the whole of Indian society, especially the middle classes and the elites. These were manifested in the demolition of the Cargill Seeds Corporation factory in Bellary in 1993 and the ransacking of the Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets in Bangalore in 1996 as well as uprooting of GMO field trials in the late nineties and, most recently, the burning of several GM Rice field trials across India in late 2006.

Farmers’ movements are continuously crusading against TNCs’ control over seeds, imports of soyas and other commodities, privatisation of wholesale grain markets, contract farming, patenting of seeds as well as the TRIPS and Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) in the WTO. The farmers’ movements believe that the farmers of India can never get a better deal under the neo-liberal, export-oriented agricultural paradigm of the AoA WTO and therefore they launched a massive campaign for keeping agriculture and food out of the purview of the WTO. Their demands have been: WTO out of food and agriculture; ban on cheap subsidised imports; reining of quantitative restrictions; complete ban on GM seeds and foods; and formulation of a comprehensive national agricultural policy. Several protests and mass rallies were organized in the WTO in New Delhi and other major cities in the last three years, the biggest one in Mumbai just before the WTO ministerial when 80,000 farmers marched to the Mumbai port against subsidised imports. The Indian farmers also joined Korean and other developing country farmers in Hong Kong in December 2005 in a united fight against corporate-led agriculture in the WTO. April 2006 and March 2007, Indian farmers protested WTO Director Pascal Lam’s visit to Delhi to accelerate the process of WTO negotia-
tions with India’s support.

In the struggles of farmers’ movements against corporate monopolies in agricult-
ure, GMOs and the WTO, Focus on the Global South-India, aligned with their cause, provided all necessary intellectual, moral and technical support, and joined them in mass actions including providing secretarial help for these actions. Focus-India organized training programmes, debates and discussions on trade, intellectual property rights (IPRs) in agriculture, World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies and their implications on Indian agriculture and farmer communities.

In view of the recent survey by the NSSO in which 40% of Indian farmers preferred to quit agriculture, the only way to protect Indian farmers from the onslaught of the present day corporate model of agriculture is to evolve a comprehensive agriculture policy. Focus India is working with research institutions, agriculture experts, economists, and farmers’ leaders to help formulate an alternative agriculture policy to provide a new direction to policy-making and agriculture reforms for ensuring the survival of small and marginal farmers and promoting self-reliant agriculture.
GENEVA, 1 March, 2007: While the WTO Doha negotiations have formally resumed, most negotiators in Geneva are in the dark about what is really going on. The main negotiations are taking place among the G4 members – US, EU, India and Brazil. These negotiations have been held outside Geneva. The majority of the Membership are sitting in Geneva and getting increasingly frustrated at their lack of involvement. Many African delegates have denounced this process. The agriculture and non-agricultural market access (NAMA) chairs are occasionnally holding consultations (these are also only small group consultations) and there are ‘open-ended’ meetings once in while.

As one delegate put it: “We are not having a multilateral process, but the bilateral and plurilateral agreements are being ‘processed’ and passed through the multilateral route just to justify that the membership is on board. In actual fact, we are not having a member-driven negotiation.”

He continued: “Resumption? This is a false resumption. The process is to legitimise the deal that the US and EU may come up with. Perhaps they felt that they were close to the conclusion of a deal or they were making progress, and they want the rest of the membership to endorse what they come up with so they called for a ‘resumption’. But the reality is that the rest of the Membership is just sitting there waiting... The Chair’s informal sessions (open to all Members held once in two or so weeks) is simply about information. You are told for example that the fireside chats did not make progress. It is a waste of time. These (open-ended) meetings are not negotiating meetings.”

Dateline Geneva
Aileen Kwa

Washington politics drive the trade round

Washington politics are currently setting the rhythm and even the content of the WTO talks. The Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) and whether Congress would give the Bush administration an extension when it expires on July 1, 2007, will determine the life or death of the Round. However, as one US official stated informally, the extension does not have to be in place by July 1 when the current TPA expires. It could well be that there is a lapse of several months before Congress agrees to a new TPA for the purposes of concluding Doha and several FTAs (Pep, Panama, Columbia, South Korea). Obviously though, US Trade Representative Susan Schwab’s negotiating authority vis-a-vis her trade partners would be diminished if the TPA lapses. A hard campaign is ongoing in Washington. Labour and environmental clauses for the FTAs are being discussed in order to draw the Democrats on board. Also, Democrats representing farm interests are being courted and asked what they want to get out of Doha and the Farm Bill. Whether the Administration’s campaign will be successful remains to be seen.

In the WTO, the Larry-Schwab- Mandelson strategy is to get a package on the table by May or June so that Democrats will be prepared to renew the TPA. Schwab does not think it is feasible to conclude all elements of the Doha Round by that time. The game plan by the WTO leaders is to get a ‘framework’ similar to the Hong Kong Declaration, although addressing more of the key issues.

Again, the small developing countries are worried that their issues will be sidelined in a ‘partial modalities’ scenario. Says one official informally “What about our issues? What will we do about preferences, commodities, Special Products and the Special Safeguard Mechanism? Will these be forgotten? And how will we put them back on the table if the main numbers have already been agreed upon? We will have no more leverage to get what we want!”

She went on to say “What if we are forced to give concessions just to have the TPA renewed and it does not get renewed? Then they will say, ‘Let’s build on what has been agreed upon’. And we can’t get our concessions back and we could already have lost some of our key issues.”

US-EU reverse engineering: Blair House accord by another name?

Schwab commented on a press conference early in 2007 that the G5 forum was not useful. Instead, she has been advocating a reverse engineering approach.

