

CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Research Report 5

*A Better or Worse World?
The Third World Social Forum
Porto Alegre 2003*

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REPORT ON THE THIRD WORLD SOCIAL FORUM
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Abstract

The World Social Forum (WSF) is described as a unique meeting place for civil society organisations and the 2003 meeting was characterised by an extraordinary level of inclusivity and ‘solidarity in diversity’. The numbers and different social characteristics of the 100,000 participants illustrates how popular resistance to corporate globalisation is growing and slicing through differences of party, class, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality and age. While in many of the meetings there was a strong repudiation of a corporate globalisation that is concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a global elite and deepening poverty, inequality social exclusion around the world, there were many differences regarding tactical issues.

This report argues that the significance of the WSF lies in its capacity to transform itself from an annual event into a process with an increasingly global reach, particularly into Africa and Asia. It is suggested that the Forum should be understood as a key component of an emerging global justice movement (GJM). Grasping the significance of this involves abandoning the rigid conventional categorizations of social movements in the social scientific literature on collective action. It is characterised by a radical decentralisation with no governing body, official ideology or mandated leader(s). This embryonic movement involves new forms of social activism. These are ‘new’ in that they involve new targets, alliances, connections, forms of organising and changes in the use of power. Some of these new forms of social activism are emerging on the local scene and several achieved a high level of visibility in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) process. However research is necessary to establish whether they are ‘militant particularisms’, ephemeral eruptions of the urban poor, the rural landless and other marginalized groups, or components of the emerging GJM.

For South Africans privileged to attend the third meeting of the WSF the colour, energy and hopefulness of the estimated 150,000 people at the opening march was reminiscent of Mandela’s inauguration. The march was also a celebration of the election of Brazil’s new president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a former metal worker and union leader. There were as many people lined up along the streets cheering the marchers, as those who joined the flow. The mood was joyous, with much chanting and dancing amidst a sea of red flags. But the WSF as a whole was both an energising and a sobering experience; inspiring in the sense that it gave us a sense of being part of a growing global movement for social justice, but sobering in that many speakers warned that we were meeting at an extremely dangerous moment in world history. The slogan of the WSF is “Another world is possible”. What emerged from the January 2003 meeting in Porto Alegre was that because of the threats of war and neo-liberalism this other world may be worse than the present one.

This report is divided into five parts, starting with the nature of the WSF. It is suggested that the third WSF was characterised by an extraordinary level of ‘solidarity in diversity’ but its significance lies in its capacity to transform itself from an annual event into a process with an increasingly global reach, particularly into Africa and Asia. It is argued that the WSF should be understood as a component of an emerging GJM that involves new forms of social activism. These are ‘new’ in that they involve new targets, connections and forms of organising. Some of these new forms of social activism are emerging on the local scene and it is suggested that the strength of the GJM depends largely on its capacity to connect the ‘local’ and the global. The final section sketches some of the implications of these developments for civil society in South Africa.

The intention behind this report is to motivate as many South Africans as possible to try and obtain the resources necessary to attend the fourth WSF, which will be held in India in January 2004. Attendance at the third WSF was overall an inspiring experience, not only because of the energy and passion of participants, representing 120 countries, but also because of the Forum's intellectual content. Many of the presentations were marked by a thoughtfulness and analytical depth invaluable to those of us struggling to understand the complexities of our time. Many of the audiences showed a disciplined seriousness and attentiveness to lengthy and complex theoretical arguments. The report draws on the insightful comments of observers of earlier meetings of the WSF, particularly those of Jai Sen, Naomi Klein, Lisa Jordan and Peter Waterman to provide continuity and as points of reference. It attempts to raise a number of provocative questions – particularly about the sustainability of the WSF itself – which demand theoretically informed empirical research from 'engaged' social scientists.

Part 1: The Nature Of The World Social Forum – Solidarity In Diversity

The WSF is a unique meeting place for civil society organisations to develop networks, build alliances and develop social and economic alternatives to corporate globalisation. It emphasises participation, diversity and pluralism, describing itself as:

...an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo-liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society centred on the human person.
(More information available at www.forumsocialmundial.org.br)

The WSF was born in 2001 as an alternative to the World Economic Forum, which meets annually in Davos to celebrate the world of power and privilege. According to one of its founders, Candido Grzybowski:

The WSF must be seen as an initiative designed to overcome neo-liberal globalisation and bring about a globalisation based on solidarity, democracy and sustainability. ...[It] draws its inspiration from the ethical principles set out in the Charter of the WSF which rejects the principles of the market as the foundation of society, denounces violence as a form of political action, and says no to a single way of thinking and yes to equality and diversity. (See Appendix 1, 'Charter of Principles')

'Solidarity in diversity' is the most striking characteristic of the WSF.

Social and ideological diversity

The numbers and social diversity of the 100,000 participants in the third meeting of the WSF illustrates how popular resistance to corporate globalisation is growing and slicing through differences of party, class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality and age. Participation was extremely broad and varied. Constituencies were brought together that have rarely interconnected in the past, from faith-based organisations, unions, youth organisations,

AIDS and other health activists, women's rights groups, environmentalists, representatives of indigenous people, landless peasants, homeless people and community-based formations of all kinds.

This diversity is a key characteristic of the WSF and is manifested not only in its social composition but also the constituent ideas. This social diversity was most dramatically expressed in a document issued at the end of WSF2 in 2002, 'Call of Social Movements', which reads:

We are diverse - women and men, adults and youth, indigenous peoples, rural and urban, workers and unemployed, homeless, the elderly, students, migrants, professionals, peoples of every creed, color and sexual orientation. The expression of this diversity is our strength and the basis of our unity. We are a global solidarity movement, united in our determination to fight against the concentration of wealth, the proliferation of poverty and inequalities, and the destruction of our earth. We are living and constructing alternative systems, and using creative ways to promote them. We are building a large alliance from our struggles and resistance against a system based on sexism, racism and violence, which privileges the interests of capital and patriarchy over the needs and aspirations of people.

The WSF is a meeting place of diverse people with inchoate ideologies of varying shades. It involves networks of individuals with a shared commitment to a very loose political agenda frequently comprised of extremely broad and inclusive values such as 'social justice', 'human rights' and 'sustainable development' expressed in universalist imagery.

In many meetings there was a strong repudiation of a corporate globalisation that is concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a global elite and deepening poverty, inequality and social exclusion around the world. There was agreement that we need deeper and more responsive democracies but many differences as regards tactical questions.

The politics of inclusivity

Because of the ideological and social diversity of the WSF, one of its features is an emphasis on inclusivity. Overall, a striking feature of WSF3 was its open and inclusive character. Anyone could attend any group (excluding political parties) or run a workshop, they simply had to get a title to the organising committee. In comparison to earlier meetings there was a strong US presence of up to a thousand, mostly community-based activists, including many at the youth camp.

The number of registered participants has grown from 20,000 at the first meeting of the forum in 2000 to some 60,000 officially registered in 2002 to 100,000 in 2003. In January 2003 alone, some 1.5 million people from more than 120 countries visited the WSF website. The size of WSF3 seemed overwhelming not only in terms of the number of participants but also in terms of the intellectual range and number of organised events. Overall, the forum involved 1286 workshops, 114 seminars, 36 panel debates, 22 testimonies, 10 conferences and four round tables. The discussions covered five broad thematic areas, each of which was conceived as a catalyst of concerns, proposals and strategies being pursued by the organisations participating in the WSF process. The WSF organizers aim was to give them visibility and, if

possible, have them adopted as widely as possible by the various actors of ‘planetary civil society’ struggling against neo-liberal globalisation. They were:

1. democratic sustainable development;
2. principles and values, human rights, diversity and equality;
3. media, culture and counter-hegemony;
4. political power, civil society and democracy;
5. democratic world order, combating militarisation and promoting peace.

With so many diverse events located in different parts of the city it is difficult to generalise but three interrelated themes surfaced strongly:

(i) Resistance to the commodification of public goods

There was an emphasis on how corporate globalisation now reaches into every aspect of life and transforms every activity and natural resource into a commodity. Corporate globalisation was widely understood to involve a mass transfer of wealth and knowledge from public to private – through measures such as the patenting of genetic forms and seeds, the privatisation of water and the concentrated ownership of agricultural lands.

As one of the founders expressed it:

In the name of the market all human relations are commercialised – even life itself, the biodiversity of nature, water, knowledge, faith. The term ‘free market’ is a deceptive euphemism for a market for the strongest, namely the major financial-economic corporations. The world and all it contains seems to be up for sale.
(Candido Grzybowski, 2003 – See Appendix 1).

The main event of the opening ceremony of WSF3 was the publication of a ‘Global Opinion Poll’ which confirmed conference participants in their belief that the world’s population wanted the global agenda focused on social goals rather than just economic growth. The survey was conducted in 20 countries between November and December 2002 and revealed that the a majority believed that globalisation made the rich richer and the poor poorer; that it was driven primarily by the interests of multinational conglomerates; and that global society should focus on social goals first rather than economic growth.

(ii) Resistance to the concentration of power

A central concern in many of the discussions was power. Who holds it? Who is exercising it? How to make our political leaders accountable for the power they have; how to change the power of the UN to make it part of the solution rather than the problem; how to limit the power of corporations; and how to empower citizens and make their political participation meaningful.

Many speakers stressed that we need new ways to think about power, resistance and globalisation; new ways of imagining power. The WSF itself does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by the participants in its meetings. This should mean that participants have:

to work out ways that will minimize the power disputes that have weakened and destroyed previous internationals. (Waterman, 2002)

A number of speakers focused on the threats embodied in the concentration of power in the multinational corporations and in the US – the most powerful empire in world history.

(iii) The threats of war and neo-liberalism

Mario Soares, European MP and former present of Portugal warned that:

The world sits on the edge of the abyss for two reasons: the war Washington is threatening against Iraq and the economic recession that is a symptom of the crisis of capitalism.

Among the many speakers, the person who articulated that the coming world might be worse than the present most clearly was the Paris based author and activist Susan George, who warned of the increasing misery of millions as famine, AIDS and unemployment increase. The implication is that we must add a third option to the choice Rosa Luxemburg posed a century ago: it is now socialism or barbarism or exterminism.

In George's analysis, capitalism cannot be maintained in 2020 when there will be 8 billion people on earth. So war and famine and disease will be allowed to take their toll.

The rich and powerful seem to have concluded that hundreds of millions of people are surplus and redundant. There will not be an Auschwitz model of exterminism but a post-modern twenty-first century model in which no one can be blamed and nothing can be done.

She stressed that this is why the struggle against neo-liberal corporate globalisation cannot fail. She argued forcefully:

Persuasion is not going to get us anywhere. Wealth and power do not willingly share anything. There is no level of human suffering that will make poverty changes. Only the power of the people will make those changes.

In similar terms Noam Chomsky warned that:

It is not clear that the species can survive very long under the present conditions of world capitalism and the US grand strategy of global rule by force.

He was among several speakers who emphasized that the struggle against the corporations and financial markets is taking place at a 'new moment'. "We're meeting", he said, "at a unique moment in history, a moment both ominous and hopeful. The most powerful empire in world history has announced that it intends to rule the world by force. It will brook no opposition."

At an earlier stage of the forum Tariq Ali said:

We live in a world we have never known before, a world dominated by one empire alone.

Both he and Chomsky underlined the significance of the Bush doctrine that the US has the right to defend its interests anywhere in the world, by force if necessary. He described the situation in Iraq as:

the beginning of a new process, the right to assert the raw military power of the world's only empire.

However, a number of speakers emphasized that the anti-war movement was building up in the USA and in Europe. For instance, Chomsky maintained that protest in the US against the war is at "levels which have no historical precedent" He said that a huge propaganda exercise is being mounted about the threat Iraq poses to the US, though in reality, after a decade of devastating sanctions Iraq is battling to survive. He quoted a poll in Canada, which found that the majority of people think that the US is the greatest threat to world peace, above Iraq and North Korea. Chomsky stressed that there is no link between Iraq and Al Qaeda but the US attack will create such a link.

It will create a new generation of terrorists... an attack on Iraq will lead not only to more terror but to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Numerous other speakers stressed the number of wars going on in the world at the moment (some 80) the staggering amount the world spends on war and the preparation for war (some \$800 billion per annum) and the enormous cost in human suffering (4 million have already been killed in the war in the Congo). Participants were encouraged to hear of Lula's decision to postpone Brazil's R6 billion defence programme.

As several analysts have suggested, this third meeting of the WSF saw the merger of the GJM and the peace movements, but a number of speakers were concerned that energies invested in opposing the war on Iraq will distract from the fight against corporate globalisation.

