

Report: Regional Meeting of the World March of Women of the Americas

October 10 and 11, 2021

From the Americas also marches to transform

The Regional Meeting of the World March of Women of the Americas took place on September 10 and 11, 2021, on a virtual platform, with the presence of 41 delegates, 47 observers and 6 communicators from 13 national/territorial coordinations: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, Quebec, Macronorth Region of Peru, Venezuela.

The program included the following moments: on the first day, an opening with mystique and presentation of the participants; political discussion on the challenges of the context; discussion in groups on our regional reality and on the accumulated and challenges. On the second day, there was a group discussion on the organization of the WMW at regional and international levels; plenary debate on our proposals for organization and action; and the election of our representatives to the International Committee.

The Communications WG produced two notes each day, which were translated and published on social networks, on the WMW Americas Newsletter email list and on national websites. The hashtags #LasAméricasSeEncuentran, #HaciaElEncuentroInternacional and #MMMLasAméricas were used.

The representatives of the last mandate evaluated the work of the last years, which had a permanent organization, with periodic meetings that have given more unity to the WMW in the region. There are the challenges of structuring a regional formation process and incorporating more of the Caribbean region, and with that articulate a dynamic to overcome the limits of language differences. The representatives of the Americas in the International Committee elected for the new mandate are Nalu Faria (Brazil), Tita Godinez (Guatemala) with the substitution of Alejandra Laprea (Venezuela).

In order to contribute to the regional discussions, as well as to the international document on the context, the WMW Americas produced a previous document, which synthesizes the regional view on the situation, the challenges to face, from feminism, the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis that affects women's lives, with its austerity policies, increase of imperialist blockades and massive migrations. But the document also recognizes that this situation has been accompanied by public demonstrations, social outbursts, popular changes, processes in which feminist organization has played a fundamental role.

In the WMW of the Americas, a process of organization has been set in motion, beginning with monthly meetings that planned and strengthened participation in international actions and regional activities, virtual workshops with themes such as the context of pandemics, sustainability of life and the dynamics and challenges of the movements. The newsletter of the Americas has been consolidated since 2018 with periodicity and participation of colleagues in the writing and translation, and is a tool of our communication. The importance of

participation in collective spaces, such as the Capire website and the International Feminist School "Berta Cáceres" was also recognized.

Day 1: Identifying regional challenges to strengthen our organization

Women live today under war, militarism, displacement and the marks of migration, the impacts of transnational corporations, violence and trafficking. Some of the issues raised by the participants as challenges, which must be fought with feminist organization, were: the criminalization of human rights and women's rights fighters; the increase of anti-rights, anti-democratic and fundamentalist groups; the deepening of the crisis of care and the overload of women's work; the offensive of transnational corporations and capital on women's lives. Faced with the reality that women's resistance is made invisible by the media, the importance of an anti-hegemonic strategy for communications from the movements was pointed out.

In the afternoon, the women divided into groups to talk about how we see the accumulations of our political proposals, our challenges, strengths and weaknesses. With these questions, the women discussed how to fight for justice in the face of the anti-rights agenda, understanding that anti-patriarchal, anti-capitalist and anti-racist struggles are linked to the struggle in defense of nature and territories.

Some strengths highlighted were our diversity of organizational forms and our memory (for which our communications and Capire in particular have an important role of exposition and synthesis), as well as our popular feminist formation, of which we must highlight the positive results of our participation in the International Feminist School "Berta Cáceres".

The women also highlighted our construction as a political subject and the dimension of internationalism. Our internationalist feminism is globally recognized and is a strength that manages to aggregate our diverse forms of organization in the territories for an articulated and emancipatory struggle. Our strength is to build concrete alternatives, in solidarity and on a daily basis, giving visibility to the struggle for land, food sovereignty and women's work, recognizing our collective knowledge. The defense of territories and peasant women is strong in all the regions where we promote our organization. We are strong in highlighting our feminist vision of the economy, making visible the contribution of women to the sustainability of life and the fight against violence against women, especially black and indigenous women.