Explains one developing country delegate, Schwab’s ‘reverse engineering’ is the process whereby the US and EU set the market access tariff cutting formulae in their negotiations and instead focus on the products of market access interest to each other or products which are sensitive for their domestic constituencies. Agreement is worked out between them product by product. After that, the tariff cutting formula to be applied multilaterally, as well as the treatment for sensitive products, will be worked out to fit in with the bilateral agreement.

When they have decided upon their desired package, the talks are then expanded to include first India and Brazil, and then a small group of other Members (probably those involved in the plurilateral meetings held by the agriculture and NAMA chairs). The majority of WTO Members are finally presented with a take-it-or-leave it package.

This process is not new. The Uruguay Round was inextricably concluded only after the US and EU met in Blair House (the official state guest house for the US President in Washington), and came up with the ‘Blair House Accord’ which they then proposed to the rest of the Membership for endorsement as a multilateral deal.
Agriculture talks

On January 31, the Administration unveiled 65 proposals for the US Farm Bill to Congress. While these remain only at the proposal stage, the trends are not particularly encouraging. More box-shifting is being planned for. This entails the categories to direct payments which in the WTO, falls under the unlimited Green Box. In fact, the US already has about 70% of its subsidies in the Blue Box, which the WTO considers to be trade-distorting. The US has named some of these disciplines but seem not to have pushed them hard in the negotiations.

Non-Agriculture Market Access (NAMA)

Every little in Geneva is taking place in the NAMA negotiations. The majors, particularly the US, are putting pressure on developing countries to get into the sectoral negotiations which are even more aggressive than the formula.

In G4 negotiations, the US and EU are putting pressure on India and Brazil to take on the coefficient of 15 in the Swiss formula. Developed countries, they propose, would have a coefficient of 10. Since developed countries have lower tariffs, a 10 coefficient would cut their tariffs by 23%-25%, while for developing countries, a 15 coefficient would cut their tariffs by 60%-70%. This contrasts with the fact that full reciprocity in tariff cuts that developing countries were promised in Doha.

The NAMA negotiations are currently stalled as members are waiting for clarity in agriculture – the logic being that ‘ambition’ in agriculture would be matched by ambition in NAMA. Nevertheless, this is an area that developing countries also have grave concerns and may not be easily resolved even if the agriculture negotiations are resolved.

Nonetheless, informal services clusters are taking place in the last two weeks of every month and are intended to be non-trade distorting elements. The G20 has appointed some of these disciplines but seem not to have pushed them hard in the negotiations.

Services

There were attempts at the end January Davos meeting by US and EU to get developing countries to agree to take a date for the revision of their services offers. Again, developing countries have chosen to wait for clearer indication in agriculture before committing themselves further. No date has been set. Explaining why developing countries have not bitten the bait, a Caribbean delegate says, "They [the US and EU] are attempting to have low ambition in agriculture and high ambition in services. In the NAMA meetings, they have not sought the US and EU have not shied away from low ambition in agriculture, there is no way I can account to my capital what I need to provide a revised offer." Nevertheless, informal services clusters are taking place in the last two weeks of every month and are intended to be non-trade distorting elements. The G20 has appointed some of these disciplines but seem not to have pushed them hard in the negotiations.

The domestic regulation talks have been continuing under the chairmanship of Singapore’s Peter Govindasamy. The domestic regulation provisions, if agreed upon, are likely to tighten the ability of developing countries to regulate foreign investors operating in their countries. For example, when turning down a license application by a foreign investor, the country, if it has opened up that sector under GATS, will have to show the domestic legislation in question is 'objective' and 'non-discriminatory'. Countries will be able to set domestic regulation on the basis of solutions to be able to choose the way in which they meet those objectives! For example, a regulation that all banks will have to provide a certain amount of credit to small farmers or small enterprises could be challenged as being unreasonable.

The African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries have been airing their development concerns in the consultations in Geneva. Thus far, these have not been met enthusiastically by the major developed countries.

The Doha talks, if concluded will foreclose developing countries’ development prospects. There are many issues around current trade policies pushed by the WTO and free trade agreements that need to be questioned. Why have increased exports not reduced poverty? How many developing countries have increased exports but have seen their level of industrialisation either stagnate or even drop?

An alternative agenda for the trading system will include getting off the liberalisation treadmill and taking a serious stab at regulating world trade instead of integrating world trade. This agenda will include having a mechanism that strictly monitors and disciplines dumping; overseeing competition policy at the multilateral level; putting in place commodity agreements that could stabilise and raise commodity prices; and regulating access to knowledge and innovation – including overseeing technology transfer, advocating open-source business models and knowledge-sharing.
Activities
India Philippines Thailand 2006
Activities Organised, Co-organised or Participated in
Focus on the Global South, India, 2006
May 3-6: Co-organised the parallel events as part of Peoples’ Forum against ADB during ADB-AGM, Hyderabad
May 15: Participated in stakeholders’ meeting on water, organized by Bombay Municipal Corporation
May 29-30: Provided logistical support and participated in Namida Bachao Andolan activists protest on Maheshwar Dam at Azad Maidan, Mumbai
June 10: Participated in the Forests Land Rights Meeting in Pune, organized by a campaign group of various social movements, Maharashtra
July 08: Co-organised and spoke at the Water meeting against privatisation in K-East, Mumbai
August 14-16: Participated in the organizing committee meeting of the Peoples’ Forum against ADB, Delhi
September 2-3: Organised in Delhi along with Peoples’ Forum (of which focus is an Organising Committee member) a strategy meeting on the role of NGOs and IFIs, a prior to the World Bank/IMF Annual meeting in Singapore
September 7-8: Participated in the Conference on National Urban Renewal Mission, organised by Action Aid, Nashik
October 7-9: Participated in training workshop on TNCS, Bangkok
October 30-31, November 1-2: Participated and was part of the media coordination at the National Conference of the National Forum of Forest Peoples and Forest Workers, Ranchi
November 8: Participated in the planning meeting of the Peoples’ Forum against ADB, Delhi
November 10: Organised a seminar on “Changing Urban Water Scenario” in IFG, Delhi
November 12: Organised a roundable on “Our Cities, Our Vision” at ISF, Delhi
November 23-25: Participated in a workshop on the National Urban Renewal Mission, organised by NCAS, Delhi
November 29: Participated in a rally against the Forest Bill at Azad Maidan, Mumbai
December 1: Participated in a planning meeting on the Foreign Direct Investment in Retail, Mumbai
December 4: Participated in the meeting on the Peoples Health Assembly, organised by CHEAT (Peoples Health NGO's), Mumbai
December 15-31: Field Visit to Kerala for ADB related work