Some described the dominant economic model of neo-liberalism as a 'silent war' or a 'social war' on millions of people. For instance Maud Barlow from Canada's largest non-governmental organization (NGO), the Council of Canadians, warned about the commodification of water, with a handful of global corporations seeking to control the world's supply. She stressed that in recent years, one of the prime conditions for the renewal of World Bank and IMF loans has been the privatisation of a country's public water and sanitation facilities.

The global water giants have been busy transforming this life-giving resource into a commodity to be sold on a for-profit-basis to those who have the ability to pay. In short, everything is now for sale to the highest bidder, including seeds, genes and water.

She compared the large corporations to vultures and warned that the big water companies are "among the most ruthless". She warned that maximising profit is the prime goal of these corporations, not ensuring sustainability or equal access to water, and many of these corporations, for example Suez, are seeking private-public

partnerships because they are more profitable. (This warning has particular relevance for us in South Africa as the final section of this report indicates.)

A number of speakers warned that the ‘enemy’ was the thousands of transnational ‘predatory and unaccountable’ corporations who control enormous resources and power in a globalised world. Susan George said that the 60,000 transnational corporations in the world might not all be:

as dishonest and predatory as Enron , but everyone in the financial world co-operated in that scandal. They did so because in a capitalist economy you are supposed to follow self interest. There is no room for altruism or ethics in corporate circles.

She redefined ‘corporate social responsibility’ as ‘corporate self regulation’:

with its clear implication that these corporations do not want any constraints or binding laws. They are claiming that they can regulate themselves. They initiated this in Rio in 1992 and have been very successfully promoting it.

Jose Dirceu, Lula’s chief of staff, argued in favour of a strategy of national self-interest, global solidarity and a challenge to the power of the United States to dictate the rules for the rest of the world. “We cannot lose sight that for the first time in the last 100 years we have a situation in the world with the hegemony of a single power”, he said. With economic and military dominance, the United States also controls global institutions, he argued, but “the Washington consensus and neo-liberalism have been defeated; they have lost legitimacy.”

At one conference in the large sports stadium, the ‘gigantinho’, Mark Weisbrot, an economist with a Washington research group, the Center on Economic Policy Research, argued that it was time for more countries to return to national development strategies. “The idea that institutions of empire will change will not happen” he said, referring to organizations like the IMF and World Bank that are controlled by the US.

Within the global solidarity of WSF3 networks were consolidated and connections strengthened on every issue on the global justice agenda, from labour and human rights, militarism, environmental issues such as the struggle against genetically modified foods, the privatisation of water, and so on.

Overall, the major achievement of the WSF over the last three years has been to puncture the basic conceit of the Davos agenda – that there is no alternative to neo-liberalism. A number of speakers emphasized the failure of the ‘Washington consensus’, the shorthand for policies of deregulation and privatisation of state functions. However differences emerged most sharply in relation to framing specific alternatives.

Alternatives

Since its inception, the WSF has posed an alternative perspective on globalisation rooted in the principles of social justice, democracy and sustainability. At the second WSF meeting in 2002 there was general agreement that the time had come to reposition the movement in affirmative terms – moving from protest to alternatives and solutions that could make the technological advances and productive potential of globalisation serve the goal of equity. Susan George wrote after WSF2:

In Porto Alegre ... the emphasis ... was on developing consensus around a more forceful agenda of proposals, solutions, and devising strategies for attaining them. ... These debates must also try to deal with the increasingly panicked, irresponsible and violent reactions coming from the side of the state and the corporate elites. (George, 2002:112)

Many of the activists at WSF3 are engaged in working for alternatives and not simply opposing poverty, exclusion and oppression.

The alternatives being advocated transcend general principles for more participatory, rights-based and autonomously controlled local and national economies. Many of the coalitions, networks and movements articulate specific, detailed policy positions regarding new forms of international economic organisation. These range from taxing speculative flows of capital, to supplanting debt service payments from impoverished countries with payment of reparations for failed development projects. (Bell, 2002:6)

In the variety of alternative systems of energy, transport, agriculture, manufacturing, governance and so on, the common thread would appear to be an emphasis on participatory democracy – on alternatives including self-sufficiency, decentralization, neighbourhood councils, participatory budgets, co-operative farming and so on. But there is no global consensus on these forms. Overall, while WSF3 was strong on inspiration, it was weak on strategy, and this generated tensions.

One of the main tensions seemed to be between a reformist or radical divide on three analytically distinct but related issues: whether the ‘enemy’ is capitalism, neo-liberalism or globalisation; whether intergovernmental institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are reformable and whether working to strengthen state power (including working with and through political parties) is a viable strategy for social transformation. In some cases this was framed as a clash between reformist and statist NGOs versus more militant grassroots social movements.

Representatives from some labour unions argued for including more protections for labour rights and the environment in international agreements, such as the rules of the WTO. But many non-governmental groups from developing countries and critics from rich countries opposed the WTO's effort to reduce regulations and expand market principles to govern agriculture, services, government purchasing, provision of water, education and health that are traditional public functions in most countries. They object to any expansion of the WTO, even for progressive goals.

One of the clearest challenges facing the WSF lies in its relationship to trade unions and political parties.

Challenges

WSF3 took place in the context of widespread global disillusionment with political parties, leaders and styles, though Brazil is an important exception. The sea of red flags at the opening march belonged to Brazil's 'Workers' Party, and the election of their leader as president gave the WSF theme, 'Another World is Possible' a special pertinency.

Nevertheless, the growth of the WSF could reflect a global crisis in political parties. According to Mario Soares:

...left-leaning people feel they are insufficiently represented by the political parties, which has stimulated new forms of expression and participation. Thus the success of the WSF.

But he argued that:

...socialist parties must be present in this field of social and environmental struggles... the WSF is a space for social movements and political parties do play a role here. Social movements cannot replace political parties which are essential to democracy. Political representation can only be achieved by voting, not by activism. Lula is the best example of this: he got to be president as leader of the Workers Party (PT). There is no democracy without parties, but the parties do not encompass all of democracy. There are other forms of citizenship, particularly NGOs. The WSF cannot be more than an apolitical social power, because political power requires legitimacy through popular voting. ... it might feed political parties new ideas and that is why socialists must be present in the unions, in the social and environmental movements, which are the ones that mobilise today's masses.

Political parties are nationally defined and, in most multi-party systems, mutually competitive, whilst the GJM is defined by collective interests, identities, problems or propositions of an increasingly global nature. However, according to Susan George, the movement of which the WSF is a part:

definitely shouldn't replace parties and unions which have their specific and indispensable roles to play. We should ally with some unions (or they with us) and this is happening more and more. We should try to influence parties and governments. But we should not seek political power per se because that is the place of compromise. (Interview reported in Terraviva 24 Jan. 2003 No 1 p 7)

There is a clear need to connect political and civil society more directly, and this relationship should have been given more comprehensive and serious attention at the WSF. A mistrust of conventional political institutions seemed to be widespread, and the tendency to renounce formal politics means that state power is often left uncontested. Samir Amin emphasized the need to work at the national level, to engage with structures of state power and to work with

the conventional political actors. The challenge is to build alliances between civil and state actors to strengthen a democratic state that can meet social needs.

Unionists who were present at WSF3 were aware of what Patrick Bond has termed “the resurgence of a humanistic but uncompromising international left”. (Bond, 2003:15) Nevertheless, Peter Waterman maintains that the International trade union movement represents the major challenge to the GJM. He argues that with the decline of worker identification with unions there should be more connection, dialogue and co-operation between unions and the GJM.

An important development, which should facilitate this, is the emergence of what Lambert and Webster term “global social movement unionism”. This could create a “borderless solidarity” and provide an important source of resistance to corporate globalisation. Global social movement unionism:

*may be said to exist when unions move beyond their traditional workplace boundaries to form alliances with other civil society movements within the nation state, whilst at the same time creating a new global union form. The latter transcends the nation-state by linking internationally with similar unions with the express goal of global campaigning as a **new** [my emphasis] form of resistance to globalisation. (Lambert and Webster, 2001:46)*

They write

...past ideological division is being transcended as movements recognise that a unifying, coalition-building strategy is essential to challenging globalisation's ruthless logic and the cyberspace communications technologies offer immense possibilities for an internationalist project. (Lambert and Webster, 2001:37).

The importance of this development is that:

...at this historical juncture, there appears to be no alternative programme and no political party willing to assert – or capable of asserting – political and social control over the process of global restructuring. (Lambert and Webster, 2001:47)

Criticisms – “big men and swooning crowds”

There were some silences in the mass events, specifically in relation to environmental issues such as the global crises of industrial pollution, loss of biodiversity and the biophysical limits to growth. Evidence on resource constraints has been available since the Club of Rome's 1972 report, but this was not always factored into the analyses of equitable growth. Not enough was said about the over-consumption of the global elite and the need to move to resource-light life styles.

One of the most optimistic analysts of struggles against corporate globalisation, Naomi Klein, feels that the WSF has been hijacked by big crowds and big men. She asks:

...how on earth did a gathering that was supposed to be a showcase for new grassroots movements become a celebration of men with a penchant for three hour speeches about smashing the oligarchy.

In her view:

...participatory democracy is being usurped at the WSF by big men and swooning crowds. (Klein, 2003:2)

Too men of those 'big men' who presented at panels and seminars were white and middle aged, and there were too few black people.

Some people felt that WSF3 was too organised and should be more anarchic, allowing for more democratic participation. Others felt it was not organised enough. Certainly the fact that the English edition of the programme was only available the third day was a source of personal frustration. But, as Grybowski himself asked at one meeting, "How can you organise a tide?" There should certainly have been a stronger African presence but the organisers are taking account of this in planning for the future.

WSF – not an event but a process

The WSF is not one annual meeting; it is not an event, but an ongoing process. The Charter of the WSF adopted in 2002 makes it clear that the construction of a new world order is as much a matter of process as of programme. In 2002 activists began organising smaller, or regional or country specific social forums to complement the global event. For instance, prior to WSF2 in Porto Alegre, a regional Social Forum was held in Genoa and an African Social Forum in Bamako, Mali.

The African Social Forum met in January 2003 in Addis Ababa and attracted over 200 participants from 40 countries who reaffirmed their strong conviction that "another Africa is possible". As at Bamako, the meeting restated their rejection of Nepad as a neo-liberal project and they committed themselves to developing alternatives. It was stressed that:

...only a dynamic civil society organised in strong and active social movements can ... challenge the neo-liberal political economy of globalisation.

A decision was taken to establish a Southern African social forum.

Many other city and regional meetings were held throughout 2002 in different parts of the world, and more are planned for 2003. In this sense, the WSF is expanding rapidly across the world; in other words, it is globalising.

The main achievement of the WSF3, as one component of the GJM, is the consolidation of networks. These are channels of contact, understanding and recognition. Overall, attending the WSF3 was an energising experience. In 2004 it will be held in India. This decision by the organising committee of the WSF:

...took account of the need to facilitate participation by Asian and African groups and organisations, which have been partly excluded from past WSF encounters by distance and cost.

The committee also undertook to promote a greater number of regional forums in 2003.

Opposition to neo-liberal globalisation is growing and the challenge for the WSF is to extract from this opposition the potential to create another world based on new dreams of freedom. The process involves both chaos and cohesion.

Nevertheless, there is much debate about the WSF; its transformative capacity and its sustainability and transferability in the future. Some believe there is a danger that it will be limited to a forum for debate, a colourful expression of democratic pluralism for the privileged elite (Pico Iyer's 'global souls') who have access to resources to enable them to travel. Jai Sen has suggested that the WSF:

...has the seeds of being one of the most significant initiatives of the past many decades – and perhaps even over the past 100 years. (Sen, 2002)

Certainly it was an inspiring occasion, and one of the most moving speakers was Arundhati Roy who ended her powerful address:

The way to confront the empire is to create a different world, a world not based on hate or fear. The World Social Forum offers that hope and for the first time in history. (See Appendix 2)

For that hope to be realised, the WSF should concentrate on the shift from event to process and on building mass participation. As Sen has argued, the WSF will only "realize its full potential" if it "becomes a truly global process, manifested in myriad local, national and regional forms" (Sen, 2002). But this globalising process is one component of a larger development – the transformation of anti-corporate initiatives around the world into a new movement. This paper argues that the real significance of the WSF is as a component of the emerging GJM.

