

Focus-on-Trade is a regular electronic bulletin providing updates and analysis of trends in regional and world trade and finance, with an emphasis on analysis of these trends from an integrative, interdisciplinary viewpoint that is sensitive not only to economic issues, but also to ecological, political, gender and social issues. Your contributions and comments are welcome.

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IN THIS ISSUE Herbert Docena reports on US efforts to raise cash for the reconstruction of Iraq and Ben Moxham, in the first of two articles, writes about the ever-widening reach of the US military. Josu Egireun and Josep-Maria Antentas provide a close reading of the mobilisations in Cancun, and lessons learned and Raul Zibechi views sceptically calls for the revival of a 'nationalist bourgeoisie'. And, for those who have not heard the news, Walden Bello was awarded Sweden's prestigious Right Livelihood Award last month. We have included the full citation for the richly-deserved recognition. Congratulations, Walden.

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## MADRID DONORS CONFERENCE: THE “PENDING BONANZA”

By Herbert Docena\*

Despite new offers for broader participation in Iraq’s reconstruction bonanza, the United States-convened donors’ conference on Iraq ended in stifled disappointment, with only US\$13 billion raised - a far cry from the \$36 billion target. To dampen expectations further, up to two-thirds of the total pledges will take the form of loans, not grants. And, if the Afghanistan fundraising experience is any indication, many of the pledges could still end up being just more broken multi-million-dollar promises.

### ‘A VERY SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE’

Most of the contributions came from those who were already expected to give: Japan handed over \$5 billion, Spain \$300 million and Kuwait another \$300 million. As expected, France and Russia gave nothing. Germany donated only \$100 million, half of which was its share in the European Union’s contribution. The Philippines pitched in \$1 million it can hardly afford to give; Vietnam offered rice; while Sri Lanka promised tea. Arab nations, which the US was counting on to save the day, turned out to be the biggest spoilers.

To underscore just how seriously they rated the fundraising event, many governments sent low ranking bureaucrats; others just assigned their Madrid-based diplomats to drop by and say hello.

“Here we are and we’ve had a very successful conference,” US Secretary of State Colin Powell said at the end of the two-day event, trying to put on a brave front. Even before the conference could start, however, Powell was already trying to lower expectations saying, “I have never approached [the \$36 billion figure] as a goal that has to be reached,” even as he later on sternly urged the participants to give “substantially”.

But they barely gave, and certainly not substantially. In order to magnify the final figure, the organizers had to keep repeating that they had raised \$33 billion - a total which includes the US’s \$20 billion pledge, even if this amount was never really intended to be included in the Madrid tally. (1)

### EMOTIONAL BLACKMAIL

The US’s plea for money fell on many deaf ears, despite a fundraising strategy that entailed trying to convince the world that there’s no other way to rebuild Iraq but to continue the occupation. In asking countries to donate, the US wanted the world to resign itself to the fact that it will not be leaving Iraq any time soon and that the only way to help the devastated Iraqis would be to finance the occupation.

Such was the line of reasoning adopted by the “international community” in the recent 15-0 United Nations Se-

curity Council resolution that effectively legitimizes the occupation and calls on countries to lend a helping hand. Armed with this resolution, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan opened the Madrid conference urging other countries “to give and to give generously”.

“We all look forward to the earliest possible establishment of a sovereign Iraqi government, but a start to reconstruction cannot be deferred until that day,” Annan said, reinforcing the argument of the occupation forces. (2)

The US and the other governments that needed political cover to convince their taxpayers to donate money hoped to use as a bargaining weapon a kind of emotional blackmail, using the misery and the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Under this line of argument, those who call for an end to the occupation and who object to funding it are not only naive and unreasonable, but also heartless and cold-hearted people who are not genuinely concerned for the Iraqis. Those who will actively or passively support the occupation, on the other hand, are to be portrayed as helping the Iraqis out of the kindness of their hearts.

### “NEED THE MONEY SO BAD”

Aside from holding the world hostage to the plight of the Iraqis, the US was forced to give up certain concessions and dangle sweeteners in order to encourage more generosity. Three days before the conference, the US finally agreed to set up the Iraq International Reconstruction Fund (IIRF) that will be independently handled by the World Bank and the UN.