PEOPLE’S PEACE AND SECURITY
February 24-26: Facilitated setting up of Peace Mumbai network and organised a Conference on Peace and Justice in South Asia, Mumbai
March 2: Participated in the protest against Bush visit to India, organised by Muslim Organisations, Mumbai
March 19: Participated in the protests on the occasion of the anniversary of the Iraq War, Mumbai
May 20: Instrumental in organising a strategy meeting towards an All India campaign on India’s foreign policy, Delhi
June 17: Organised the follow-up meeting of the All India campaign on India’s foreign policy in Delhi
July 10-26: Meetings with college students and youth groups as part of the “Mumbai in White Campaign” after the serial bomb blasts in Mumbai
July 26: Organised the “Mumbai in White Day” in Mumbai calling on all Mumbai citizens to wear white for peace
August 6-9: Attended the Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemoration events, Mumbai
August 12-14: Facilitated Indian delegation for the peace mission to Lebanon
August 19: Organised a press conference by the Indian delegates to the delegation to Lebanon

ALTERNATIVES
February 11-12: Participated in the India WSF IWC Meeting, Delhi
March 24-25: Participated in the World Social Forum, Karachi, Pakistan
June 10: Participated in the WSF Asia and Africa Support Group meeting, Mumbai
July 22-23: Facilitated a delegation to the Conference on WSF, Durban
August 21: Participated in the WSF Asia Africa Group Meeting, Mumbai
August 24: Participated in the Western Region Consultation on IFG, Pune
September 28-30, October 1: Facilitated the participation of Mr. Sanjay Mango for a Seminar on Strategies of the Social Movements, Brussels
November 9-13: Participated and organised events at the ISF, Delhi
November 11: Participated in the Afro-Asian Social Movements Meeting in the ISF, Delhi
November 12: Participated in the Interim WSF Asia Council Meeting in the ISF, Delhi

GENERAL AND MISCELLANEOUS
January 14: Attended launch of a new political formation composed of social movements called People’s Political Front, Mumbai
February 1-3: Management team meeting, Bangkok
April 21: Attended meeting in Mumbai to facilitate Mr. Balkrishna Renke, farmer-activist in Maharashtra on his being nominated Chairman of Commission for Nomadic Tribes
May 17: Attended meeting on recent trend of anti-people Judgments being handed down by Supreme Court and others Indian Courts, India
June 17-25: Staff retreat, Bangkok
Sept. 12-13: Board meeting, Bangkok
October 25- November 14: Visit of Chinese group under the China-India Exchange
December 18: Management team meeting, Bangkok
DEFENDING AND RECLAIMING THE COMMONS

March 17-19: Foro Internacional en Defensa del Agua, parallel civil society forum to the World Water Forum

April 18: Alyansa ng mga Manggagawa sa Agriculutra's Alliance of Farm Workers) forum on Charter Change and its impacts to the farming sector April 22: Input presentation on the results of the ICARRD and IRRI Parallel events in the Philippines and its implications to agrarian reform advocacy work in the Philippines. Mindanao groups working on agrarian reform, Davao City, Mindanao

May 7: Development and active participation in the mobilization-final mass tribute for Ka Eric Cabanatuan, held in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform, Quezon City.

May 8: Dialogue with Bambangun Water Cooperatives, Balay Kalinaw, UP Diliman, Quezon City. (DRTS)

June 2-15: International Solidarity for Land and Justice (ISJL): An International Fact-Finding Mission (nationwide: Luzon-Viyas [June 3-4], and Mindanao [June 6-9]).

June 6-8: UNORKA's Fourth Congress - Focus/IARAN multimedia presentation on struggles for land

June 8: Speaker at forum on "Insights and Learnings on the Rights-based Approach in the Agrarian Reform Struggle," organized by the Alternative Forum for Research in Mindanao (AFIRM) and FIAN-Davao City.

June 9: Press conference on the initial findings of the International Fact-finding Mission-Davao Province leg, Davao City; Mobilization on the 18th Anniversary of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), Davao City.


July 13: Press conference on the "State of the Countrywide Assessment of the Alliance of Small Farmers and Fisherfolk (AMMFA)," as a pre-State of the Nation's Address (SONA) of the government. Educational Discussion on the "State of the Countrywide Assessment of the Alliance of Small Farmers and Fisherfolk (AMMFA)."

