



01 - January

THE MARCH IN ACTION

THE WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN'S THIRD INTERNATIONAL
ACTION NEWSLETTER

Editorial

Through this newsletter, we are inaugurating the year of our Third International Action. Together with the 2010 website, it will be our main tool of communication and exchange of information with regard to all that we are organising as the WMW in our countries and regions in 2010.

It's important that we involve ourselves actively in the construction of this newsletter, by sending updated WMW action news on a regular basis from our countries to International Committee members and International Secretariat. It's also fundamental that we make an effort to share and distribute it to all those who are interested in the themes of our struggles, WMW sympathisers, those who don't have access to the internet (by printing it out), those who speak languages other than English, French and Spanish (by translating it), those who listen to the radio and access other media (by transforming it in audio format).

Our proposal is to publish this newsletter every two months in our three working languages (Spanish, French and English), but if we receive a lot of information, we can publish it with greater frequency. We look forward to receiving your contributions! Please send your comments and suggestions to communication@marchemondiale.org or info@marchemondiale.org

In feminist solidarity,

International Secretariat

INTERNATIONAL

The 100th anniversary of the declaration of International Women's Day¹

The history of the date of International Women's Day, today commemorated on the 8th March, is fairly confused... Traditionally, we link the 8th March to a strike and / or fire that are supposed to have taken place in a women's textile factory in New York, either in 1857 or in 1908², but when we research deeper into its origins, as Renée Coté has done in her book, "International Women's Day or the real facts and the real dates of the mysterious origins of the 8th March...", we discover the history of a whole period of feminist struggle for economic and workers rights, as well as the right to vote, in the USA and elsewhere...

It was in 1910, at the 2nd International Socialist Women's Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, that Clara Zetkin - German socialist and feminist -

¹Article based on :

- Cote, Renée (1984) *La Journée internationale des femmes ou les vrais dates des mystérieuses origines du 8 de mars jusqu'ici embrouillés, truquées, oubliées : la clef dès énigmes. La vérité historique.* Montreal: Les éditions du remue ménage.

proposed the creation of an annual International Women's Day, following the example of North American socialist women who, since 1908, had been organising a national annual Woman's Day (to demand economic and political equality for women, to denounce exploitation of women workers, to demand the right to vote, etc).

(continues)

- SOF (2000) *International Women's Day: In search of lost history.* Text available in: <http://www.marchemondiale.org/actions/2010action/origen8marzo/en>

² The origins of International Women's Day are perhaps erroneously linked to a strike due to the fact that, in 1910, the US Woman's Day was preceded by a 3-month long textile workers (shirtwaist makers) strike in which 80% of the strikers were women. The alleged connection with a fire in the same city is perhaps due to the fire that is thought to have taken place on the 26th March 1911, in which 147 women textile workers died (records to be confirmed).

INTERNATIONAL

(continuation)

From 1911 onwards, Women's Day became international, although it was celebrated on different dates in different countries in different years... The main reference to the 8th March is the general strike triggered by Russian women workers against hunger, war and czarism on the 23rd February 1917 according to the Russian calendar (the 8th March in the Gregorian calendar). On this day, and defying party orders, women textile workers left their factories, went out into the streets, and in doing so precipitated the beginning of revolutionary actions that brought

victory to the Russian revolution (as recognised by Kollontai, Trotsky, and others).

1921 documents of the Communist Women's International Conference in which a Bulgarian participant proposed the 8th March as the official date for International Woman's Day, in remembrance of the Russian women's initiative. And thus, from 1922 onwards, International Woman's Day was officially celebrated on the 8th March, continuing the cycle of women's active and persistent participation in the struggle for social transformation.

The Walkers: Summary of the project sent on the 25th November 2009

The *Walkers* are dressed marionettes that illustrate the diversity of women, their histories, their experiences, their living conditions, their demands, their dreams. The project aims to generate and to represent the links and solidarity among the National Coordinating Bodies and regions of the world. It symbolises that we are together on the march again, meeting and re-meeting as grass-roots women.