“I need the money so bad we have to move off our principled opposition to the international community being in charge,” the US’s chief administrator in Iraq L Paul Bremer was quoted as saying. (3) If it were not so desperate for cash, the US would have chosen to keep its grip on how all of the reconstruction money would be spent and to whom contracts will be given.

This exclusive control had so far allowed the US to corner most of the billion-dollar reconstruction deals because federal laws require contracts to be granted only to American corporations. US Treasury Undersecretary John Taylor recently stressed that for as long as the money comes from American taxpayers, the US will reserve the right to prevent non-US companies from securing contracts financed through bilateral aid. (4)

### THE SELLING POINT

With the creation of the IIRF, however, the US has been compelled by its liquidity problems to share the reconstruction bonanza with non-US corporations. A crack at this lucrative bonanza was then held up as the main incentive to induce donor countries to part with their cash. “It’s a way to get in on the ground floor,” one high-ranking US official confided before the conference. “That’s the selling point.” (5)

The US was willing to submit to this compromise, however, only because it was assured that such a concession would not undermine its political and military control over occupied Iraq. In fact, by encouraging more external funding to offset the US's current financial constraints, the arrangement could even allow the US to spend less on relief and more on pacification.

The US would have less money to give to its corporations, but it could at least be assured of having the resources to stay longer. After all, one dollar not spent on water treatment plants - because others will be paying for it - is one dollar more to be spent on bullets and bombs. Hence, any donation - even if coursed through an independent channel - would still indirectly finance and prolong the occupation.

What's significant with the IIRR, however, is that it signals the move from unilateral to multilateral reconstruction. With the IIRF, the bidding process for contracts will now be a free-for-all. Donors can now directly donate their taxpayers' money to Iraq and specify at the same time that only their own corporations would profit from each reconstruction deal.

As the usual practice in aid-giving goes, Japan's \$5 billion will most likely be tied up with a Japanese contractor, and Spain's \$300 million will go to its own chosen corporations. Whether it takes the form of a grant or a loan could make a lot of difference. If the donation to rebuild a bridge, for example, takes the form of a grant, then Iraq keeps the bridge, but the Japanese or Spanish company keeps the cash. But if it takes the form of a loan, as it most likely will, then Iraq keeps the bridge, but it will also still have to repay the Japanese or the Spanish government in the future, at conditions which these governments set today and without the Iraqis' consent.

## BRIGHTER FUTURE

Despite these arrangements, the organizers strove to project the conference as a gathering of the generous, not as the multilateral division of spoils that it turned out to be. "Madrid is today the symbol of our confidence in the future of Iraq," Spanish Foreign Minister Ana Palacios said. "If we can make the process succeed, Iraq should have a brighter future after its nightmare," said British Secretary for International Development Hilary Benn. (6)

But as the wheeling and dealing dragged on inside the meeting rooms, prospectors also gathered in the parallel investors' conference elsewhere in the complex to discuss their brighter future. Here, members of the 100-strong Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) delegation gave presentations on the many business opportunities awaiting them in what is considered the largest and most lucrative rebuilding spree since World War II.

The conference attracted representatives from organizations and corporations such as the US Chamber of Commerce, the Spanish Employers' Association, the gi-

ant carmaker Daimler Chrysler, the construction equipment company Caterpillar, and even the French BNP Paribas, which was forced to lobby for a seat with the Spanish government since France had no interest reserving it for them. (7)

## THE PUNISHMENT

With an apparent flair for timing, the Iraqi interim central bank governor used the occasion to announce that six foreign banks will soon be given licenses to operate in Iraq. (8) It had earlier been reported that JP Morgan Chase, which has controlling stakes in some of the world's largest corporations, such as ExxonMobil, General Electric and General Motors, would head a consortium of Western banks that will operate the new Trade Bank of Iraq. (9) In an economy with booming business opportunities but where capital is scarce and interest rates consequently high, JP Morgan and the chosen banks will secure a niche in what promises to be one of the most profitable sectors in the economy.