Part 2: The WSF as One Component of the Emerging Global Justice Movement

According to several informants, what has emerged from the various meetings organised by the WSF is a new definition; participants at the second WSF have left behind the anti-globalization label and defined themselves as part of the 'GJM'. Nevertheless, the mainstream media continue to demonise this movement as negativist, mindless and violent. As Susan George writes:

The label 'anti-globalisation' is at best a contradiction, at worst a slander. ... these forces are opposed to market-driven corporate globalisation, but they are not 'anti-globalisation' per se, which would be pointless: clearly technology and travel are bringing us closer together and this is all to the good. They are, instead, anti-inequity, anti-poverty, anti-injustice as well as pro-solidarity, pro-environment and pro-democracy. (George, 2002:111)

The embryonic GJM is best understood as:

...a sum of many vibrant, disparate civil society parts which allow multiple local, national and global initiatives around different issues to co-exist, connect and understand themselves as belonging together in a global community oriented toward social change. (Jordan, 2002:6)

However this orientation ‘toward social change’ is not encoded in any blueprint. For this reason it is sometimes claimed that the global justice movement lacks ‘vision’. However, as Klein points out:

When critics say that the protestors lack vision, what they are really saying is that they lack an overarching revolutionary philosophy – like Marxism, democratic socialism, deep ecology or social anarchy – on which they all agree. (Klein, 2000:19)

The Charter of Principles of the WSF clearly suggests that the function of the WSF is to provide a meeting-place for the movement against neo-liberal globalisation. It strongly rejects the notion of acting as some kind of global vanguard, in either leadership or policy terms, and is modest in denying that the WSF is anything more than one component part of a movement against capitalist globalisation.

At the same time, many triumphalist claims are made about the GJM. For instance, the International Forum on Globalization refers to the

...millions of people brought together in a loose global alliance that spans national borders to forge what may be considered the most truly global and inclusive social movement in human history. (International Forum on Globalization, 2002:4)

However there is considerable disagreement on whether this should be conceptualised as a single, coherent movement for global justice, given that it is characterised by a radical decentralisation with no governing body, official ideology or mandated leader(s).

Klein has argued that there is no single, unified movement for holistic change. However:

...the protests in Seattle and Washington DC look unfocused because they were not demonstrations of one movement, but rather convergences of many smaller ones... These smaller, targeted movements are clearly part of a common cause: they share a belief that the disparate problems they are wrestling with all derive from corporate-driven globalisation, an agenda that is concentrating power and wealth into fewer and fewer hands. (Klein, 2002:16)

She points to a potential unity developing:

...there is an emerging consensus that decentralizing power and building community-based decision-making potential ... is essential to countering the might of multi-national corporations. (Klein, 2002:16)

Other analysts maintain that there are a multiplicity of social movements. Munnik and Wilson assert that the WSF is a “centre of gravity for civil society” involving a multiplicity of social movements. They write:

The size, diversity and geographic extent of current social movements, questioning, critiquing and proposing alternatives to the current world order is unprecedented. (Munnik and Wilson, 2003:7). ...The WSF is a coalition of the widest possible range of social movements based on the principle of respect for differences and the autonomy of ideas and forms of action. (Munnik and Wilson, 2003:11)

However Munnik and Wilson, along with many other insightful analysts, often shift from the plural to the singular in their analysis.

Understanding the GJM involves abandoning the rigid conventions and categorisations of social movements in the social scientific literature on collective action. Pillay has warned against adopting too narrow a definition. He writes:

Social scientists have attached different meanings to the term ‘social movement’, ranging from small local protest groups to ‘anti-systemic’ national liberations movements. Much of the literature is rooted in the experiences of the developed North. For our purposes, social movements are those relatively autonomous movements or organisations that are mass based and oriented towards social change. (Pillay, 1996:329)

Hunt has emphasized “the multi-agency character of modern social movements” He writes:

...a most important feature of contemporary social movements is that they rarely, if ever, take a single organizational expression. ... they are characterized by their multiplicity of organisational expressions. The real world of social movements is to be found in the combination of both different sorts of ‘organisations’... and different forms of ‘action’. (Hunt, 1997:238)

Similarly Castells emphasizes this multiplicity. He understands environmental networks as constituting social movements that have impact but:

...their impact on society rarely stems from a concerted strategy, masterminded by a center. Their most successful campaigns, their most striking initiatives, often result from ‘turbulences’ in the interactive network of multilayered communication. (Castells, 1997:362)

The fact that environmental and anti-corporate globalisation campaigns are so decentralized and involve minimal hierarchy and bureaucracy does not mean they are incoherent. Klein uses the compelling image of a ‘swarm’ to describe this new form of collective action that:

...involves horizontal and decentralized forms of organising, mobilized through the internet and ‘swarming’ on a target with dramatic effect. The movement models the decentralized, interlinked pathways of the internet, it is ‘the internet come to life’. (Klein, 2002:17)

The internet, as part of the new technology that facilitates communication across the boundaries of space and time, is a major impetus to the creation of a single coherent movement, centred in the WSF. Until very recently we had what Klein has termed:

...two activist solitudes. On the one hand there are the international globalization activists who seem to be fighting faraway issues, unconnected to people's day-to-day struggles... On the other hand there are thousands of community-based organizations fighting daily struggles for survival. The only clear way forward is for these two forces to merge. What is now the anti-globalization movement must turn into thousands of local movements. ...the local movements fighting privatization and deregulation on the ground need to link their campaigns into a large global movement. ...we need a movement that encourages and fiercely protects the rights to diversity: cultural diversity, ecological diversity, agricultural diversity and political diversity, different ways of doing politics. (Klein, 2002:245)

This convergence is now underway. Klein's 'two activist solitudes' exist in what Castells has described as two forces in the "back alleys of society, ... in alternative electronic networks [and] ... in grassrooted networks of communal resistance" (Castells, 1997:362). This is where he has "sensed the embryos of a new society" (Ibid). Together these two different kinds of networks – both NGOs and grassroots initiatives – are being folded into an emerging GJM that involves forms of social activism which are new and distinctive in several ways. The WSF is positioned at the centre of this.

'New' forms of social activism, the World Social Forum and the Global Justice Movement

Various new forms of social activism have emerged in the last few years that are new in the sense that they involve new targets, terrain, connections and forms of organising as well as being premised on new forms of power.

A new global terrain of struggle

The fact that WSF3 attracted participants from 120 different countries illustrates how the resistance against corporate globalisation is increasingly global in scope. It is a struggle being waged on its own terrain – the whole world. Action is increasingly mobilized around issues of global concern, whether they be human rights, the environment or labour standards.

Over the past decade millions of people have taken to the streets in India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil, Bolivia, the USA, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, France, Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic, Spain, Sweden, the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Kenya, South Africa, Thailand, Malaysia and elsewhere in massive demonstrations against the institutions and policies of corporate globalisation. (IFG,2002:2)

New targets

The GJM involves new targets in that the state is no longer always the focus of political struggles. Increasingly, the GJM is targeting corporations and global agencies, particularly the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, which is fast becoming the most powerful multilateral organisation in the world. This is in contrast to the pattern throughout the sixties, seventies

and eighties when we saw the ascendance of national liberation movements throughout Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, which focused on the nation-state as the target of their struggle. The fact that the primary target for change has changed from national governments to trade and financial institutions and multinational corporations has important implications. As Bell writes:

Since the state is no longer the primary focus of political demand-making, the role of political parties is less central. Since domestic matters are no longer the primary unit of analysis, national social movements have, in their majority, become too weak to stand alone. As a result, the last 5 years or so have witnessed a tremendous growth in cross-border organising. (Bell,2002:4)

New connections between issues

This ‘cross-border organising’ has involved forging new connections between issues. Social movements have traditionally organised around geography, sector or identity (e.g. indigenous peoples) or focus area (e.g. land rights). Today these movements are finding common ground in what they perceive as fundamental to their poverty and social exclusion: unjust trade policies in global and regional trade agreements and an unjust model of development imposed by international institutions such as the World Bank. Issues are increasingly framed in global rather than domestic terms. As a result, more diverse people are joining together, a diversity that was dramatically illustrated at WSF3. Positioned at the heart of the GJM, the WSF promotes a unique scale of talking across boundaries – boundaries between disciplines, issues and countries. Many social issues are now defined as inter-connected, such as the ecological impact of military activity, which unites both peace and environmental activists.

New alliances

Activists are forming new allegiances across sectors and issues in ways never before seen. An oft-invoked example of this is the turtles and Teamsters – an alliance between two sectors, environmentalists and labour, which previously had often viewed their interests as contradictory and dates to the November 1999 protests in Seattle against the WTO – is one example. However these new alliances tend to exclude political parties.

New forms of organising

The GJM relies on networks, but these do not necessarily take an organisational form. The members or components are interconnected in a variety of ways. The movement is technologically driven in the sense that it is based on new technologies that facilitate communication across the boundaries of space and time. Specifically, it relies on the new organisational and strategic possibilities that are emerging through the internet, which connects previously isolated people to each other and to an abundance of information. This virtual interaction may promote effective mobilisation. For example, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines that linked over 1,000 NGOs in some 60 countries “never possessed a bank account or even a street address” (Mekata, 2000;172).

Overall the GJM is a decentralized, diversified network of nodes of different sizes which form strategic alliances of different kinds: tight and loose, direct and ‘virtual’, permanent and temporary. As the IFG writes:

Unified by a deep commitment to universal values of democracy, justice and respect for life, this alliance functions with growing effectiveness without a

central organisation, leadership, or defining ideology. It also takes different forms in different settings. (IFG, 2002:12)

The different organisational form of this new kind of social activism is illustrated by the Brazilian Landless Rural Workers Movement or MST, which despite questions around accountability, Chomsky has described as “the most exciting popular movement in the world”. The MST has been at the forefront in organising the WSF. It is:

...a mass social movement whose principal objective is to gather people for the struggle. How do you join? ...There is no membership, no cards and it's not enough just to declare that one wants to be in the MST. The only way to join is to take part in one of the land occupations on the ground. That's how we get members. (Stedile, 2002:54)

New forms of power

WSF3 dramatically illustrates the pluralist conception of power in the GJM. This involves a rejection of all blueprints for change. There is no attempt to bring about agreement on declarations, agendas or manifestos. As Jeremy Brecher writes of the WSF:

...its emphasis on pluralism and diversity manifests the spirit of a movement that seeks a future based on open global dialogue, not decisions imposed by a new elite. (International Forum on Globalisation, 2002:64)

As stated above, the GJM operates as a globalised network. Networking is the dominant relational form, and in a decentralized social network there is no centre of power.

A strong theme in the GJM is the transformation of the nature and application of power.

Political and social organising among grassroots movements today strives to redefine power between people, place, state, class, and social groups – what it is, how it is shared and how it is used. New modes of organising incorporate the belief that money and real politik power are not the only units of analyses; morality and dignity must be integrated into the new paradigm. Leadership must be decentralized and based on the idea of direct – as opposed to representative – democracy ...The models of organising have evolved in keeping with the comment that ... ‘how we organize reflects our goal’. Dominant modes of organizing in the 1960s through 1980s reflected the goal of accessing state power – usually without a simultaneous commitment to transforming power. The principles of organizing did indeed reflect the goal, and the characteristics of the groupings which dominated national agendas: political parties and labour unions. Movements were primarily based on centralized authority and decision-making. Organisational structures were largely vertical. Leadership was often concentrated among men, intellectuals and members of ethnic majorities. Today the movement thinks, looks and acts differently, as it works toward different goals. (Bell, 2002:9)

Bell argues that the new movement for equitable and locally-controlled economic alternatives, is based on principles such as:

- new models of leadership and self organisation, emphasizing decentralised leadership and decision making;

- direct, participatory democracy;
- diversity and plurality;
- a strong commitment to moralism, with a central cluster of values including internationalism; and
- new organising practices including networking as opposed to competition, fluidity and flexibility.

It is also tempting to point to a new energy that is connecting different issues and citizens around the globe. Some analysts have pointed to “a new brand of, dare we say, joy, perhaps rambunctiousness involved in the new direct action, fax jams and ‘hactivism’ (Shephard and Hayduk, 2002:1).

A new collective identity

The networks that constitute the GJM allow for the powerful expression of new collective identities. Richard Falk has argued that ‘globalisation from below’ is disseminating powerful new social identities and new images of solidarity and connectedness “on behalf of an invisible community or polity that lacks spatial boundaries” (Falk, 1992:224). In Falks’ view, the GJM activists act as ‘citizen-pilgrims’ in a community that lacks spatial boundaries. This is very different from the militarised nature of citizenship that asserted obligations of military service to the nation state.

The social diversity of ‘globalisation from below’ is also distinctively different to the predominantly middle-class supporters of the so-called ‘new social movements’ of an earlier period. Writing in 1983, Raymond Williams pointed out that:

All significant social movements of the last 30 years have started outside the organised class interests and institutions. (Williams, 1983:172)

Many of those initiatives were characterised by a social shallowness in the sense that they had no strong connections to, or deep penetration into mass-based movements.

Globalisation involves the dissolution of traditional identities. For example, gender relations and conventional family forms are increasingly challenged by a powerful women’s movement, and occupational identities by the changes involved in the new forms of work. This disruption of traditional identities is not a smooth, unilinear process. Globalisation is also creating new ethnic and fundamentalist identities that are often highly charged and antagonistic.

