

Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World

# World Citizens Assembly

Lille - December 2 to 10, 2001

Thematic Group

## Globalization, Solidarity, Access to Resources: New North-South Relations

The group divided into sub-groups according to language to identify action strategies around the following issues: globalization and solidarity, access to resources, South-South relations and North-South relations. Each group was in charge of identifying a problem, of proposing action strategies, and of determining with which actors these actions could be implemented.

After a long process of developing proposals, the group presented the results of its work to the plenary session and placed its proposals on the cartography. Since no facilitator was present, the group was not informed that it was supposed to identify 3 strategic axes. Nonetheless, it defined 7 broad axes:

\* Establish new democratic systems of regulation and develop the participation of civil society in the management of international organizations. Civil society should also have the power to control the activities and management of international organizations. Finally, it should take part in the decision-making process within these organizations both at the highest level (the power to propose) and when the decision is actually made. A step in this direction would be the creation of joint agencies in charge of evaluating the activities of international organizations. These agencies would subsequently have to be replaced by other organizations, operating on new bases. Mechanisms allowing the consultation and participation of civil society should be set up at all levels of governance.

\* Develop the links among the different organizations of civil society, both in the North and in the South. Exchanges of information, knowledge, and expertise between various organizations of civil society should be developed to allow people to lead common actions. One form of action could be international lobbying. In this perspective, the development of organizations of civil society in the South should be supported. The importance of organizations in the South in the production of knowledge and expertise should be recognized.

\* Establish mechanisms guaranteeing that justice will prevail at all levels and in all sectors of society. International organizations should demand economic and social justice. Equal access to financial and economic resources should be ensured. Subsidies to farmers should be prohibited, so as not to penalize small-scale producers and fishermen, in particular in the South. On the other hand, fair trade should be developed both regionally and internationally.

From a penal point of view, international legal mechanisms should be reinforced. The discretionary powers of the UN should be extended, but it should be compelled to conform strictly to its founding principles, whatever parties are involved in any given conflict.

International organizations should show particular concern for the situation of women and children.

\* Guarantee that natural resources are properly managed. It is indeed crucial to insist on the necessity of an equal access of all to natural resources, but this is not sufficient: the problem of marketing these resources and

processing them should also be taken into account. In this perspective, national and regional mechanisms should be developed to plan the allocation and use of these resources. Natural resources are the common wealth and world heritage of humanity: they cannot be considered as commodities. Moratoriums against the production and marketing of GMOs and against the privatization of living organisms should swiftly be adopted.

\* Develop the pooling of useful expertise and knowledge. These assets must be considered as common goods. In order to allow knowledge and information to become quickly available to all citizens, adequate and transparent management mechanisms of data flows must be developed. Access to expertise, know-how and technologies must be guaranteed for all.

\* North-South relations must be reconsidered and redesigned. It is particularly crucial to develop South-South cooperation and exchanges as well as triangular relations between one Northern country and two Southern countries.

\* Socially responsible media must be associated to the process of change and must participate in the building of collective awareness.