July 20: Solidarity mass for Bontoc Peninsula farmers organized by Kitoar (Agrarian Reform Movement), FIAN Philippines and the Department of Agrarian Reform Employees Association.

August 22-23: 2nd Agrarian Reform Policy Roundtable Discussion organized by Kitoar.

September 16: In front of the Singapore Embassy in the Philippines on the banning of Filipino activists, including peasant leaders of FSRP technical support for Via Campesina members in the Philippines to participate in the la Via Campesina events on the WB IMF annual meetings, Jakarta.

September 17: Breaking Free: Conference on Shrinking or Replacing the IMF, Singapore.

September 18: Plenary on the alternatives to the IMF, International People's Forum vs the IIs, Batam, Indonesia.

October: Roundtable Discussion on GTZ-Department of Agrarian Reform Study on Post-LAD Scenario

October 19: Participation in the technical working group meeting, House of Representatives Committee on Agrarian Reform

November 4-7: La Via Campesina South-East Asia and East Asia Women Peasant's study tour in the Philippines, with women peasant leaders from South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Japan visiting areas of PARAGOS-Pilipinas and KMP in Luzon.

FOCUS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH, THAILAND, 2006

ALTERNATIVES

February 26-27: Regional workshop on Asia WSI, co-hosted with Workers Democracy Group and APWL, Chulalongkorn University

March 24: Presentation on Thailand's current political struggles, Forum-Asia

March 31: Presentation on Thailand's current political struggles, Jubilee South Asia-Pacific meeting, Sirin Beverly Hotel

March-April: Joining Public People Alliance for Democracy (PAID) against Thaksin's policies on FTAs and other neo-liberal policies

April 2: Brainstorming meeting of the NGOs and POs network to identify common agenda and strategies for political and social reform, National Human Rights Commission

April 26: Co-organizing the conference on Political Reform, Chulalongkorn University

May 5: Meeting of representatives of about 50 civil society organizations to make collective decisions on the organization of the Thai Social Forum (TSF) 2006, Thammasat University

June 29: Co-organizing a talk by Walden Bello on "Construction of Alternatives: The Experiences of Latin America," Economic Faculty, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.

July 15: Presentation on "External Economic Relation and the Formulation of Public Policy in Thailand: Office of Health Promotion Fund, Nakorn Pathom

July 23: Organizing a brainstorming meeting between academics and activists on the proposal of trade negotiation bill, Chulalongkorn University.

August 9-10: Participating in consultations on "Gross National Happiness," organized by Suan Nguen Mee Ma together with other organizations.

August 28: Presentation on gender issues in Thailand development, CCS Office

September 22: Urgent meeting of NGO COD members to discuss the coup d'etat and prepare a statement in response, Thai Volunteer Service Building

September 23: Press Conference on the NGO-COD statement on the coup, Thai Volunteer Service Building

September 25: Meeting of the TSF Organizing Committee on the implications of the coup d'etat and the drafting of a statement, Thai Volunteer Service Building.

September 26: Press Conference on the TSF Organizing Committee's statement in response to the coup, Thammasat University.

October 10: Presentation on the World Social Forum at the orientation workshop for the volunteers of the Thai Social Forum, Thammasat University

October 21-22: Thai Social Forum 2006, Thammasat University, Rangsd Campus (Focus Thailand Program organized two half-day seminars on alternative economic theories and practices in Thailand, acted as moderator for a seminar on education privatization and as panelists in other seminars on alternative ASIAN and gender and globalization
TRADE

January 4: Spoke at a conference on WTO after Hong Kong, organized by the Strategic Policy on Natural Resources Base Project, National Human Right Commission

January 9-13: Mobilization against the 7th round of Thailand-US FTA negotiations in Chiang Mai (Focus as part of FTA Watch coordinated and worked with media)

January 10: Press conference on the WTO at the UN press room, Geneva

January 19-20: Lectured on "The WTO and its Implication in South East Asia," University of Bonn, Germany


February 2: Presentation on FTA impacts, Thammasat University

March 8: Lecturing on Impacts of FTAs and Trade Liberalization for Burmese participants, organized by the Catholic Commission for Ethnic Groups

March 10: Meeting on Thai-US negotiation and its implication on human rights, National Human Rights Commission, Bangkok

March 15: Presentation at the Foreign Affair Commission of the Senate on Thai-Japan FTA (FITEA), Parliament

March 16: Presentation on "WTO and the Role of Civil Society," at WTO Watch, Thammasat University

March 23: Presentation on "International Economic Relation and the Implication on Small Scale Farm Producers," for corn producer network, Petchohboon

March 30: Co-organized workshop on "Thailand's Populist Policies and the View from the Grassroots," Economic Faculty, Chulalongkorn University

April 29: Presentation at a group discussion on "FTA and the Human Security," Chulalongkorn University

May 24: Co-organized and participated in the press conference on the Thai-Australian FTA (TAFTA), Chulalongkorn University

May 25: Presentation on "The Doha Round and its Consequences on Thai Farmers," at the Association for Small Scale Farmers and ThaiDHRA, Bangkok

June 7-8: Participated in a consultation workshop on developing a training kit on "Women and Food Sovereignty," organized by Women's Action Network (WAN)

July 8: Spoke in a panel on "Impacts of FTAs" in Phetchaburi province, organized by farmer's group

July 15: Presentation on "International Economic Relation and the Implication on Small Scale Farm Producers," for Lower-Northern Region Farmer network, Petchaboon

July 27-28: Participated in and organized an international strategy workshop on "Fighting FTAs," in Bangkok, as part of FTA Watch. The workshop was co-organized with bilaterals.org, GAIA and Magazines Sara Fraternales