We have accumulated a long history of struggles, and we need to advance our regional and global alliances and articulations, strengthening the connection between anti-imperialism, internationalism and local struggle, and putting our agendas more strongly together with our allies. We have the challenge of expanding our movement in all areas to consolidate the WMW as a political platform for the articulation of struggles; and to advance in the integration of women from different regions, in the rural-urban relationship and in the renewal of leadership of our movement, as well as in the relationship with the struggles of women trade unionists. We compete with more institutional sectors and with more resources, and this is at the same time a fragility and a strength, since we do not allow ourselves to be led by co-optations, but we need to look for our more autonomous forms of financing. The difficulty of organizing the movement in times of pandemic and fragmentation was highlighted, and the need to focus on strategic bets, instead of locking ourselves into reactive paths. This difficulty can only be

overcome with creativity, diversity, solidarity and a political proposal that puts the sustainability of life at the center, with a concrete agenda.

Second day: proposals and political agenda

The debates of the morning day focused on how to strengthen our movement in the region and internationally. Broadening political connections with emancipatory movements and appropriating more of the agendas and political visions among the organizations that participate in the WMW and our political field was one of the proposals made by the participants. One of the specific mentions was to strengthen the presence of feminists in the International Peoples Assembly (IPA) to expand and position our anti-imperialist struggle, as well as the agendas of the struggles against transnational corporations and climate change.

It was proposed to map and plan the expansion of National Coordinations around the world, seeking to initiate work in countries where there were never WMWs, as well as to resume links in countries where they softened. Specifically in the Americas, it was analyzed that a region where it is necessary to make such a process with a closer look is the Caribbean.

The dates of unified and international action were evaluated as positive, such as the 24h of Feminist Solidarity, which put us in motion, strengthen us in the construction of guidelines in each place and in our connection with the global struggle. But it has also raised the need to strengthen the identity of the WMW as a movement to build an agenda of struggles and actions of its own, giving it a permanent dynamic of organization beyond participation in international actions or calls for solidarity.

We also pointed out the need to understand the integrality of the struggles, since the dimensions of the oppressions we live are intertwined, such as racism, LGBTphobia and the polarization between urban and rural realities. It was proposed to build bridges and alliances with the sex and gender diverse community, unveiling and denouncing all discrimination, as well as to continue the dialogue with feminists from the provinces, the countryside, the city, black and indigenous women, and to energize the work from the understanding and articulation of diversities.

The participants also pointed out the importance of identifying thematic axes that can help us to articulate and connect with international fields of action, taking into account that this could allow us to assume common agendas and make the WMW more visible. We must continue the common struggle against the impunity of transnational corporations and their profit motive, as well as the denunciation of the totalitarianism of neoliberalism that subjects our populations to its reproduction. Regarding the new IC and IS, it was mentioned the need for a new coordination with organizational capacity, to strengthen our alliances and agendas of struggle, and strengthen strategic regions that we want to return to actively participate in the WMW.

Another challenge is to maintain training as a priority, with technological support, digital security and attention to the sub-regional realities and the matrices of each sub-region, recognizing their contributions and traditions. Promoting affective spaces of accompaniment as part of our resistance, where mysticism and sisterhood embrace our struggles accompanied by the celebration of life and the care of our bodies was another of the demands to promote the identity of the WMW supported by practices of solidarity, cooperation and sustainability of life.

In the afternoon, it was decided to organize a plan to expand and root the WMW in the countries and territories, at international and regional level. In the Americas, deepening our action in the Caribbean is a special part of this process. The participants proposed to strengthen the proposals towards new constituents and the formation of plurinational states, necessary steps for the struggle for democracy and respect for indigenous peoples. Anti-racism and the peasant struggle are fundamental marks of our struggle, as are the experiences of agroecology and food sovereignty, of solidarity and defense of life in the territories and communities and in mobilizations. These practices must be made visible and supported, together with a vision of sustainability of life from the feminist economy, so that the WMW can put into practice its motto "we resist to live, we march to transform". To carry out this agenda, we evaluate the need to articulate organization, training and communication, which underlines the need to continue to further improve external and internal communications, including collectively contributing to Capire and our regional and international communicative instances. Ensuring access to and the best possible use of technologies must also be a strategy of our articulation.

It was also agreed to follow up on the Feminist Organizing School, in its editions in the Americas region and especially in the Caribbean. Our diversity of participation, experiences and spaces of struggle make us stronger, as it unites us on an equal footing with young, adult and older women in the formation of our movement and radical and creative political practices.

(translated with <https://www.deepl.com/>)