On the same day, just to remind the donors in time, an opinion column in the business-oriented London Financial Times hinted at where the donations could ultimately go. "If their hard-earned funds are to have the maximum benefit," wrote Kamal Shair, "donors' attention must focus on helping build an Iraq that will adopt an open, liberal economy." The millions, Shair insisted, should not just be used for financial assistance, but should "extend to encouraging complementary private investment." (10)

If there was any doubt as to what was really being negotiated in Madrid, the IGC representatives themselves made it very explicit. Asked about France, Russia and others' refusal to pledge anything, one IGC member ominously said, "The new Iraqi government would remember." These countries, IGC members were quoted as saying, would be "punished" when the time for awarding more contracts comes. (11)

## ABSURD CORRUPTION

At the end of the day, however, despite promises of a "brighter future", few wanted to "get in on the ground floor".

In part, this could be due to the real economic and political constraints of donor countries that face growing budget deficits and widespread public opposition to the war. Even if they wanted to, these governments either did not have enough money or enough political capital to sacrifice. But it could also have been a conscious and deliberate decision not to prop-up and finance what many majorities still hold to be an illegal occupation.

It certainly did not help that in the week of the conference, more explosive accusations of corruption continued to be leveled against the US and its contractors. Adding to mounting charges, Representative Henry Waxman accused US company Halliburton of importing oil to Iraq "using the Iraqis' own money" at markedly inflated

prices. A US Agency for International Development (USAID) lawyer accused his own agency of setting the size of a contract to “justify the available funding” rather than basing it on actual needs.

In addition, the US has just imposed a procurement policy which gives bidders only three days to submit their tenders - an “absurd” policy that would never be done in the US, says a procurement policy expert, and that would only benefit the big corporations who are already doing business in Iraq. (12)

## FINANCIAL BLACK HOLE

Most explosive, perhaps, is what the British relief organization Christian Aid revealed in Madrid on the morning of the conference itself. According to its report, up to \$4 billion of all the funds that have been transferred to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) after the war “has effectively disappeared into a financial black hole”. (13)

In addition to the \$1 billion left over from the UN oil for food program before the war, the CPA should have received \$1.5 billion in post-war oil revenues, as well as \$2.5 billion in seized assets from the Saddam Hussein regime. “Yet, incredibly, these billions of dollars have never been publicly accounted for,” Christian Aid said.

The agency had been chasing the CPA and the UN to account for the expenses, but was not given any answers. They quoted one senior diplomat as saying, “We have absolutely no idea how the money has been spent. I wish I knew, but we just don’t know. We have absolutely no idea.”

Dominic Nutt of Christian Aid said CPA head Bremer, who’s attended the conference along with around 100 Iraqi delegates, was very agitated by their revelations. “They were very pissed off. Now they don’t even want to answer reporters’ questions about our allegations,” Nutt said.

## THE RESISTANCE

In the end, however, Madrid failed because - in the face of a mounting resistance that’s no less determined than ever - there might be no future awaiting anyone who dares get in on the ground floor. It’s a floor that anyone who still wants to have a future would not want to enter.

Despite much upbeat talk, Lieutenant-General Ricardo Sanchez, commander of US and allied forces in Iraq, admitted last week, “The enemy has evolved: a little bit more lethal, a little bit more complex, a little bit more sophisticated.” (14) A recent report by the CPA on the security situation was described as a “sobering read”. No less than US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has directly contradicted his and President George W Bush’s more rosy public pronouncements by privately questioning the US’s progress in Iraq.

As further proof of the Iraqi resistance’s success in foiling others’ plans for their country, an international conference for giant oil corporations’ executives to meet with Iraqi oil ministry officials had been postponed indefinitely. Royal Dutch Shell still prohibits its employees from stepping on Iraqi territory. Instead of downgrading them, companies are raising their “threat assessments” because of fresh reports about plans to attack reconstruction corporations. (15)

One of Bechtel’s sites, for example, was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade recently. Bechtel employees, who had been forced to live in trailers in camps protected by barbed wire, now have to travel in armed convoy with at least one designated “shooter” in every vehicle. That or they take a military helicopter and fly. (16)

## NO BLOOD FOR PROFITS

All these attacks sent one very clear message to those attending the donors’ conference: no one must profit from the occupation. The message was well heard: a Spanish delegate to the investors’ conference said that with all the things he’s been hearing, he’s not all that excited about Iraq. After all, there’s Eastern Europe.