August 4: Attended a seminar on lessons learned from US FTAs, organized by GSEI, Sot Twin Towers Hotel


August 8: Presentation on "FTA and the Impact on Female Labourer," for Women Labour Unions Network, FES, Bangkok

August 10: Workshop on ASEAN, co-organized with Thai Volunteer Service, Chulalongkorn University

August 15: Presentation on "Globalization and the Thai Society," for Caritas Thailand, Chachoengsao

September 13: Presentation on "FTA and the Trade Policy of Thailand," Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok

September 14: Lecture on "Power Politics in the WTO," at the Economic Faculty, Thammasat University

September 14: Lecture by Dr. Jayati Ghosh on "India and Economic Cooperation: A Rising Pole in Asia," co-organized with South Asian Center, Institute of Asian Studies

September 29: Organized and participated in the FTA Watch's press conference on the coup d'eta and FTA at the Press Association of Thailand

November 7-8: Presentation on "Service and Investment in FTA Impacts on Development" and "Intellectual Property Rights in FTAs," at the Indonesian Civil Society Learning Event on Indonesia's Regional Trade Agreement (RTA) Policy, Negotiations and Implications, Jakarta, Indonesia

November 18: Presentation on "Economic Rights: Human Rights on Equality and Diversity," for high-school students organized by a student group from Political Science Faculty, Chulalongkorn University

November 22: Co-organized and participated in the press conference on the Thai-Japan FTA (UFTA), Chulalongkorn University

November 27-29: Made a presentation and participated in press conference on the WTO and Development at ActionAid workshop, Hanoi, Vietnam

December 1: Presentation in a workshop panel on "The Network of Bilateral and Subregional Free Trade Agreements in Southeast Asia"

December 9: Participating in the Regional Trade Strategy Meeting, Cebu City, the Philippines, co-organized with other organizations

December 22: Co-organized and participated in press conference on the Thai-Japan FTA (UFTA), Chulalongkorn University

DEFENDING AND RECLAIMING THE COMMONS

May 27-28: Participated in AAI Asia-Pacific Forum in Chiang Mai

June 16: Presentation on "Reclaiming State-owned Public Enterprises" at the Public Sector Trade Union Confederation of Thailand, Bangkok

June 28-29: Attended the Political Economy Seminar on post-crisis dynamics of Thai capital, Chulalongkorn University

August 2: Spoke in a panel on "Thai Style CSR," organized by CSR Journal and other organizations

November 30: Participated in a conference on contract farming, organized by the Program for Health Promotion among Informal Labor in Agriculture, Surin province

December 7: Conference on "Carbon Trading and Solution to Climate Change," co-organized with MEAs Intelligent Unit and Center for Social and Development Studies, Chulalongkorn University
ALTERNATIVES
ALTERNATIVE REGIONALISM: ARTICLES AND REPORTS
Azzi, Diego and David Harris, "ALBA: Venezuela’s answer to “free trade”: the Bolivarian alternative for the Americas," Focus on the Global South and Hemispheric Social Alliance, October 2006, http://www.focusweb.org/alba-venezuela-s-answer-to-free-trade-the-bolivarian-alternative-for-the-americas.html
Barria, Susana, "Chavez’s ALBA Project: The Dawn of a New Integration?," Focus on India, October 2006, Issue


PRESENTATIONS
PRESS (IN WHICH FOCUS IS MENTIONED OR QUOTED)

"ASEAN civil society warns of more economic burden in the region," The Philippine Star, December 11, 2006

"Southeast Asian economies may just be Chinese satellites," Business Mirror, December 11, 2006

"Civil society groups told to fight hard for interests in ASEAN Charter," Sun Star Manila, December 14, 2006

"Activists press ASEAN to create rights body, support UN Millennium resolution," International Herald Tribune, January 11, 2007

"Civil society dares ASEAN to be ‘caring, sharing,’" Business Mirror, January 12-13, 2007


DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE SERIES PUBLICATIONS/DOCUMENTATIONS/ACTIVITIES

Research Papers, Articles And Publications


PRESENTATIONS DURING THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS


Apuen, Koronodo, "Sustainable Agriculture for Sustainable Communities," September 21, 2006

Baviera, Aileen, "Between Two Worlds: The ASEAN’s Relations with the United States and China," November 7, 2006


Chavez, Jenina Y., "Understanding ASEAN: Developing Perspectives on ASEAN and Regionalism," September 22-27, 2006

de los Reyes, Julie, "Towards an Alternative Foreign Policy," November 15, 2006

de los Reyes, Julie, "Understanding ASEAN: ASEAN policies and procedures on political cooperation and regional security," November 2, 2006

Delos, April, "GMA Super Regions: Implications for Food and Agriculture in Mindanao," September 22, 2006

Docena, Herbert, "ASEAN: An Option?" September 22, 2006


Fuertes, Mary Ann, "Monoculture and Aerial Spray: Their Effects on Human and Environmental Health," November 15, 2006

Fuertes, Mary Ann, "Monoculture and Aerial Spray," September 22, 2006


Ortiz, Gladys Florangel, "Land Use and Crop Changes and Its Implications on Agriculture and Food Security in Mindanao," November 15, 2006

Pangalad, Pendatuk, "Effect of Armed Conflict on the Agriculture and Food Security Situation in Muslim Communities," September 22, 2006


Rubon, Romeo, "The DRTS on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development," November 15, 2006

Rustico, Rogelio, "Overview of Mindanao Agriculture and Food Security Situation and the DRTS Process," November 15, 2006


Other articles and presentations on alternatives, WSF


Bullard, Nicola, Member of the Resource Team at the Pre-Feminist Dialogues (Pre-FD) meeting, Nairobi, Kenya, August 5-9, 2006.