Each National Coordinating Body (NCB) that would like to participate in the project is responsible for



creating one or various *Walker(s)*. The idea is to create at least one piece of clothing that will be used by a marionette, but the NCBs can decide to create as many as five items of clothing for five *Walkers* – each representing a WMW world region. It is proposed that these *Walkers* be created during popular education workshops with WMW grassroots activists.

The suggestion is that the *Walkers* (and, consequently, their clothing) are given the dimensions of a large woman (from 2 to 2 ½ metres tall) so that they are highly visible during the International Women's Day / 3rd International Action Launch marches and mobilisations in 2010.

After the marches / mobilisations in March, each NCB will have two options:

1. They can send the clothing of one of their *Walkers* to a designated country or territory in their region (for more information: info@marchemondiale.org).

From there, the clothing will be sent (via a delivery service or a WMW sister travelling by air) to Bukavu, South Kivu (DRC), location of the international mobilisation in October 2010.

2. They can send the clothing with a national delegate who will participate in the regional mobilisation in their region, and from there, a WMW sister (for example an IC member) will take the clothing to Bukavu.



On the 17th October 2010, the *Walkers* will appear in public for the second time, carried by the participants of the international mobilisation that will close our 3rd International Action in Bukavu, South Kivu (DRC).

Timeline	
November 2009	Project presented to the NCBs.
December 2009	Creation of the popular education workshops.
January / February 2010	Popular education workshops
March 2010	First appearance of the <i>Walkers</i> at the national level
Late March / April 2010	<i>Walkers'</i> clothes are sent to a designated central location in each continent
17 th October 2010	Second appearance of the <i>Walkers</i> in Bukavu, South Kivu

To read the complete project, please click on: <http://www.marchemondiale.org/actions/2010action/marcheuses/en>



INTERNATIONAL

Website 2010: mobilisation and diffusion

Our website dedicated exclusively to the WMW Third International Action is almost ready. The address is <http://www.mmm2010.info> (for Spanish), <http://www.wmw2010> (for English) and <http://www.mmf2010.info> (for French).

The website will be a very important tool for mobilisation, as well as for the diffusion of national actions. All mobilisation materials temporarily available on the permanent WMW website of the WMW will be made available on the 2010 site, to which

National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) will be able to add documents, photos, videos and audio recordings. The website will therefore also act as an important historical archive, as a way of registering what took place at national, regional and international levels during our 3rd International Action. The website will also include a blog tool that will facilitate direct contact between groups and NCBs between diverse countries. Instructions on how to use it will soon be sent out by the International Secretariat!

REGIONS

Asia: struggle against free trade, military bases, and trafficking of women

The WMW National Coordinating Bodies in Asia and Oceania will meet from the 12th – 14th May in Quezon City, the Philippines. This will be a time to reflect on and evaluate the mobilisations carried out in March in the countries of the region, deepen the debate around the four WMW Action Areas, and plan actions for the expansion and consolidation of the WMW in the region following the 3rd International Action. In addition to the meeting, a street demonstration is being planned to raise awareness of, and make known our demands, in relation to the struggle against trafficking of women, free trade, militarisation, and climate change as part of the regional action.

In the Americas, meeting of women against war and for peace

The meeting, being organised by the Social Movement of Women against War and for Peace, of Colombia, and the World March of Women, will be held from the 16th – 23rd August. The objective is to reflect, and take action, on the critical situation of social and armed conflict that the American people are experiencing, particularly in Colombia. The invitation to the meeting affirms: “War has worsened violence, poverty, and inequality; it is women who suffer most perversely from displacement, feminicide, and disappearances, as well as being responsible for supporting their families due to the fact that the State prioritises military spending over the provision of basic services.” In addition, the recently-announced installation of U.S. military bases in Colombia represents a threat to the entire continent, as these bases become an instrument of military intervention for political and social control of the people, placing their sovereignty at risk.