In this context Castells points to a search for new connections around reconstructed identities.

In a world of global flows of wealth, power and images, the search for identity, collective or individual, ascribed or constructed, becomes the fundamental source of social meaning ... identity is becoming the main, and sometimes the only, source of meaning ... People increasingly organize their meaning not around what they do but on the basis of what they are, or believe they are. (Castells, 1996:3)

In many of the International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs) we see new collective identities being constructed; what Castells (1997) has termed:

... 'project identities' – sources of meaning and experience when social actors ... build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure. (Castells, 1997:8)

Many of the networks and alliances that constitute the GJM promote alternative political identities that emphasize human rights, tolerance of difference and reconciliation. This involves challenging or loosening the notion of racial and ethnic identities as fixed, essentialist and antagonistic. This changes the quality of social interactions.

For many activists in the networks that constitute the GJM social interactions have a depth and density that provides for new forms of solidarity and connectedness; new social bonds that contrast with the 'thin', atomised identities of citizen and consumer. It provides something of a counter to the social dislocations and displacements of globalisation. Barber (1995) has emphasized how the nation state as a framework for democracy is weakened by both the challenges of the market and of Islamic fundamentalism. He concludes that:

...the priority must be the reconstruction of civil society as a framework for the reinvention of democratic citizenship. (Barber, 1995:284)

The GJM offers a collective identity that is not linked to state structures or the market; it reconnects rights and responsibilities. As Barber writes:

In the international domain where states are weak and markets dominant, civil society can offer an alternative identity to people who otherwise are only clients or consumers or passive spectators to global trends they can do nothing to challenge. (Barber, 1995:285)

The GJM provides a space for such challenges at a time when, in the North, there is a withdrawal from conventional political struggle and a dissolution of many traditional political identities. As Hobsbawm writes:

The decline of the organised mass parties, class-based, ideological or both, eliminated the major social engine for turning men and women into politically active citizens. (Hobsbawm, 1994:581)

The intensity of the social interactions within the GJM now provides such an engine for many.

This raises interesting questions about an emerging global or 'planetary' citizenry. Several of the informants interviewed about the WSF maintained that it is the concrete expression of a new political culture and "an emerging global citizenry" (Oded Grajew, founder of the WSF, New York, July, 2002). One of the crucial themes debated in the 2003 meeting was about citizenship. At this level the actors in the GJM are constructing a political community. As Chantal Mouffe writes:

Politics is about the constitution of the political community, not something that takes place within it. (Mouffe, 1993:81)

Many of these communities are being constructed in more inclusive forms.

The search for new political identities partly explains the growing size of the WSF, as a component of the GJM. As Peter Waterman has written:

The WSF, and the movement it both represents and shapes, already has the power to transform the thinking and acting of the Old Left, whether 'revolutionary', 'reformist' or 'third worldist'. This is because these terms have lost most of their meaning and effect over the last two or three decades. (Waterman, 2002)

We are in what Klein has termed a “new era of political protest, one adapted to our postmodern times” with “a movement that doesn't have a leader, a centre or even an agreed-on name” and she asks, “how could it be otherwise? The traditional institutions that once organized citizens into neat, structured groups are all in decline: unions, religions, political parties” (Klein, 2002:146).

The WSF as part of an emerging global civil society

The WSF is part of the emerging phenomenon usually conceptualised as ‘global civil society’ (GCS). As one commentator noted, “It is the only global event organized by and for civil society”. As Lisa Jordan wrote:

The emergence of a global justice movement from Porto Alegre is illustrative of what can happen when global civil society claims its own space and is not reacting to agendas established by the UN, other governmental institutions or elite international civic organisations. The global justice movement is the sum of many vibrant, disparate civil society parts. (Jordan, 2002:6)

But as Peter Waterman has warned, the concept of ‘global civil society’ has not yet passed “through the forge of theoretical clarification or the sieve of public debate” (Waterman, 1996:170). It tends to be used “as a kind of catchall term for non-governmental organisations or social movements of all shapes and sizes, operating in the international realm”. (Taylor, 2002:1)

GCS is highly amorphous if defined as:

...the sphere of ideas, values, institutions, organizations, networks, and individuals located between the family, the state and the market and operating beyond the confines of national societies, politics and economies. (Anheier et al, 2001:21)

While its meanings are highly contested, the concept of GCS suggests both a new space of social interactions and new social patterns; it is a terrain constituted by transnational networks and alliances of individuals and groups who understand themselves to have some point of affinity, some shared political or ethical understanding.

This involves a contradictory process. On the one hand a corporate-led globalisation is loosening social cohesion and eroding the capacity for collective action through promoting an individualism that atomizes people and which is expressed in a retreat into purely privatist or materialist concerns with ‘survival’ for many in the South, or ‘material success’ for many in the North. On the other hand a ‘globalisation from below’ is promoting collective action to secure common human values.

There are difficult issues involved here. Analytically there is a danger of presenting too homogenous a view of GCS. Politically, the crucial question is whether GCS provides an effective challenge to existing global relations of power and privilege, or is it a mystification; a class-blind concept that obscures and detracts from the task of strengthening the democratic state institutions with the capacity to deliver the good and services necessary to meet human needs? There is a vociferous GCS rhetoric that must be subjected to critical scrutiny.

GCS is more than the GJM. It includes transnational networks of right wing groupings, financial speculators, anti-gun control groups, anti-abortion groups, pro-fundamentalists, pro-creationists, para-military and mafia-like formations.

GCS is new since the 1990s in the sense that the number and range or scope of INGOs operating has increased dramatically. Around one quarter of the thousands of INGOs in existence today were created after 1990 (Anheier, 2001:6).

The new forms of activism within the political and social space constituted by GCS are most dramatically evident in the various parallel summits that have taken place at successive UN conferences on women, population, the environment, social development and habitat. These conferences have stimulated the development of a stronger, more cohesive and integrated GCS.

There is no prospect of a global state but our current system has been described as:

...global governance without global government, one in which a few institutions – the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO and a few players – the finance, commerce and trade ministers, closely linked to certain financial and commercial interests – dominate the scene. (Stiglitz, 2002:22)

But this dominance is being increasingly questioned and a crucial question concerns the limited power the GJM is able to wield. Bell writes, “The power that these social movements are able to amass, and their ability to change policy, is limited.” Yet, as the political scientist James Scott notes:

Under the appropriate conditions, the accumulation of petty acts (of resistance) can rather like snowflakes on a steep mountainside, set off an avalanche. (Bell, 2002:8)

Obviously the ‘impact’ of the GJM cannot be approached in an empiricist fashion. As in the relation of the butterfly to the hurricane – another favourite image from chaos theory – when dealing with complex social phenomena, causal relations cannot be precisely established, let alone quantified.

The GJM has had some extraordinary successes, such as the banning of landmines and focusing attention on issues such as blood diamonds. But its most important impact has probably been the development of hope.

A huge citizens movement has been mobilised to question globalisation and the path it is taking. ... the mobilisation has recreated an enormous movement of hope. It has given new wind to the idea that another world is possible. (Massiah, 2002:127) ... The worldwide citizens’ movement is building an alternative around

the guiding principle of respect of people's rights. In each mobilisation the reference to rights is becoming increasingly central. (Massiah, 2002:128)

A new moment?

Do these new forms of social activism reflect a new logic based in a new political moment? Clearly globalisation is causing seismic shifts in all aspects of social, political and economic life. Bell argues that we are in:

...a new historical moment which ... has led to surges in the quality and quantity of organizing. New contestations of power have led to transformations in forms of resistance and visions for alternatives. (Bell, 2002:4)

Certainly a sense of crisis is widespread with increasing violence, insecurity throughout the world, growing inequality, an unravelling social fabric and environmental degradation. In this context of crisis John Cavanagh writes:

It is this reality of social and environmental disintegration that has brought millions of people together in a loose global alliance that spans national borders to forge what may be considered the most truly global and inclusive social movement in human history. (International Forum on Globalisation, 2002:22)

The moment is one marked by the increasing social visibility of risk and insecurity. Throughout the world people are increasingly anxious and bewildered by the scale and scope of the changes we are living through. This is amplified by the failure of many states to protect their citizens and maintain the monopoly on violence that has traditionally been viewed as the hallmark of state power. The privatisation of security is a worrying global development.

For the first time since the emergence of the nation state, more military weapons are in the hands of private citizens than in the hands of national governments. (Mandel, 2001:130)

The absence of effective state protection and the global spread of violent crime lead to the growing sense of risk and insecurity that Beck has conceptualised as 'the risk society'. The growing strength of the GJM is related to these trends. Recently we have seen the:

...emergence of global issues of popular concern including environmental issues, HIV/AIDS, the drug trade, third-world debt, nuclear testing and the social ramifications of economic globalisation. In that these issues cannot be effectively addressed without concerted action by governments throughout the world, they lend themselves to international citizens' action. (Clark, 2001:19)

Environmental groups have long stressed the transnational nature of the issues they confront. Environmental pollution is not restricted to national borders; nuclear accidents and global warming affect us all. The environmental movement is giving these issues increasing social visibility. This is one reason why Castells regards the contemporary environmental movement as "the most comprehensive and influential movement of our time" (Castells, 1997:67). It is arguable that he provides a somewhat triumphalist account but it is clearly the source of a holistic perspective that, to some extent, is percolating throughout the GJM.

Clearly there has been a significant shift within the global reality, with the US becoming more militarised and unilateralist but, as the South African Communist Party recently stated, “This shift is NOT a rupture with the underlying and persisting realities of a century-and-a-quarter of imperialism, but it does mark the end of a particular phase within imperialism.” For this reason the SACP has reaffirmed the critical importance of international solidarity. “Ours should be a struggle to swim against the tide of imperialist globalisation.” This points to how the new forms of social activism build on earlier traditions.

The new forms of social activism build on earlier ones

The global solidarity promoted by the GJM and tangible during the closing session of the WSF3 clearly builds on earlier traditions of both proletarian and feminist traditions of internationalism. However, Peter Waterman points out that:

Inter-nationalism, as the name implies, was a relationship between nation-states, nationalities, nationalisms and nationalists. Despite heroic efforts and achievements, it became increasingly attenuated and hollow during the C20th, until it no longer moved anyone or anything. Its contemporary successor is something best understood as a global solidarity movement, in the sense that it addresses global problems (of which those of nations/nationalities are but one part), and that it addresses them holistically (neither isolating one struggle from, nor prioritizing one, over others). (Waterman, 2002)

This raises important questions concerning the process whereby global struggles recognize and empower local struggles.

The relation between the local and the global

Gray maintains that behind all the various meanings of globalisation is:

...a single, underlying idea, which can be called de-localization: the uprooting of activities and relationships from local origins and cultures. (Gray, 1998:57)

Similarly, it has been argued that:

...the central modus operandi of the globalization model is to delocalize controls over economic and political activity in a systematic appropriation of the powers, decisions, options and functions that through history have been fulfilled by the community, region, or state. (IFG, 2002:106)

Within the GJM and voiced loudly at WSF3, there was a strong emphasis on subsidiarity, favouring the local over the global and reinvigorating the conditions by which local communities regain power. There was a recognition that international work has to be grounded in local issues; an emphasis on decentralized, localized, alternative paths and institutions.

The activists who make up the GJM are forging global alliances that seek to shift power to democratic, locally rooted, human-scale institutions. As Vandana Shiva put it, the GJM is a fight for local democracy.

The history of the World Bank has been to take power away from communities, give it to a central government, then give it to the corporations through privatization. (Cited by Klein, 2002:36)

Global events, such as the WSSD conference in Johannesburg 2002, can become a focal point for regalanising local interests and activism. Being the hosts of the Global NGO Forum, the South African environmental NGOs became reanimated in their efforts to promote diverse agendas that linked environmental issues to questions of health, development and social justice. In some ways the new wave of globally stimulated activism has generated conflict but it has also helped to renew confidence in initiating local campaigns. One example of this is the growing citizen mobilisations around South African government plans to develop a pilot Pebble Bed Modular Nuclear reactor, with associated problems of transporting nuclear fuel and the incineration of nuclear waste (Cock and Fig, 2001). One informant maintained that at Porto Alegre the WSF “succeeded in making that elusive local-global connection. The discussions were rooted around local problems but causes and solutions were framed in a global context”. This has been conceptualised as ‘glocalism’, “political activism based on the insight that every local action has a global component” (Shephard and Hayduk, 2002:5).

The fact that the WSF is located in the south is significant. As Sen writes:

It is perhaps the first truly global civil initiative widely linking and bridging South and North that has been taken from the South. (See CCS website, 2002)

Providing opportunities for mass participation depends on strengthening connections between the ‘local’ and the ‘global’. In this respect contemporary South Africa is significant.