Bullard, Nicola, Presentation on building social territories at the WSF, Babels meeting, Paris, June 3-5, 2006

Bullard, Nicola, Presentation on new forms of governance, Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, "What Next?" conference, Uppsala, September 19-21, 2006
Focus on the Global South, Organiser/participant, Social Movements Seminar, Brussels, September 29 - October 1, 2006
Focus on the Global South, Bamako, Caracas and Karachi Social Forums, January and March, 2006 (various panels and discussions)
Focus on the Global South, Norway Social Forum, Oslo, speakers at various panels including opening and closing ceremonies, October 19-22, 2006
Focus on the Global South, India Social Forum, New Delhi, organisers and speakers at various panels, November 12-16 2006
Menon, Meena, Panel discussion on "Globalisation and the WSS," Foreign Affairs program GeoTV, Karachi, Pakistan, March 28, 2006

CHINA
Bello, Walden, "China Needs and Ecologized Social Democratic System" an interview with Dale Wen
Guerrero, Dorothy, "Welcome Chinese China’s Rise and its Increasing Role in ASEAN" in Focus on the Global South Dossier "Revisiting Asian Regionalism, December 2006

DEFENDING AND RECLAIMING THE COMMONS
ARTICLES, PAPERS AND PRESS
Bullard, Nicola, "Deepening democracy in Asia after the financial crisis: One step forward and two steps back?," paper presented at the CLACSO International Workshop on "The Impact of the Washington Consensus on Democratic Stability: Lessons and Perspectives from the South", Caracas, Venezuela, June 8-9, 2006
Bullard, Nicola, Presentation on strategies for rolling back the powers of TNCs at the TNCs, Corporate Power, International Law and Peoples Alternatives, Expert and Strategy Meeting, Amsterdam, April 1-2, 2006
Bullard, Nicola. Presentation/participation in the Oxfam International Consultation on Agribusiness, Bangkok, August 22-23, 2006
Chevez, Jesse Joy, "The Question of Water: Notes on Regional and International Perspectives, Initiative and Policies," Presentation at the Water Commons Institute Workshop, Quezon City, Philippines, January 27, 2006 (powerpoint)
de los Reyes, Julie, "Globalisation, the Bretton Woods Institutions, and the WTO," paper presented at the Far Eastern University Institute of Accountancy Business and Finance Lecture Series, August 15, 2006
de los Reyes, Julie, "The IMF in Crisis," paper presented at the IRIS Media Workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia, September 12, 2006
Guttal, Shalmali, "Development and Plunder in the Mekong Region" in Revisiting Southeast Asian Regionalism which can be found on the Focus website (http://www.focusweb.org/revisiting-southeast-asian-regionalism/itemid=30), an electronic copy of the paper can be found on the Focus website (http://www.focusweb.org/attachment/6142)
Guttal, Shalmali, "Standing By East Timor" Focus on Trade Number 120, June 2006
Guttal, Shalmali, "International Financial Institutions," Discussion paper for the National Convention of the National Alliance of Peoples’ Movements, Bangalore, India, May 30-June 1, 2006
Guttal, Shalmali, "Fueling Discord: The World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Singapore," Focus on Trade #124, October 2006
PRESS (IN WHICH FOCUS IS QUOTED OR MENTIONED OR PROVIDED BACKGROUND MATERIAL)


"Singapore stands by decision to bar some activists," The Straits Times (Singapore), September 8, 2006


"Singapore an 'Immature state,' activists say," Inquirer (Philippines), September 11, 2006

"WB-IMF 'Helpless' as Host S'pore Deports Critics," Inter Press Service, September 14, 2006

"Forum slams IMF 'legitimacy problems,'" The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), September 18, 2006

"Activists Plan to Discuss Alternatives to IMF and World Bank," Bloomberg, September 17, 2006

"Revamp or wind up lender, demand disassembled NGOs," AFP, September 18, 2006

In addition, Focus staff were interviewed by print, radio and TV press on East Timor, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

PEACE AND PEOPLES SECURITY

PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS, VIDEOS

Bello, Walden, "Americans want new direction, but will Democrats lead?" Philippine Daily Inquirer, November 14, 2006, opinion.inq.net/inqviewpoints/columns/view_article.php?Article_id=10246


Bello, Walden, "Why we are going to Lebanon," Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 14, 2006, opinion.inq.net/inqviewpoints/columns/view_article.php?Article_id=14647

Burry, Varsha, "The Bush-Mahmoud Nuclear Compact: Heightening Insecurities in South Asia and Beyond," Focus on Trade #116, March 2006


THAILAND

ARTICLES, PAPERS AND PRESS

Chomthong, Jacques-chai, “Thaksin’s retreat: Chance for change or consolidation of powers?” April 2006 (for Focus on Trade)

Chomthong, Jacques-chai, “Capital-led Globalisation is not the final answer: an echo from the other side of the globe” July-August 2006, series of three articles (published in INN Exclusive, weekly journal)

Chomthong, Jacques-chai, “It’s time for the people to stop playing supporting role” September 2006 (published in INN Exclusive, weekly journal)

Chomthong, Jacques-chai, “The future of FTA under the junta” October 2006 (published in INN Exclusive, weekly journal)

Chomthong, Jacques-chai, “The key element of a trade negotiation bill” November 2006, paper prepared for FTA Watch meeting and various presentations