The reports from Iraq are certainly not the sort that will make the country very popular among businessmen who have no serious thrill issues. This insecurity ultimately explains why, as the spoils got divided in Madrid, there were few takers. With the continuing resistance, Iraq will remain - as a Washington businessman who has organized several investors’ conferences puts it - a “pending bonanza”. (17)

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## NOTES

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- (2) A Eatwell, “Donors’ conference heads for shortfall despite pleas for “generosity for Iraq”, *El Pais*, October 24, 2003.
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- (13) Christian Aid report, October 23, 2003.

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## THE US MILITARY: BRINGING HOPE "TO EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD"

By Ben Moxham\*

THE extent of US military reach is unquestionably vast but exactly how vast is deliberately hazy. According to the US Department of Defense's 2003 Base Structure Report, a detailed itinerary of US owned military installations, the United States has 702 bases in 40 countries and a further 96 bases in its territories. This figure does not reflect the recent trend of stationing troops on foreign bases where the United States has access rights but not formal ownership of facilities but it does include the large number of US troops stationed for the major military interventions of the 1990s, namely, Bosnia, Saudi Arabia (post Gulf War), and Kosovo. In the wake of September 11, the US invaded Afghanistan and now maintains facilities in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Since the invasion of Iraq, Gulf States such as Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman are housing US military. The US fear of terrorists hiding out in North Africa has seen the US military web extend to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. And to assist in the other "war" the US administration is fighting – the war on drugs – US reach in Latin America now covers half a dozen countries. This is in addition to the "traditional" US presence in many European countries, Japan and South Korea

In all, the US has a military presence in nearly 60 countries. Even then, this figure doesn't include the vast network of surveillance installations. Nor does it include the military access agreements or status of forces agreements (SOFAs) the US has signed with nearly 100 countries. These agreements define the legal status of US service personnel serving abroad. Infamously, they typically give the United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by personnel "carrying out official duty".

The number of installations is also set to grow. According to the Wall Street Journal, bases are also being considered for Azerbaijan, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia in North Africa and Senegal, Ghana, Mali and Kenya in sub-Saharan Africa. It also mentioned Singapore, Australia, Vietnam, Georgia, Romania, the Philippines and Bulgaria.

(1)

### "JUST-IN-TIME" WARFARE

The recent shifts in basing strategy were recently described by Foreign Affairs as "the most sweeping changes in the US military posture abroad in half a century." (2) Many of the major bases the administration has relied upon to police the boundaries of the Cold War, such as Germany, Turkey and South Korea, are being scaled down to make way for a network of "forward operating bases". These are foreign owned facilities, usually strategically placed airfields or ports to which the US has access rights, with military hardware on stand-by and, although sparsely staffed, can be quickly activated. Defense Department officials envisage these will eventually cover what

they have dubbed the “arc of instability” – a vast sweep of the world running from Latin America to North Africa, Central Europe, the Middle East and then to South East Asia. Beyond this would lie a ring of bare-bones “forward operating locations” or FOLs.

This new basing strategy reflects the administration’s doctrine of preemptive attack against terrorists and hostile states. It is designed to quickly counter a foe who could be anywhere. “We certainly don’t have six months to do it”, commented Maj. Gen. James Jones of US Central Command, “we may only have hours to do it.” (3) A dispersed and flexible fighting force is in contrast to the present US military juggernaut in Germany which maintains approximately 310 military facilities and 95,000 military and civilian personnel. The plan now is to rotate some of the 60,000 troops in Germany between the US and Poland, Bulgaria and Romania.

In another trend of late twentieth century restructuring, it seems that basing personnel will also be victims to the roll back of the welfare state. As a part of a leaner and meaner agenda, these new installations will give up “the paraphernalia of welfare and family support arrangements that have marked overseas basing since World War 2”. (4)

Where there isn’t a war on “terror”, the US administration is relying on the war on drugs to justify more bases. Citing problems with cocaine production in Colombia and Bolivia, the US has expanded its military presence in Latin America. With the winding down of the US military presence in Panama in 1999, operations were transferred to Puerto Rico and FOLs for the US airforce have been set up in El Salvador, Ecuador, Curacao and Aruba (islands off the coast of Venezuela).