Part 3: The Local and the Global : The Case of South Africa

Many of the new social movements in South Africa suggest a rich and mutually stimulating relationship between the ‘local’ and the ‘global’. Several of them achieved a high level of visibility in the WSSD process and their multiple voices were heard in what Manuel Castells has termed, in another context, a ‘creative cacophony’. (Castells, 1997:69). Do they also represent a new form of social activism? Are they ‘militant particularisms’, ephemeral eruptions of the urban poor, the rural landless and other marginalised groups, or components of the emerging GJM?

Many of these recent grassroot initiatives are struggles around ‘social citizenship’. A key aspect of social citizenship is the right to a ‘healthy environment’, which implies access to adequate housing, water, sanitation and electricity, which many South Africans lack. At a local level, the prescriptions of GEAR have witnessed a shift away from the ‘statist’ service delivery models of the past where the state subsidized and delivered municipal services (albeit in a racially-biased manner), towards a ‘neo-liberal’ service delivery model where the private sector dominates and the emphasis is on profit rather than meeting basic human needs. These developments have seen the costs of basic services escalate and increasing disconnections of water and electricity.

The poor and the marginalised are not responding passively to these changes in material conditions and state policy. A number of mass-based initiatives have arisen to challenge the water and electricity cut-offs, the lack of access to sanitation, proper housing and health

facilities, AIDS treatment, reparations in terms of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process, popular justice, evictions from informal settlements and lack of land redistribution. These have involved a diverse repertoire of resistance strategies including organised marches and petitions to parliament and local authorities.

As Webster points out:

What is missing from the conventional academic analysis of the concept of social citizenship is any notion of struggle, of agency, and of the social movements that provide the basis of a new politics of social and economic reconstruction
(Webster, 2002:3)

But the crucial question is whether they do indeed provide such a basis.

Jon Jeter has called the rise of these grassroots movements, 'South Africa's new revolution'. He writes:

What most provokes South Africa's defiance today are what they see as injustices unleashed on this developing nation by the free-market economic policies of the popularly elected, black-led governing party, the ANC. (The Washington Post 6.11.2001)

But are these mass-based struggles around social citizenship largely informal and ephemeral, incapable of establishing a sustained, durable presence? Are they embryonic social movements in the sense of "purposive collective actions whose outcome, in victory, as in defeat, transforms the values and institutions of society" (Castells, 1997:3)? Do they seek to empower the poor and the marginalised against local, national and global elites? Could these 'militant particularisms', to use Raymond William's phrase, feed into an emerging global civil society and generate broader, transformative politics? What are the connections between these initiatives and the GJM?

The Anti-Privatisation Forum is a particularly significant formation in the light of the argument that the 'common thread' in the so-called 'anti-globalisation movement' is opposition to "the privatization of every aspect of life, and the transformation of every activity and value into a commodity" (Klein, 2001:82). Klein has argued forcefully that "the only clear way forward" is for the community and anti-globalisation activists to unite. "What is now the anti-globalisation movement must turn into thousands of local movements, fighting the way neoliberal politics are playing out on the ground" (Klein, 2001:89).

Another analyst who has emphasized the importance of linking global to local struggles said a year ago that one of "the weaknesses of current global struggles against globalisation" was that "important as they are, they bear little relation to progressive struggles and forces within nation states. These global struggles are still largely limited to demonstrations around major international events. One of the challenges is to transform this energy to concretely link up with national struggles around the globe" (Waterman, 2002).

This is beginning to happen and the WSF is a crucial site for making deep and meaningful connections and giving voice to local and global critiques of commodification.

Participants at WSF3 included key actors from significant South African alliances such as the Economic Justice Network and the Gender and Trade Network. Both of these contributed to a declaration against Nepad formulated at a meeting in July 2002, which was linked to the African Union launch and attended by about 70 people from 28 organisations.

The Social Movement Indaba at the time of the WSSD brought together a number of other dynamic forces including the Anti-Privatisation Forum, Jubilee SA, the Environmental Justice Networking Forum, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, the Rural Development Services Network, Friends of the Earth, First People, the Municipal Services Project, the World Bank Bonds Boycott, Indymedia, the Palestinian Solidarity Committee, and the Landless People's Movement (LPM), which has been described as "South Africa's strongest grassroots social movement in the Gauteng Region" (Global fire, The Official newspaper of the WSSD civil society process, 22.8.2002:1). The International Landless People's Assembly at Shareworld cemented links between land activists in Latin America, Europe and Asia.

These all represent new forms of social activism, often mobilising around survival issues. As Eddie Cottle of the Rural Services Development Network commented:

New forms of organisation are forming. It's a move away from the traditionalist congress movement of the past. Its becoming mass based. Its grassroots demands are about jobs, livelihoods and living standards. We are just beginning to mobilise African civil society. (Cited in The Mail and Guardian 23.8.2002)

These struggles have been described as having:

...a dual character. On the one hand they are defensive, localised, issue-driven struggles and on the other hand they have already made the programmatic leap confronting the class character of the ANC state. (Gentle, 2002: 18)

Gentle points to a factor which:

...begins to give the social movements the character of being 'something new' ... the absence of any participation of the traditional formations of the working class, chiefly the formations comprising the tripartite alliance. (Gentle, 2002:18)

Other issue-based organisations are the Treatment Action Campaign, Jubilee 2000, the Basic Income Grant Coalition and Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC). These have mobilised around real grievances but tended to do so in opposition to the government and the ANC "because of subjective weaknesses on our side or because we have left a vacuum" (ANC discussion document 'The Balance of Forces', cited in Mail and Guardian 16.8.2002).

It has been suggested that many in the ANC Alliance dislike what is sometimes termed 'the Seattle movement'; one reason being the movement's insistence on decentralization and diversity, to the point of having no identifiable leadership. "This goes against the grain of the strongly centralised political tradition of the SA liberation struggle" (Munnik and Wilson, 2003:41). There is a fear that an emphasis on the autonomy of civil society could undermine the project of a strong developmental state taking the National Democratic Revolution forward.

These militant mass actions were not confined to Gauteng in 2002. There have been significant anti-eviction campaigns in the Western Cape. In 2001 the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban was met with the biggest protest marches since the early 1990s. The Durban Social Forum (DSF), a coalition of community-based organisations, led a march of some 35,000 protestors to focus attention on privatisation, evictions, debt cancellation, community housing, electricity cut-offs and landlessness. It has been suggested that the DSF involved a “new form of politics” (Desai, 2002:145); also that it signalled the emergence “of a new force in South African politics and society” (Article in the Sunday Tribune cited by Desai, 2002:137). This is “a movement” with an ideology “that springs from ideas of neighbourliness, dignity and life” (Desai, 2002:149). Like several other analysts, Desai also shifts from the singular to the plural in describing “these community movements as something precious and powerful” (Ibid).

Desai admits that “much remains undecided” but points to increasing state repression. A striking characteristic of the state response to these various forms of social activism has been the use of force in the form of teargas, rubber bullets, live ammunition and stun grenades. The newly formed Soldiers Forum (a grouping of ex-combatants protesting their exclusion by the SANDF) is an affiliate of the Anti-Privatisation Forum. In August 2002, 83 former soldiers were allegedly tear-gassed while in police custody after they refused to be moved to a prison to await trial. Unconfirmed reports said that some had to be hospitalised (Mail and Guardian 23.8.2002).

These groupings are sometimes criminalised and sometimes romanticised. For example, the Minister of Public Enterprises, Jeff Hadebe, recently compared the members of the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC) to “a gang of criminals” (The Sunday Times, 2.12.2001). Water Affairs Minister, Ronnie Kasrils, called a group of about 70 anti-privatisation protestors in September 2002 “thugs”. (The Star, 4.9.2002) In very different, somewhat nostalgic terms, a SECC activist said:

It is just like the old days. We are pamphleteering, we have meetings ... What strikes me about all these protests is that we're so fresh out of political independence and it's amazing that people have shaken off the nationalist honeymoon so quickly. (The New Internationalist, September, 2002)

New linkages – both global and local – were forged and cemented between protestors in the WSSD process. The crucial question is whether these linkages and alliances are sustainable? Or did the WSSD process demonstrate only episodic collective action – fleeting struggles without clear leadership, ideology or structured, accountable and democratic organisation? Is Gentle correct that “the rise of new social movements in South Africa ... is an index that a new political alignment of forces is developing” (Gentle, 2002: 19)? Did the process sow “the seeds of a South African Social Forum” as Bond has suggested (Bond, 2002:360)?

The Social Movements United march on 31 August 2002 mobilised thousands of local and international activists, but was one of two marches, the other having been organised by the Global People’s Forum with the support of the Alliance. As with the three marches in Durban in 2001, the two marches “revealed a deep split running through South African civil society” (Munnik and Wilson, 2003:3).

According to Gentle, the Alex march, organised by the Social Movements United:

...is significant in that it marks the most public expression of the break of large sections of the working class and the rural poor with the liberation alliance and the political identification of the ANC government as the new oppressor. The march brought together a range of social movements and opened the way to a possible broad opposition movement of the left. (Gentle, 2002:17)

The Social Movements United march seems to have been very much a last minute coalition composed mainly of the LPM and the Social Movement Indaba. Earlier one of the leaders of the Social Movement Indaba, the Anti-Privatisation Forum said:

We are inspired by earlier anti-globalisation protests in Seattle and Genoa and we hope our protest turns into something like Seattle. (Cited in The Mail and Guardian, 23.8.2002)

This emphasizes the importance of analysing the relation between the local initiatives and the anti-corporate globalisation movement.

Munnik and Wilson compare the Social Movement Indaba and the Global People's Forum to the WSF and argue that the WSF provides a model for a new approach to power. They write:

Through its slogan, 'a sustainable world is possible', the Global People's Forum self-consciously linked itself to the WSF meetings in Porto Alegre. The Charter of the WSF lays particular stress on diversity and the organisers see their main role as facilitators, opening and protecting space for all voices in civil society. The Forum links organisations, but does not represent them. It does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by participants. This approach relies on a different understanding of power within civil society. In building a different world the means have to be the end because civil society relies on support for value based arguments rather than force. For example, the ideal of participatory democracy is built on the clear understanding that power belongs to everyone and is freely shared. The building blocks of a participatory democracy are access to information, participation in decision making and monitoring to see that the outcomes of decision making are true and just. Therefore power has to be relearned so that it can be responsive, persuasive, rather than coercive and can see the empowering of other not power over other, as the route to more power... The single most important change to the concept and practice of centralised power will come from the acceptance of diversity, which is an outstanding contribution of the global social movement. Its other contribution is solidarity. (Munnik and Wilson, 2003:77)

This emphasis on solidarity, diversity and a new approach to power has important implications for us in contemporary South Africa.

Part 4: Implications for South Africa

This is clearly a defining moment in South Africa; contestations about the meaning and nature of transformation are growing. It is a time when we need to mobilise all our resources to address the critical issues of poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS. In this process of

developing our collective strength there are a number of points that emerged from WSF3 that we should discuss and debate. They include:

1. The importance of inclusivity

The emphasis on diversity and debate within the context of respect for difference at WSF3 presented a strong contrast to the past year in South Africa where some very sectarian interventions deflected debate from substantive policy issues, with a reckless labelling of comrades and a factionalist tone and language.

We need to defend the right to dissent and engage in debate with the ‘ultra-left’, and not dismiss it as a ‘negative tendency’ and indulge in ‘reckless labelling’. As Blade Nzimande states:

What must be defeated is this McCarthy tendency of intolerance of divergent views. The real enemy of our revolution is poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and that is the challenge... (Nzimande, 2002:17)

Tactical differences should not be allowed to blow up into fundamental divisions within civil society. As Dot Keet said at the WSSD:

The real enemy is the United States and its allies, the big corporations and the international financial institutions, not your comrades who made different tactical decisions. (Cited by Munnik and Wilson, 2003:64)

Related to this is the question of discipline and non-violence, which would exclude trashing of city streets, looting or destruction of property. The new social movements forming around the country focusing on basic needs such as access to water and land, could prevent what a number of commentators have conceptualised as a slide into authoritarianism, an intolerance of criticism and dissent. Analysts have written about the ‘criminalisation of dissent’ and the tendency to paint anti-corporate activists as ‘latent terrorists’ or in our case, ‘hooligans’ and ‘criminals’. There has been an escalation of the use of tear gas, mass arrests, water cannons, stun grenades and rubber bullets by police during demonstrations in many parts of the world, including Johannesburg.