Prachason, Sajin, “Secrets of Transforming Earth into Heaven for Transnational Capital by Mr Favour FTA (Part 1-2),” www.prachatai.com


MEDIA

Interviewed in five national broadcast radio programmes, two community radio programmes, three overseas radio programmes

Interviewed, talked, and discussed in twelve television programmes, including nation channel, ASTV, and Channel 9.
FOCUS ON TRADE

NUMBER 115, JANUARY 2006
Accession through the backdoor: how the US is pushing Iraq into the WTO
Mary Lou Malig
China, the WTO and globalisation: looking beyond growth figures
Dorothy Guerrero
Humanitarian intervention: evolution of a dangerous doctrine
Walden Bello

NUMBER 116, MARCH 2006
What happens when you run a country like a corporation: a primer on Thailand’s political crisis
Alic Belford and Chandra Charyappa
The Bush-Mannohwar nuclear compact: heightening insecurities in South Asia and beyond
Versha Reyan Berry
State of emergency in the Philippines: back to the future
Herbert Docena
Military radicalism in Venezuela: how relevant for other developing countries?
Walden Bello
US troops in Sulu: has the wooden brigade returned?
Herbert Docena

NUMBER 117, APRIL, 2006
Bello misrepresents School of the Americas
Letter from Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation
Lamy’s rule-less negotiating procedures work against the weak
Aileen Kwa
Siah and burn: how the current negotiations in NAMA threaten development in the south
Mary Lou Malig
State of play: critical WTO negotiations go underground
Aileen Kwa

NUMBER 118, MAY, 2006
The wisdom of Wall Street
Nicola Bullard
Thailand: democracy, elections and legitimacy
Alic Belford and Chandra Charyappa
Critica plan offensive as IMF-World Bank crisis deepens
Walden Bello
“Aquí estamos y no nos vamos”: the struggle for immigrant rights in the US
William I. Robinson
Bolivia’s radical realignment under Evo Morales
Roger Burbach

NUMBER 119, JUNE, 2006
Take the IMF off life support
Soren Ambrose and Walden Bello
The Iraqi issue: background
Prabir Purkayastha
The case of the relief and reconstruction complex
Walden Bello
NUMBER 120. JUNE 2006
Standing by East Timor
Shalmali Guttag
Killing season in the Philippines
Herbert Docena
After Thakkar: the CEO state, nationalism and US imperialism

NUMBER 120. JUNE 2006
Standing by East Timor
Shalmali Guttag
Killing season in the Philippines
Herbert Docena
After Thakkar: the CEO state, nationalism and US imperialism

NUMBER 121, JUNE 2006
WTO members question process, yet again
Aileen Kuwa
Services industry drives India GATS negotiations
Benny Kuruvilla
Africa to lose out from WTO negotiations, even in agriculture
Aileen Kuwa

NUMBER 122, JULY 2006
Reactions to the collapse of the round
Aileen Kuwa
Doha round collapse best for developing countries
Walid Bello
Development is not possible in the wto
S.N. Panjabi

NUMBER 123, AUGUST 2006
Nasrallah: New Arab world hero
Seema Mustafa
Unbroken spirits fill highways of death
Seema Mustafa
Traing a trail of destruction: Report from Lebanon 1
Walid Bello
Truce hopes emerge in fog of war
Seema Mustafa
Bombing till the last minute: report from Lebanon 2
Walid Bello
In Beirut, jubilation and trepidation
Herbert Docena
A bitter sweet day: report from Lebanon 3
Walid Bello
Why did the Lebanese resistance accept 1971?
Ferzoe H. Mathibowala

NUMBER 124, OCTOBER 2006
The Thai coup, democracy, and wearing yellow on Mondays
Chandra Chyaspati and Alex Bamford
A Siamese tragedy: The collapse of democracy in Thailand
Walid Bello
Fueling discontent: the World Bank and IMF in Singapore
Shalmali Guttag
Microcredit, macro problems
Walid Bello

NUMBER 125, NOVEMBER 2006
Americans want a new direction, but will Democrats lead?
Walid Bello
Latin America, state power and the challenge to global capital: An interview with William I. Robinson
Alessio Bendaña
Chaingang economics: China, the US and the global economy
Walid Bello
Behind the great wall: US corporations opposing new rights for Chinese workers
Global Labour Strategies

Dossiers
Revisiting Southeast Asian Regionalism (December 2006)
http://www.focusweb.org/revising-southeast-asian-regionalism.html

Destroy and Profit: Wars, Disasters and Corporations (January 2006)

The ADB and policy (mis)governance in Asia (May 2005)

Silent War: The US Economic and Ideological Occupation of Iraq (March 2005)

Anti Poverty or Anti Poor? The Millennium Development Goals and the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (October 2003)

Power Politics in the WTO (January 2003)
http://www.focusweb.org/power-politics-in-the-wto.html
Too hot to handle: The Samut Prakan Wastewater Management Project inspection process (May 2002)
http://www.focusweb.org/too-hot-to-handle.html

Good Governance or Bad Management: An overview of ADB’s Decision making Processes and Policies (May 2002)
http://www.focusweb.org/good-governance-or-bad-management.html

Profiting from Poverty: The ADB, private sector and development in Asia (May 2002)

Prague 2000: Why we need to decommission the IMF and the World Bank (September 2000)
http://www.focusweb.org/publications/Books/Prague%202000.pdf

The Transfer of Wealth: Debt and the making of a Global South (October 2000)
http://www.focusweb.org/pdf/Transfer.pdf

Creating Poverty: The ADB in Asia (May 2000)

