



Caracas Manifesto

Declaration of the III Trade Union Meeting of “Our America”
July 24, 2010

We are in the midst of Bicentennials throughout *Nuestra América* “Our America,” and the Caribbean. In 1804, Haiti raised the first battle cry for the emancipation of our people’s. Since then, there has been an accumulation of unstoppable social force that seeks to emancipate Our America, a social force that condensed in 1810. In time, that struggle against colonialism became a struggle against capitalism and imperialism. The dawn of the last century found us, workers, in full struggle against the capitalist regime. The political project to emancipate ourselves revolutionized and fueled the capitalist consolidation of a region fragmented by the appetites of the local dominant class. Taking from the tradition of the struggle of the original Indigenous people against the colonial invader, and from the struggles for emancipation that we commemorate through the bicentennials, the working class of our region accepts the challenge of this unfinished project for our emancipation.

Today, as yesterday, those at the bottom of society propose Liberation, and under new conditions we confront the project of the dominant class, known today as “liberalization,” which promotes the opening of national economies to the needs of the transnational corporations. Under the theme of “liberalization” they impose the worst suffering upon our people and intend to deepen this relationship of exploitation at a time of capitalism in crisis, while they try to usurp our territories and take possession of important natural resources such as: water, petroleum, gas, land, biodiversity, all as a method to subordinate the region to the needs of capitalism.

During 2009 alone, there were more than 3million new unemployed in Latin-America and the Caribbean, as part of the 50 million that form part of that category throughout the planet. The scourge of being unemployed is

accompanied by under employment, instability, precariousness and the impoverishment intermixed with an offensive by the capitalists more focused on debilitating the response of the working class and its labor movement.

In this capitalist offensive, the dominant classes intend to recover the terrain they lost as a result of the political changes that took place during this last decade, accomplishments achieved by our own means and by our own efforts. They are aware of the danger of the meaning, for every Latin-American and Caribbean nation, of the persistence for more than 50 years of the Cuban Revolution, despite the blockade and boycott of the US and its associates—namely, the dominant classes within the structures of power of each of the Caribbean and Latin American countries. They are worried about the Popular Power (Power of the People), generated by the constitutional reforms in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, as well as other experiences within the same context, those that have upheld the principle of a protagonic objective and participation of the people in the transformation of reality and in the development a transition from a capitalism built out of our territories, towards a new anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, socialist society, that retrieves the tradition of *quality life* practiced by the original people, the experiences of direct, participatory and communal democracy, capable of organizing the economic and social order without exploiters and without exploited ones.

They worry about progressive, democratic and popular movements -- organized within governments that reject the neo-liberal, hegemonic model of the 90's—that have the potential to produce more radicalized processes. The ultraconservative dominant sectors intend to recover the lost initiative of years past. The first decade of the 21st century made evident the achievements in the critique of the hegemonic policies based on a neo-liberal model, principally in South America, expressed by government coalitions, where—in some instances—the left and the popular movements, with various levels of trends and contradictions, both in breadth and depth, were able to make their voice and proposals heard.

From these processes of political change, especially from those with revolutionary roots, the rationale and the struggle for socialism made sense

again, just as it was presented in the 20's of the last century by José Carlos Mariátegui, by Che Guevara in the 60's, as well as by the Revolutionary process led in Cuba by Fidel. We would like to underline the fact that, 20 years after the disarticulation of Socialism in Eastern Europe and the dismantling, in the popular consciousness, of an anti-capitalist social order, there are now, in Latin-American and the Caribbean territory, new winds of change favorable to revolutions, under new forms and practices that reinvigorate the creativity to transform our society "in a way that these societies are not a simple carbon copy, but a heroic creation by the people."

This pre-occupation has driven the capitalists to militarize the region, as they have militarized other parts of the world, where the military bases of Colombia constitute an essential part of their project towards the region; they revitalize the aggression in the form of military coups as they demonstrated with Honduras; and they aspire to reinstall through any means, the strategy of free trade and a renewed economic, financial, technological and cultural dependency. On this path of free trade the United States and Europe compete to renew the dialogue amongst the European Union and Latin America to re-establish a Free Trade Agreement, one that we must defeat as we defeated the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). We, trade union workers, and organizations of workers and of territories, convened in Caracas for the III Trade Union Meeting of "Our America", declare our repudiation of militarization; of the bases in Colombia; of authorizing U.S. military bases in Costa Rica and in other countries; of military coups; of free trade agreements, of payments of external public debt, of privatization in general and the privatization of public service sectors in particular, and of all forms of subordination of the region and of our peoples to the interests of transnational capital, the local economic groupings and the international system of domination, at the head of which we find the G20, the G8, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

We, as workers, are fully aware that we are paying for the crisis of capitalism, just as they want us to pay for the policies of the anti-crisis, marked by bank bailouts, and the rescuing of failing businesses. The capitalists call upon the capitalist state to socialize the losses so as to make

possible the recovery of the profits affected by the crisis. The ruling elite classes utilize the crisis as a form of bribery of the most dispossessed to deepen the adjustment and restructuring of the regressive capitalist order. The crisis is an opportunity for capitalism to readjust and to deteriorate the power of the worker's and their organizations. However, despite the initiative of the bourgeoisie and the state, through this Manifesto of the III Trade Union Meeting of "Our America," we maintain that this crisis is also an opportunity for us, the exploited, for the people; to assert ourselves as conscious subjects in the struggle against the capitalist regime. It is also our opportunity to constitute ourselves as the builders of our emancipation; to overcome the defensive struggle and build an offensive with the prospect of a society without exploitation.

The current capitalist crisis is our opportunity to re-launch, under new conditions, the emancipation project that has existed for more than 200 years, and that it is part of the historical struggle of the original (indigenous) people. To make "Our America" a reality, we must reclaim the revolutionary ideas and practices of resistance groups and build autonomous projects for social and continental liberation.

Through this manifesto we convene the workers of Our America and the world to unite in the broadest struggle for our rights, against capitalism and for social emancipation. Workers unity is a necessity of our time; it is indispensable to confront the offensive of the dominant class, and it is a reassurance towards thinking of a society without exploiter or exploited. The practice and the participation of workers in decision-making processes and in the renewed experiences of "workers control," as well as struggles and actions that have been a counter weight to the regressive policies imposed on workers are an example of the crucial need of workers unity.

Within this framework, we convene all workers to deepen the struggle of resistance against all readjustment plans, and especially towards a continental campaign on December 10, International Human Rights Day as well as towards a genuinely popular plebiscite against the military bases throughout our continent.