2. Re-thinking our macro economic policy

WSF3 focused on deepening global poverty. Recent statistics indicated rising poverty levels in South Africa between 1995 and 2000. Although household incomes have declined, the social wage has increased through the provision of basic services, but this is meaningless if people cannot afford to pay for them. In a 2001 national survey 10 million people reported that their water services were cut off, with devastating social impacts (Bond, 2002:45). In rural KwaZulu-Natal, the state changed free, communal taps to a prepaid card system with a R50 registration fee. Consequently, thousands of people had to obtain water from polluted rivers. This led to a cholera epidemic with more than 100 000 infected and some 100 deaths (McDonald and Pape, 2002). At the time of writing (February, 2003) there have been 1,000 reported cases of cholera in the Eastern Cape. The water corporations Maud Barlow warned of at WSF3 are driving this process of water privatisation. At the WSSD a prominent message was ‘Our World is Not for Sale’. Protecting the role of the state in the delivery of basic

services, referred to as ‘the struggle for common public goods’ involves re-thinking our macro-economic policy, which currently concentrates power and wealth in the hands of the few, so that poverty and inequality are deepening.

The connection between the two requires emphasis. Poverty alleviation cannot be separated from wealth alleviation, and the over-consumption of the global elites.

There will be no equity unless the corporation-driven consumer classes in North and South become capable of living well at a drastically reduced level of resource demand. Such a transformation of wealth is the central challenge of sustainability. (Heinrich Boell Foundation, 2002:36)

In South Africa at present many seem caught up in a drive of greed and acquisitiveness. Avarice flourishes. We have a model of free market capitalism and executive greed in recent disclosures of fraud attributed to six major US corporations. The greed was systemic. Ben Turok has pointed out that in line with the US our chief executives are helping themselves to huge salaries and perks. The danger is that we follow the US lead in the self-enrichment of chief executives, but we do so in the name of black economic empowerment. He writes:

The crisis in US capitalism creates an opportunity for South African critics of rampant capitalism to debate our own way forward. (Turok, 2002:12)

Related to this is the need to rebuild social capital

3. Rebuilding social capital

In strong contrast to the sense of solidarity and connectedness at WSF3, there is an erosion of social capital in contemporary South Africa. Social capital refers to relations of trust, reciprocity and a sense of obligation. While much is said about the flight of domestic capital as investors use offshore opportunities to shift their assets, the loss of social capital is equally serious. It involves the unravelling of relations of caring and responsibility. It is taking many different forms of which the practice of raping babies and young girls is only the most extreme expression. It is also manifest in the case of the nurse whose patient dies while she chats to the driver in the front of the ambulance, the builder who erects sub-standard RDP housing, the policeman who takes bribes, the currency speculator whose concern for profit obliterates any concern for the well being of fellow citizens, the teacher who abuses or neglects his pupils, as well as the owners and drivers of minibus taxis who are indifferent to the safety of their passengers. This lack of concern for others was named a “crisis of social disintegration” by Minister Zola Skweyiya in January 2000.

Part of the process of social reconstruction involves animating the concept of citizenship. The identity of ‘citizen’ is an alternative to the passive spectator of ‘reality’ television or the consumer. A citizen is an individual who understands him or herself to be part of a wider community. What the GJM is claiming is that we are also ‘planetary citizens’ caught up in a web of global relations.

We need new models of active citizenship whether global or national. We also need to redefine gender identities. As Nombiniso Gasa has written:

We need to view apartheid as a cultural order ... one of the core elements being violence as a means of dealing with difficulty and difference.

In the light of rising rates of violence against women and children she asks:

As for apartheid's dehumanisation, how do black people recover their dignity? How do black men recover their manhood? ... We need to develop models of masculinity that will make an active contribution towards a culture where the recovery of manhood is not at the expense of other human beings. (Gasa, 2002:8)

This ideology of violence as legitimate is deeply rooted in Southern Africa in struggles against colonial and white minority regimes.

4. Challenging war and militarisation

The attention given to the prospect of a US attack on Iraq at the WSF3 reinforced the need to confront how war and militarisation in Africa continue to destroy lives and infrastructure and cannibalise scarce resources. The past few years have seen armed conflict in the DRC, Burundi, Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast and Liberia. At the final summit declaration of the WSSD no reference was made to demilitarisation or the need to transfer resources from military to social spending. We need to mobilise all our resources to challenge the R60 billion rearmament programme, which is like dismantling a house in order to build a fence around it.

5. Challenging social exclusion

The process of social exclusion that Susan George warned us about at WSF3 is deepening, and threatens to include much of Sub-Saharan Africa. Castells has analysed the disastrous social consequences for the millions of homeless, impoverished and often illiterate people who populate this 'Fourth World'. As Klein writes:

Mass privatization and deregulation have bred armies of locked-out people, whose services are no longer needed, whose lifestyles are written off as 'backward', whose basic needs go unmet. These fences of social exclusion can discard an entire industry, and they can also write off an entire country. (Klein, 2002:xx1)

They can also write off a continent like Africa.

6. Deepening our collective understanding of corporate globalisation and strengthening our connections to the Global Justice Movement

Many speakers at WSF3 emphasised the need for study and analysis of this complex historical moment. Many speakers also talked about how trust in conventional political structures is fraying. There is a widespread loss of trust in politicians and political processes and political parties locally as well as globally. AfroBarometer surveys report that "only 1 in 10 South Africans believe their elected public representatives act in their best interests or listen to them

most of the time”. They also point to voter apathy – one in five South Africans will not cast their vote (Mail and Guardian, 13.12.2002).

In this context of complexity and popular disillusionment we have much to learn from the GJM. For example, South Africa’s LPM sent delegates to WSF3 and to hold talks with the MST. The LPM can learn from the achievements of the Brazilian activists in organising land occupation and food production.

Part 5: Conclusion

Porto Alegre is a beacon of a new kind of politics from which we have much to learn. The major achievement of the WSF as the centre of the GJM is the consolidation of networks opposing neo-liberal globalisation. It is possible that these networks are, as Raymond Williams wrote twenty years ago of the new social movements, “our major positive resource” (Williams, 1983:173). But the threat of war, deepening inequality and social exclusion, the persistence of armed conflict, human rights abuses, environmental degradation and ethnic nationalism mitigate too optimistic a view of the GJM. We cannot look to the GJM as the sole route of political revitalisation, though this is tempting in view of the increasing apathy and cynicism about political leaders and participation in political parties in the established democracies; the intellectual and political space left by the demise of socialism and the erosion of faith in ‘the market’. Many believe that effective state institutions are necessary to provide security and the goods and services necessary to meet human needs. For them the attention given to global civil society is a distraction from the key task of building strong and democratic state institutions with the capacity to do this. Michael Edwards stresses that:

It is still only states that can address the threats of the 21st century, since there is no other legitimate authority to which we can turn. (Edwards, 1999:16)

Much research needs to be done to develop an understanding of the social dynamics behind the WSF, its relationship to the GJM and the new forms of social activism it encompasses. Does it involve a new global solidarity, a new collective identity? Is it an incoherent patchwork? What is its transformative capacity? Is it another expression of unaccountable power? It is clear that new communities are forming in non-traditional ways often based on informational technology and shared values. Clearly much theoretical and empirical work is required, and a good deal of that work must involve analysing the relation between the global and the local.

Are the new South African forms of grassroots activism connecting to an emerging GJM and generating new forms of resistance politics? There are high expectations of these initiatives. Bond maintains that the “new activist networks” in South Africa provide “inspiring modes of anti-neoliberal resistance” which should best be realised on a regional basis (Bond, 2002:366). Also thinking in terms of the Southern African region, another analyst has warned that:

...unless a Polanyian ‘second movement’ orchestrated by a broad coalition of democratic forces in support of the poor and the powerless takes off, the region’s future is not as bright as was once thought in the aftermath of South Africa’s transition to majority rule. (Tsie, 2001:142) ... The only potential source for long

term progressive change in the region is seen to lie in a latent Polanyian 'second movement' generated by popular civil society across the region. (Tsie, 2001:144)

It could be that this is forming; that the forms of social activism described in this report are Castell's 'embryos of a new society' or Jeter's 'new revolution'. Only theoretically informed social research can provide the answers. Webster has pointed to "a new social force in post-apartheid South Africa: the politically enfranchised working poor" (Webster, 2002:34). He argues that the new work order calls for:

...new models of unionism ... New allies will have to be sought among the social movements emerging in the townships of South Africa, such as the Treatment Action Campaign and the Landless People's Movement ... it is time for new tactics, new forms of organisation. (Webster, 2002:34).

But the main impression many of us brought home from Porto Alegre is that the 'new' is already emerging on a global terrain. In the words of Arundhati Roy at the closing session of WSF3:

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

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Appendix 1: The Charter of Principles

The document states, “While the principles contained in this Charter - to be respected by all those who wish to take part in the process and to organize new editions of the World Social Forum - are a consolidation of the decisions that presided over the holding of the Porto Alegre Forum and ensured its success, they extend the reach of those decisions and define orientations that flow from their logic.

1. The World Social Forum is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society centred on the human person.
2. The World Social Forum at Porto Alegre was an event localized in time and place. From now on, in the certainty proclaimed at Porto Alegre that “another world is possible”, it becomes a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives, which can-not be reduced to the events supporting it.
3. The World Social Forum is a world process. All the meetings that are held as part of this process have an international dimension.
4. The alternatives proposed at the World Social Forum stand in opposition to a process of capitalist globalization commanded by the large multinational corporations and by the governments and international institutions at the service of those corporations’ in-terests. They are designed to ensure that globalization in solidarity will prevail as a new stage in world history. This will respect universal human rights, and those of all citizens - men and women - of all nations and the environment and will rest on democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality and the sovereignty of peoples.
5. The World Social Forum brings together and interlinks only organizations and movements of civil society from all the countries in the world, but intends neither to be a body representing world civil society nor to exclude from the debates it promotes those in positions of political responsibility, mandated by their peoples, who decide to enter into the commitments resulting from those debates.
6. The meetings of the World Social Forum do not deliberate on behalf of the World Social Forum as a body. No-one, therefore, will be authorized, on behalf of any of the editions of the Forum, to express positions claiming to be those of all its participants. The participants in the Forum shall not be called on to take decisions as a body, whether by vote or acclamation, on declarations or proposals for action that would commit all, or the majority, of them and that propose to be taken as establishing positions of the Forum as a body.
7. Nonetheless, organizations or groups of organizations that participate in the Forum’s meetings must be assured the right, during such meetings, to deliberate on declarations or actions they may decide on, whether singly or in coordination with other participants. The World Social Forum undertakes to circulate such decisions widely by the means at

its disposal, without directing, hierarchizing, censoring or restricting them, but as deliberations of the organizations or groups of organizations that made the decisions.

8. The World Social Forum is a plural, diversified, non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party context that, in a decentralized fashion, interrelates organizations and movements engaged in concrete action at levels from the local to the international to build another world. It thus does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by the participants in its meetings, nor does it intend to constitute the only option for interrelation and action by the organizations and movements that participate in it.
9. The World Social Forum asserts democracy as the avenue to resolving society's problems politically. As a meeting place, it is open to pluralism and to the diversity of activities and ways of engaging of the organizations and movements that decide to participate in it, as well as the diversity of genders, races, ethnicities and cultures.
10. The World Social Forum is opposed to all totalitarian and reductionist views of history and to the use of violence as a means of social control by the State. It upholds respect for Human Rights, for peaceful relations, in equality and solidarity, among people, races, genders and peoples, and condemns all forms of domination and all subjection of one person by another.
11. The meetings of the World Social Forum are always open to all those who wish to take part in them, except organizations that seek to take people's lives as a method of political action.
12. As a forum for debate, the World Social Forum is a movement of ideas that prompts reflection, and the maximum possible transparent circulation of the results of that re-flection, on the mechanisms and instruments of domination by capital, on means and actions to resist and overcome that domination, and on the alternatives that can be proposed to solve the problems of exclusion and inequality that the process of capitalist globalization currently prevalent is creating or aggravating, internationally and within countries.
13. As a framework for the exchange of experiences, the World Social Forum encourages understanding and mutual recognition among its participant organizations and movements, and places special value on all that society is building to centre economic activity and political action on meeting the needs of people and respecting nature.
14. As a context for interrelations, the World Social Forum seeks to strengthen and create new national and international links among organizations and movements of civil society, that - in both public and private life - will increase the capacity for social resistance to the process of dehumanization the world is undergoing and reinforce the humanizing measures being taken by the action of these movements and organizations.
15. The World Social Forum is a process that encourages its participant organizations and movements to situate their actions as issues of planetary citizenship, and to introduce onto the global agenda the change-inducing practices that they are experimenting in building a new world.

Appendix 2: 'Confronting Empire' by Arundhati Roy

I've been asked to speak about "How to confront Empire?" It's a huge question, and I have no easy answers. When we speak of confronting "Empire," we need to identify what "Empire" means. Does it mean the U.S. Government (and its European satellites), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and multinational corporations? Or is it something more than that?