Why Reform of the WTO is the Wrong Agenda (February 2000)
http://www.focusweb.org/publications/Books/why WTO.pdf
SPECIAL REPORTS


Lebanon: aggression and resistance (November 2006)

Resisting Corporate India (November 2006)
http://www.focusweb.org/resisting-corporate-india.html

When the Wind Blows: An overview of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) in India

The Struggle for Land: A summary of discussions and strategies at the Asia Land Meeting (November 2004)

Never Again: Cartoons on the Gujarat Carnage (December 2002)
http://www.focusweb.org/never-again-cartoons-on-the-gujarat-carnage.html

The Asian financial Crisis and Filipino Households: Impact on Women and Children

OCASIONAL PAPERS

Occasional Paper 1, “Globalisation and Change in Southern Laos” (January 2006) By Jonathan Comford

Occasional Paper 3, “ALBA Venezuela’s answer to “free trade”: the Bolivarian alternative for the Americas” (October 2006) By David Harris and Diego Ace

BOOKS

Dilemmas of Domination: The unmaking of the American Empire, Walden Bello (March 2005)

Anti-Development State: The Political Economy of Permanent Crisis in the Philippines (September 2004), Walden Bello, co-authored by Mary Lou Malig, Herbert Docena and Marissa de Guzman

Multilateral Punishment: The Philippines in the WTO, 1995-2003 (October 2004), Walden Bello

Behind the Scenes in the WTO (September 2003), Aileen Kwa and Fatoumata Jawara, Zed Books

The Future in the Balance: Essays on Globalisation and Resistance (May 2001), Walden Bello


CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

VIDEOS

A World Without the WTO (2006)

Why the WTO is Really Bad for You: the Hong Kong Deal (2005)

Why the WTO is Really Bad for You (2004)

Why the WTO is Bad for you (2000)

ACTIVISTS MANUAL

The Derailer’s Guide to the WTO (November 2005)
Funders, board members and staff 2006
We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the following organisations/individual for the following conferences and specific projects:

11.11.11 - Belgium
Regional Trade Strategy Meeting Bangkok and Asian Delegates to Geneva
ActionAid Asia Regional
World Bank/IMF Annual meeting Singapore and International Course on Globalisation Bangkok
Christian Aid
Regional Trade Strategy Meeting Bangkok and World Bank/IMF Annual meeting Singapore
Kariu, Norway
Conferences on International Network for Foreign Military Bases
Development and Peace, Canada
Conferences on International Network for Foreign Military Bases
Oxfam NOVIB, the Netherlands
Conferences on International Network for Foreign Military Bases
In addition, the following organisations supported staff or delegate’s travel costs for various events:
ActionAid-UK, AIOF-Norway, Babet, CLASCO, Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, FEDAEPs-Brasil, FEMNET, Food and Water Watch, Forum Social Mondial, Greenpeace International, ISS, Ashbridge South, Mary Tae, Norway Social Forum, Pacific Institute, RBF, SID, TNI and University of KwaZulu-Natal

### Focus on the Global South *
Comparison of Budget, Income and Expenditure
As at December 31, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternatives Program</td>
<td>164,310.00</td>
<td>107,718.77</td>
<td>110,932.43</td>
<td>55,377.57</td>
<td>- 2,213.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending &amp; Reclaiming the Commons program</td>
<td>141,720.00</td>
<td>116,407.37</td>
<td>123,862.35</td>
<td>27,007.35</td>
<td>- 7,214.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace &amp; People's Security Campaign</td>
<td>181,010.00</td>
<td>122,136.39</td>
<td>122,529.22</td>
<td>58,499.78</td>
<td>- 4,413.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Campaign</td>
<td>306,160.00</td>
<td>229,860.17</td>
<td>238,268.85</td>
<td>67,893.15</td>
<td>- 8,406.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Program</td>
<td>168,500.00</td>
<td>86,352.36</td>
<td>86,933.36</td>
<td>81,166.64</td>
<td>- 271.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International network against foreign military bases (No-Base Network)</td>
<td>34,799.74</td>
<td>34,105.17</td>
<td>- 34,105.17</td>
<td>- 94.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter-Summits in Geneva</td>
<td>6,062.58</td>
<td>10,146.85</td>
<td>- 10,146.85</td>
<td>- 4,083.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Trade Strategy Meeting</td>
<td>4,514.75</td>
<td>8,842.89</td>
<td>- 8,842.89</td>
<td>- 4,326.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Course on Civil Society</td>
<td>43,546.38</td>
<td>42,280.57</td>
<td>- 42,280.57</td>
<td>- 1,265.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Project in Phg (DRTS)</td>
<td>24,922.27</td>
<td>24,141.50</td>
<td>- 24,141.50</td>
<td>- 760.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Project in Phg (ASEAN Summit, Cebu)</td>
<td>7,900.00</td>
<td>8,460.78</td>
<td>- 8,460.78</td>
<td>- 760.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Project in Phg (SNR Campaign)</td>
<td>3,642.89</td>
<td>3,476.04</td>
<td>- 3,476.04</td>
<td>- 13.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional fee</td>
<td>3,088.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Interest income</td>
<td>11,431.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>1,101.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain or Loss on Exchange</td>
<td>- 16,548.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>975,700.00</td>
<td>786,359.89</td>
<td>817,627.08</td>
<td>158,079.90</td>
<td>- 31,249.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
1 Usd = 39.00 Bht, 50.00 Peso, 43.00 Inr.
1 Euro = 1.29 Usd.
*Include Philippine funds & Expenditure direct through their country