The meeting will consist of three parts; it will begin with an international humanitarian action in different

regions of the country, followed by the meeting of women in Bogotá, and closing with a public political action represented by a mobilisation and vigil for life and sovereignty.

In Europe, a march and discussion of demands at the regional level

The European WMW action will take place on the 30th June in Istanbul, Turkey, the day before the European Social Forum (1st – 4th July) – although independent of this event – with the participation of 200-300 WMW activists. Plans for the day of action include the organisation of a march, plenary discussions and workshops on the four Action Areas, with presentations of the struggles of Turkish and Kurdish women. A working group is currently preparing a proposal for WMW demands at the European regional level to be debated by the NCBs prior to Istanbul.

Africa: international mobilization closes the 2010 action

The closing mobilization will take place on October 14-17, in Bukavu, in the province of South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with the presence of an international delegation composed mainly of women from the African continent but also women from other countries in conflict around the world. At the first international planning mission, which took place in October, 2009, the format of the action was defined: two days of panel discussions on the four action areas of the WMW, one day of a food sovereignty fair, and one day of protests in the streets where women will speak out against war and for peace. Planned activities also include planting trees and the inauguration of a memorial to honor women who have been victims of violence in the DRC, particularly the women were buried alive in Mwenda territory (Kasika). The next edition of the newsletter will bring more information about the social, political, and economic situation in the DRC as a whole.



COUNTRY ACTIONS

Women on the March until we are All Free! National preparations for 2010

During our International Action in 2010, we will once more demonstrate our strength as collectively organised women with diverse experiences, political cultures and ethnic backgrounds, but with a common identity and goal: the desire to overthrow the current, unjust world order that provokes violence and poverty, and to construct the world we want based on peace, justice, equality, freedom and solidarity.

As we have explained in past newsletters (October 2009 http://www.marchemondiale.org/bulletin_liaison/2009/200903/en and July 2009

http://www.marchemondiale.org/bulletin_liaison/2009/200902/en/), we will be launching our 3rd International Action, while also celebrating the 100th year anniversary of the declaration of International Women's Day, on the 8th March 2010. Several countries are preparing themselves for mobilisations during the 8th – 18th March period, in this way bringing women's demands to the attention of the press, civil society and authorities. They include **Brazil** (as described in July); **Kenya** (as described in October); **Mali**, where sisters are preparing marches in the 5 Bamako district communes and 8 regional capitals from the 9th – 15th March (preceded by discussion workshops and the creation of instruments), culminating in a demonstration on the 18th in one of the Northern regions in conflict; **Pakistan**, where rural and urban women will travel 200km from Hyderabad to Karachi in decorated buses and tractors, passing from one village to the next organising popular education and cultural activities; and **Sri Lanka** (described in October).

National and local demonstrations and / or other activities are also being planned on, or close to, the 8th

March to launch our International Action in the following countries around the world: **Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, the Basque Country, Belgium, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Canada, Chile, England, El Salvador, France, Galicia, Greece, Guatemala, India, Italia, Japan, Kurdish Territory, Macedonia, México, Mozambique, Nepal, New Caledonia, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Quebec** (sisters from Quebec will also be marching from the 12th – 17th October, as described in the July newsletter), **South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Turkey, Western Sahara.**

These demonstrations and activities will take many diverse and creative forms: marches, rallies, symbolic acts, conferences, debates, the launching of campaigns, the distribution of written materials, cultural presentations (music, dance, films, etc), press conferences and releases, workshops, forums, direct actions, vigils, the use of visual symbols (flags, bracelets, posters, marionettes, bandanas, etc), meetings with authorities, theatre, batucadas (drumming groups), frontier meetings, and the presentation of demands.

And we know of yet other countries in which we believe WMW sisters are preparing mobilisations and / or other activities for the launch of our 3rd International Action, including Cuba, the Central African Republic, Denmark, Haiti, Lesotho and Martinique. Those NCBs or Participating Groups who have not yet shared their planned activities for 2010, please send them to us urgently.

The March in Action is a newsletter edited by the World March of Women International Secretariat (IS) and distributed by email.
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