In many countries, Empire has sprouted other subsidiary heads, some dangerous by products – nationalism, religious bigotry, fascism and, of course terrorism. All these march arm in arm with the project of corporate globalization. Let me illustrate what I mean. India – the world's biggest democracy – is currently at the forefront of the corporate globalization project. Its "market" of one billion people is being prized open by the WTO. Corporatization and Privatization are being welcomed by the Government and the Indian elite. It is not a coincidence that the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the Disinvestment Minister – the men who signed the deal with Enron in India, the men who are selling the country's infrastructure to corporate multinationals, the men who want to privatize water, electricity, oil, coal, steel, health, education and telecommunication – are all members or admirers of the RSS. The RSS is a right wing, ultra-nationalist Hindu guild which has openly admired Hitler and his methods.

The dismantling of democracy is proceeding with the speed and efficiency of a Structural Adjustment Program. While the project of corporate globalization rips through people's lives in India, massive privatization, and labor "reforms" are pushing people off their land and out of their jobs. Hundreds of impoverished farmers are committing suicide by consuming pesticide. Reports of starvation deaths are coming in from all over the country. While the elite journeys to its imaginary destination somewhere near the top of the world, the dispossessed are spiralling downwards into crime and chaos.

This climate of frustration and national disillusionment is the perfect breeding ground, history tells us, for fascism. The two arms of the Indian Government have evolved the perfect pincer action. While one arm is busy selling India off in chunks, the other, to divert attention, is orchestrating a howling, baying chorus of Hindu nationalism and religious fascism. It is conducting nuclear tests, rewriting history books, burning churches, and demolishing mosques. Censorship, surveillance, the suspension of civil liberties and human rights, the definition of who is an Indian citizen and who is not, particularly with regard to religious minorities, is becoming common practice now.

Last March, in the state of Gujarat, two thousand Muslims were butchered in a State-sponsored pogrom. Muslim women were specially targeted. They were stripped, and gang-raped, before being burned alive. Arsonists burned and looted shops, homes, textiles mills, and mosques. More than a hundred and fifty thousand Muslims have been driven from their homes. The economic base of the Muslim community has been devastated. While Gujarat burned, the Indian Prime Minister was on MTV promoting his new poems. In January this year, the Government that orchestrated the killing was voted back into office with a comfortable majority. Nobody has been punished for the genocide. Narendra Modi, architect of the pogrom, proud member of the RSS, has embarked on his second term as the Chief Minister of Gujarat. If he were Saddam Hussein, of course each atrocity would have been on CNN. But since he's not – and since the Indian "market" is open to global investors – the massacre is not even an embarrassing inconvenience.

There are more than one hundred million Muslims in India. A time bomb is ticking in our ancient land. All this to say that it is a myth that the free market breaks down national barriers. The free market does not threaten national sovereignty, it undermines democracy. As the disparity between the rich and the poor grows, the fight to corner resources is intensifying. To push through their "sweetheart deals," to corporatize the crops we grow, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the dreams we dream, corporate globalization needs an international confederation of loyal, corrupt, authoritarian governments in poorer countries to push through unpopular reforms and quell the mutinies.

Corporate Globalization – or shall we call it by its name? – Imperialism – needs a press that pretends to be free. It needs courts that pretend to dispense justice. Meanwhile, the countries of the North harden their borders and stockpile weapons of mass destruction. After all they have to make sure that it's only money, goods, patents and services that are globalized. Not the free movement of people. Not a respect for human rights. Not international treaties on racial discrimination or chemical and nuclear weapons or greenhouse gas emissions or climate change, or – god forbid – justice.

So this – all this – is "empire." This loyal confederation, this obscene accumulation of power, this greatly increased distance between those who make the decisions and those who have to suffer them. Our fight, our goal, our vision of Another World must be to eliminate that distance. So how do we resist "Empire"? The good news is that we're not doing too badly. There have been major victories. Here in Latin America you have had so many – in Bolivia you have Cochabamba. In Peru, there was the uprising in Arequipa. In Venezuela, President Hugo Chavez is holding on, despite the US government's best efforts. And the world's gaze is on the people of Argentina, who are trying to refashion a country from the ashes of the havoc wrought by the IMF. In India the movement against corporate globalization is gathering momentum and is poised to become the only real political force to counter religious fascism.

As for corporate globalization's glittering ambassadors – Enron, Bechtel, WorldCom, Arthur Anderson – where were they last year, and where are they now? And of course here in Brazil we must ask ...who was the president last year, and who is it now? Still ... many of us have dark moments of hopelessness and despair. We know that under the spreading canopy of the War Against Terrorism, the men in suits are hard at work. While bombs rain down on us, and cruise missiles skid across the skies, we know that contracts are being signed, patents are being registered, oil pipelines are being laid, natural resources are being plundered, water is being privatized, and George Bush is planning to go to war against Iraq.

If we look at this conflict as a straightforward eye-ball to eye-ball confrontation between "Empire" and those of us who are resisting it, it might seem that we are losing. But there is another way of looking at it. We, all of us gathered here, have, each in our own way, laid siege to "Empire." We may not have stopped it in its tracks – yet – but we have stripped it down. We have made it drop its mask. We have forced it into the open. It now stands before us on the world's stage in all its brutish, iniquitous nakedness. Empire may well go to war, but it's out in the open now – too ugly to behold its own reflection. Too ugly even to rally its own people. It won't be long before the majority of American people become our allies. Only a few days ago in Washington, a quarter of a million people marched against the war on Iraq. Each month, the protest is gathering momentum.

Before September 11th 2001, America had a secret history. Secret especially from its own people. But now America's secrets are history, and its history is public knowledge. It's street talk. Today, we know that every argument that is being used to escalate the war against Iraq is a lie – the most ludicrous of them being the US Government's deep commitment to bring democracy to Iraq. Killing people to save them from dictatorship or ideological corruption is, of course, an old US government sport. Here in Latin America you know that better than most. Nobody doubts that Saddam Hussein is a ruthless dictator, a murderer (whose worst excesses were supported by the governments of the United States and Great Britain). There's no doubt that Iraqis would be better off without him. But, then, the whole world would be better off without a certain Mr. Bush. In fact, he is far more dangerous than Saddam Hussein. So, should we bomb Bush out of the White House?

It's more than clear that Bush is determined to go to war against Iraq, regardless of the facts – and regardless of international public opinion. In its recruitment drive for allies, The United States is prepared to invent facts. The charade with weapons inspectors is the US government's offensive, insulting concession to some twisted form of international etiquette. It's like leaving the "doggie door" open for last minute "allies" or maybe the United Nations to crawl through. But for all intents and purposes, the New War against Iraq has begun.

What can we do? We can hone our memory, we can learn from our history. We can continue to build public opinion until it becomes a deafening roar. We can turn the war on Iraq into a fishbowl of the US government's excesses. We can expose George Bush and Tony Blair – and their allies – for the cowardly baby killers, water poisoners, and pusillanimous long-distance bombers that they are. We can re-invent civil disobedience in a million different ways. In other words, we can come up with a million ways of becoming a collective pain in the ass. When George Bush says "you're either with us, or you are with the terrorists" we can say "No thank you." We can let him know that the people of the world do not need to choose between a Malevolent Mickey Mouse and the Mad Mullahs.

Our strategy should be not only to confront empire, but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen. To shame it. To mock it. With our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness – and our ability to tell our own stories. Stories that are different from the ones we're being brainwashed to believe. The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability. Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing. – Arundhati Roy, Porto Alegre, Brazil, January 27, 2003

Appendix 3: Zulu Translation of Arundhati Roy's 'Confronting Empire' by Nontobeko Hlela

Ukubhekana ngeziqu zamehlo noMbuso, ibhalwe ngu –Arundhati Roy yahunyushelwa esiZulwini ngu – Nontobeko Hlela.

Ngicelwe ukuba ngikhulume ngokuthi “kungaliwa kanjani noMbuso?” Lo ngumbuzo onzulu, anginazo izimpendulo ezilula.

Uma sikhuluma ngokuphikisana no “Mbuso”, kudingeka sizibuze ukuthi “uMbuso” uchazani? Ngabe uchaza uhulumeni waseMelika (kanye namazwe ezwa yona ase-Europe), iBhange lomhlaba (World Bank), inhlango yezizwe ebheka izindaba zezimali (International Monetary Fund), noma inhlango yomhlaba ephathelene nezokuhweba na (World Trade Organization)? Noma mhlawumbe yinto engaphezulu kwalokhu.

Emazweni amaningi lombuso usuzale imixhantela eminye, eminye yalemixhantela evela emaceleni iyingozi – njengoku phakamisa ubuzwe (*nationalism*), ukucwasana ngokwenkolo, ukuphatha ngengcindezelo nobuhluku, kanye nobuphekula zikhuni. Zonke lezi zinto zihambisana ncamashi kanye nezinhlalo ze-*corporate globalization*.

Ake ngichaze ukuthi ngiqondeni. I-Ndiya – le eyaziwa njengezwe elinokuphatha kwabantu okukhulu– njengoba sikhuluma nje, leli izwe elihamba phambili kwizinhloso ze-*corporate globalisation*. “Imakethe” yalelizwe inabantu abayibhiliyoni, livulwa ngenkani yi-WTO. I-*corporatisation* ne *privatisation* sekumukeliwe nguhulumeni kanye nalabo abakhethekileyo baseNdiya.

Akwenzekanga ngephutha ukuthi uMongameli wezwe, uNgqongqoshe wezasekhaya, uNgqongqoshe we-Disinvestment- kube ngamadoda asayinda isivumelwano nenkampani yakwa Enron eNdiya, yiwo futhi adayisa I-*infrastructure* ezinkampanini ezinkulu, ezisebenza emazweni amaningi ahlukene, yilamadoda afuna ukuthi amanzi abe sezandleni zabantu abazimele hhayi zahulumeni, ugesi, u-oyela’ amalahlle, insimbi, ezempilo, imfundo, kanye nezokuxhumana nazo bafuna ukuzidayisa – lamadoda wonke angamalunga noma abancomi be- RSS. I-RSS inhlango engathandi izinguquko, eqhayisa ubuzwe bobuHindu, engafihli futhi ukuthi iyamncoma uHitler gendlela ayenza ngayo izinto eJalimane.

Ukudicilelwa phansi kwentando yeningi kuqhubeka ngesivivini nangekhono eliseqopheleni eliphezulu. Ngenkathi isu le-*corporate globalisation* liklebhula izimpilo zabantu eNdiya, ukudayisa kwezinto ebeziphethwe nguhulumeni ziye ezandleni zabantu abazimele kwenzeka kakhulu kakhulu, “izinguquko” endleleni yokusebenza zixosha abantu emhlabeni wabo zidale nokuthi abantu balahlekelwe umsebenzi. Amakhulu ngamakhulu babalimi abantulile bancama ukuthi bazibulale ngokuthi baphuze ushevu wokubulala izilokozane. Imibiko yabantu abafayo kungenxa yendlala eyafika ezweni lonke.

Ngenkathi laba abacebile nabakhethekileyo bethatha uhambo lwabo ngokomqondo olungathekiswa ngasokhakhayini lomhlaba, laba abadingisiwe bashona phansi bakhalakathele ebulelesini nasekuphithizeleni. Lesi simo sashaqisa, futhi baphelelwa ithemba ezweni lonke, uma sibheka umlando uyasitshela ukuthi izimo ezinjalo ziyindawo evundile yokuzala ingcindezelo.

Izingalo zikaHulumeni waseNdiya sezikuyolile ukusebenza njengodlaka. Ngenkathi enye ingalo imagange idayisa isigaxa sezwe, enye iphambukisa ukunganakwa. Umkhulungwane, ukuhohoza okukhuluma ngobuzwe bohlanga lamaHindu nokucindezewla ngokwenkolo. Uhulumeni wenza ucwaningo ngezikhali ze-nuzi, ushicilela kabusha izincwadi zemilando, ushisa amasonto, ubuye udicilele phansi izindawo zamaSulumane zokukhonza. Ukuhlolisisa izinto ezibhalwayo nezivezwa komabonakude ukuze ziveze lokho uhulumeni akufunayo, ukubhekwa nokulandelwa kwabantu, ukumiswa kwenkululeko yabantu, kanye namalungelo abantu, konke lokhu kudala ukuthi incazelo yokuthi ubani oyisakhumazi saseNdiya nokuthi ubani ongesona, ikakhulu nxa kuphathelene nalabo abayingcosana uma kufikwa ezindabeni zenkolo, kungabe kusaqondakala kahle.

NgoMbaso odlule, esifundazweni saseGujarat, izinkulungwane ezimbili zamaSulumane zabulawa ngonya, lesi senzo sasikhuthazwe nguhulumeni. Abesifazane bamaSulumane babenonjoliwe. Babe khunyulwa, bese bahlukunyezwe ngokocansi idlanzana lamadoda, ngaphambi kokuthi bakhongelwe ngomlilo bephila. Abanye babephanga, bashise ngamabhomu izitolo, imizi, izindawo zokukhiqiza izimpahla ezilukiweyo, kanye nezindlu zokusonta zamaSulumane.

Angaphezulu kwekhulu nezinkulungwane ezingamashumi amahlanu (150 000) amaSulumane asexoshiwe emizini yawo. Ingqikithi yesimo somnotho samaSulumane sesicekelwe pahansi.

Ngenkathi isifundazwe saseGujarat singqongqa, uMongameli waseNdiya waye kwiMTV (isiteshi sikamabonakude esidlala umculo) eyophakamisa egqogqozelela izinkondlo ayezibhalile. NgoNhlolanja walonyaka, uhulumeni lo owawugqogqozela ukubulawa kwabantu uphinde wavotelwa ukuthi uphinde uphathe, wawina kahle nje futhi. Akekho umuntu opanishiwe ngenxa yalesi senzo sokubulala esenzeka. UNarendra Modi, okunguye owaye ngumklami walezi zehlakalo, nolilungu eliziqhenyayo le-RSS, useqale umkhawulo wesibili njengoNdunankulu wesifundazwe saseGurajat. Uma ubenguSaddam Hussein, noma ikanjani yilobo nalobo budlova abenzile bebuzovezwa phambi kweCNN (isiteshi sikamabonakude saseMelika sezindaba esisakaza emhlabeni wonke imini nobusuku). Kodwa-ke ngoba akayena uSaddam – kanti futhi “imakethe” yaseNdiya ivulekile kubatshali zimali bomhlaba wonke – ukubulala kwakhe uModi akuyona neze into embangela amahloni noma emphoxayo emphakathini.

Endiya, kunamaSulumane angaphezu kwekhulu lesigidi (100 000 000). Kune bhomu elingaqhuma noma inini kuleliya lizwe.

Konke lokhu kuyaveza ukuthi kuyimpicabadala ukuthi ukuhweba ngokukhululeka kuwisa izithiyo zobuzwe. Ukuhweba okukhululekile akusabisi neze ukuzibusa kwamazwe, okukwenzayo ukubukela phansi amandla entando yeningi.

Ngenkathi ukungalingani phakathi kwabacebile nabampofu kukhula, ukulwela ukukwazi ukuthola amandla kubanzulu. Ukukwazi ukudlulisa izivumelwano zabo ezinongiwe, ukukwazi uku-*corporatize* izilimo esizitshalayo, amanzi esiwaphuzayo, umoya esiwuphefumulayo, kanye namaphupho esiwaphuphayo, *I-corporate globalization* idinga inhlangano yesivumelwano yomhlaba ethembekile, yohulumeni abonakele, abanengcindezelo emazweni antulile ukuze ikwazi ukuthi kuphumelele ukuthi izinguquko abantu abangazifuni zenzeke nokuthi ithulise abazama ukuhlubuka nokuvukela umbuso.

I-corporate globalization – noma kumele siyibize ngegama layo langempela? – *I-imperialism* – idinga abantu abathutha izindaba abazokwenza sengathi basakaza ngenkululeko. Izingantolo ezishaya sengathi zifika ezinqumweni ngokomthetho.

Ngenkathi kwenzeka lokhu, amazwe aseNyakatho ayaqinisa, avala imingcele yawo ukuze kungangenwa noma ikanjani emingceleni yawo., abuye futhi athenge ngamandla izikhali ezinokufa okukhulu. Kadeni kumelwe baqinisekise ukuthi yimali nje kuphela, izimpahla, nokusebenza okuglobalazwayo. Hhayi ukuhamba ngenkululeko kwabantu. Hhayi ukuhlonipha amalungelo abantu. Hhayi izivumelwano zomhlaba eziphathelene nokucwasa ngebala noma izikhali zamakhemikhali neze-nuzi, noma izinto ezibulala ubunjalo bomhlaba ngokungcolisa ngezintuthu zezimoto nezamafekhtri okwandulela ekushintsheni kwezulu.

Konke lokhu, singakubiza ngo-“mbuso”. Le nhlango ethembekile, lokhu kunqwamelisana kokufuna ukuthola amandla, lesi sikhala esikhulu phakathi kwalabo abenza izinqumo nalabo okufanele baphile ngaphansi kwazo siyanda.

Impi yethu, umgomo wethu, umbono wethu ngomunye umhlaba, kufanele kube nguku vala lesi sikhala.

Ngakho-ke siwuvimbela kanjani “umbuso”?

Izindaba ezimnandi wukuthi asenzi kabi kakhulu, imizamo yethu iyabonakala. Sekuke kwaba khona ukunqoba okusemqoka. Lapha e-Latin America sekuzekwenzeka izikhathi ezimbalwa lokhu – eBolivia, kukhona uCochabamba. ePeru, kwabakhona ukuvukela umbuso e-Arequipa, eVenezuela, uMongameli uHugo Chavez usabambebele, yize iMelika isizame kabi ukumchitha.

Futhi amehlo omhlaba athe njo kubantu base Argentina, abazama ukutakula izwe labo emlotheni elifakwe kuwo yi-IMF.

ENdiya umzabalazo olwa ne-*corporate globalization* uyakhula, akukude kube yiwo kuphela ozokwazi ukumelana nengcindezelo ahimbasana nokucwasa ngokwenkolo.

Amanxusa e- ***corporate globalization*** anga ngqa phambili ezinkampani zakwa – Enron, Betchel, WorldCom, Arthur Anderson – bezikuphi nyakenye, futhi zikuphi-nje namhlanje?

Lapha eBrazil kumele sibuze ukuthi ubani obenguMongameli nyakenye, nokuthi sekungubani namhlanje?

Yize, noma abanye abaningi bethu sisafikelwe ubumnyama, sizizwa siphelelwa amandla nethemba. Siyazi ukuthi ngaphansi kompheme wempi yabavukela mbuso (War Against Terrorism) amadoda agqoke amasudi amatasatasa ayasebenza.

Ngenkathi amabhomu esinetha, nezilabi zindiza esibhakabhakeni, siyazi ukuthi amakhontilaka azobe esayindwa, ama-*patents e-register*, amapayipi a-oyela efakwa, ingcebo yemvelo iphangwa, amanzi edayiselwa izinkampani ezizimele, bese uyamangala ukuthi yini u-George Bush efuna ukuyohlasela I-Iraq.

Uma sibuka lokhu kuphikisana njengoba kubhekene ngeziqo zamehlo “noMbuso”, bese ubheka labo abethu abaphikayo bezabalaza, kungabukeka sengathi siyahlulwa.

Kodwa-ke ikhona enye indlela esingayibheka ngayo le mpikiswano. Thina sonke esilapha, sonke ngezindlela zethu, siwubambile “umbuso”.

Mhlawumbe asikakayibambi-ngqi – okwamanje – kodwa sesiyivezile ubuze bayo. Siyenze yakhipha imaskhi. Siyiphokelele ukuthi ivele obala. Manje imi phambi kweshashalazi lomhlaba elikhulu, inqunu, iveziwe ubuhluku nobubi bayo bampela.

Umbuso uingahamba uyolwa lempi yayo efuna ukuyilwa, kodwa manje isisobala – yimbi ayikwazi nokuzibuka emehlweni. Lombuso mubi ngalendlela yokuthi uyahluleka ngisho ukugcina abantu bayo bengakuyona. Ngeke kuthathe nesikhathi esingakanani ngaphambi kokuthi abantu baseMelika babe mdibimunye nathi.

Ezinsukwini ezimbalwa ezedlule e-Washington, ikota lesigidi sabantu besibhikisha siphikisana nempi yase Iraq. Inyanga nenyanga izwi lokusola, nokuphikisana liyakhula.

Ngaphambi kukaMfumfu wamhlaka 11 2001 iMelika ibinomlando ofihlekile. Ubuyi mfihlo ikakhulu kubantu bayo. Kodwa manje izimfihlo zeMelika sezingumlando, nomlando wawo usuwaziwa uwonke-wonke. Kukhulunywa ngawo ezitaladini.

Namhlanje, siyazi ukuthi yonke impikiswano ebisetshenziswa ngempi yase-Iraq, ukuthi ingamanga. Into ehlekisa kakhulu yile ethi uhulumeni waseMelika uzimisele ukuletha intando yeningi e-Iraq.

Ukubulala abantu ngoba uthi uyabasiza noma ufuna ukubakhulula kuhulumeni wengcindezelo umdlalo omdala wahulumeni waseMelika. Lapha eLtin America, niyazi kangcono leyonto kunabanye emhlabeni.

Akukho ongabazayo ukuthi uSaddam Hussein ungumphathi onesihluku esibi, umbulali (yize kunjalo izezo zakhe ezimbi kakhulu zaxhaswa nguhulumeni waseMelika nowase Ngiladi). Akungabazeki ukuthi abantu baseIraq bangabangcono kakhulu uma uSaddam engekho. Uma kunjalo kodwa umhlaba wonke ungaba ngcono kakhulu uma uMnuzane Bush “othile” enganyamalala. Empeleni, uyingozi kakhulu kunoSaddam Hussein.

Ngenxa yalokho-ke sekufanele simbambe simkhiphe ezindlini zaseMelika zahulumeni e-White House?

Kusobala ukuthi uBush uzimisele ngokulwa ne-Iraq, nanjengoba kunezinkomba eziqinisekile zokuthi akanandaba nabantu emhlabeni ukuthi bathini.

Ekuzameni kwayo ukuthola abantu abazoma ngkuyo, iMelika izimisele ngisho nokuqamba amanga.

Lo mdlalo ewudlalo iMelika ngabahloli bezikhali, le indlela yayo yokuba icanule noma, ithuke, izama ukuthola indlela okuzoba sengathi yenze yonke into esemandleni ngaphambi kokuthi ihlasele e-Iraq. Lokhu kufana nokushiya “intuba” ivuliwe ukuze kuthi lapho sekugoqwa abazibandakanya neMelika, mhlawumbe nenhlangano yezizwe imbala, bakwazi ukugaqqa ngamadolo bangene.

Uma sikhuluma iqininso, impi entsha ne-Iraq isiqalile.

Singenzani thina?

Singacijisa izingqondo zethu, sifunde emlandweni. Singaqhubeka sivuthele amalangabi kubantu nemibono yabo, kuze kugcine sekubanga inhlokomo enkulu engazibeki.

Singayiphendula lempi yase-Iraq siyiguqule ibe isitsha senhlanzi Ekhombisa ukunganeliseki kwahulumeni waseMelika.

Singabadalula o-George Bush noTony Blair – kanye nabaxhumene nabo - ukuthi bangamagwala ababulala abantwana, ukuthi bafaka ushevu emanzini abantu abaphuza kuwo, nokuthi bayizinti ezingenamgodla ezibhomba zikude.

Singakha kabusha ngezindlela ezahlukeni indlela yokungalaleli singumphakathi. Ngamanye amazwi, singaqhamuka nezindlela eziyizigidi zokuthi sibe yimbumba ezobelelela.

Nxa uGeorge Bush ethi “uma ungekho ecaleni lethu, ukulelo labavukeli mbuso” singathi kuye, “Qha, siyabonga”. Singamtshela ukuthi abantu bomhlaba akudingi ukuthi bakhethe phakathi kobubi obufanayo.

Amasu kanye namacebo okuphamba ethu, akufanele kube kuphela ilawo okulwa nombuso, kodwa kumele siwuvimbe. Siwucindezele, siwuncishe umoya. Siwuveze ukukhohlakala kwawo. Siwubhuqe ngobuciko bethu, umculo, izincwadi, ngenkani, ngenjabulo, ngobuhlakani, ngokungaphezi kanye nokukwazi ukuthi siyixoxe indaba yethu. Sixoxe izindaba ezihlukile kunalezo abafuna sizikholwe.

I-corporate revolution izobhidlika uma siqaba ukuthi sithenge lokho abakudayisayo – indlela yokwenza, ukulandisa umlando, izimpi zabo, izikhali kanye nokwenza sengathi ayikho enye indlela ngaphandle kwale abayishoyo.

Khumbulani lokhu: Thina sibaningi kunabo. Basidinga kakhulu kunalokho sibadinga bona.

Omunye umhlaba, enye indlela yokuphila, hhayi nje ukuthi ingenzeka kodwa isendleleni. Uma usuku lucwathile ngiye ngiwuzwe lomhlaba omusha ozayo uphefumula.

* U-Arundhati Roy wayeyibhalele ukukhuluma ePorto Alegre, eBrazil, ngoNhlohlolwa wa- 27 enyakeni wa-2003.