## THE SPOILS OF WAR

The spread of US bases reflects the strategic needs and spoils of prior conflict. The establishment of one base during or in the aftermath of one war provides a basis for projecting force in that region and potentially launching the next conflict. Classic examples are the heavy stationing of US troops in Okinawa in Japan and Germany in World War 2 and Saudi Arabia after the first Gulf War. And the pattern continues. Defense department officials plan to keep the Central Asian bases established for the conflict in Afghanistan: Uzbekistan (with its Saddam-esque treatment of dissidents) (5) Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are all new US military friends. The US also plans to hold onto four bases in Iraq – although Iraqi resistance thinks otherwise. (6)

## WHERE THERE’S OIL, THERE’S BASES

With the revival of US imperialism, comes a new honesty in stating US geo-strategic objectives. The Rand Corporation, an influential conservative US think tank, argued that a major consequence for a US-led war against Iraq will be the US control and boosting of Iraqi oil output, thereby weakening the OPEC quota system and driving down the global price of oil. “OPEC could plunge into

a death spiral”, notes Rand policy analyst James Bartis. (6) Media Magnate Rupert Murdoch agreed, “The greatest thing to come out of this for the world economy...would be \$20 a barrel for oil. That’s bigger than any tax cut in any country.” (7) Perhaps it was because of this persuasive argument that all 175 of his newspaper editors were beating the drums of war? (8)

However, with continued resistance in Iraq, the sabotage of pipelines has indefinitely postponed this tax relief. Combined with awkward US-relations with the house of Saud, this has added further impetus to the US Administration’s plan to wean the US economy off Middle Eastern oil. Like flies to a picnic, all the potential alternative points of supply have attracted rumors of US bases being set up. The oil rich Gulf of Guinea in West Africa from which the US imports 1.5m barrels a day is now on Washington’s security radar. The African Oil Policy Initiative Group, a lobbying group comprising oil executives and Pentagon officials reported to congress that the region and its vast oil supplies made it “a ‘vital interest’ in US national security calculations.” (9) It suggested establishing a US military sub-command for the Gulf of Guinea and setting up bases on the islands of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe. Unless the US did more to prop up the oil industry there, commented one senior CIA official, “the oil industry ran the risk of imploding as a result of the region’s inherent instability”. (10)

Similarly, there are now two US military aircraft facilities on the Caribbean islands of Aruba and Curacao, a very short bombing run away from the coast of oil-rich, politically troubled and Washington-unfriendly Venezuela. The Caspian region of central Asia, with four percent of the world’s proven oil and gas reserves, will soon to be blessed with three permanent US military bases. US funded military are guarding the Occidental Petroleum Oil facilities in Colombia and in the wake of the war in Afghanistan, the stationing of the US military has now made it possible for US oil company UNOCAL to build a pipeline from Afghanistan to Pakistan. (12)

## AN IMPERIAL DESIGN

The new US security strategy is to stop a threat that is potentially ubiquitous - to stop terrorism’s “cancer growing in the middle of nowhere” according to Maj. Gen. Jeffrey B. Kohler. (13) It is no coincidence that this “nowhere” covers most of the Global South. Failed development at the hands of a US-led cabal of corporations and governments has turned 80% percent of the world’s population into forgotten people. And the solution? With missionary zeal, the Whitehouse’s National Security Strategy seeks to “bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world.” (14) If Iraq is any indication of what this means, the people of the world should start digging bunkers.

Those deviating from the US brand of “globalization” may have to contend with the military muscle of what the Project for a New American Century, the pet think

tank of Washington's back room boys, describes as "America's grand strategy". (15) "It is always possible to fall off this bandwagon called globalization" comments US military strategist Thomas Barnett. "And when you do, bloodshed will follow. If you are lucky, so will American troops." (16) But the US is not some benign global coast guard. With guns blazing in over 200 foreign military interventions, US history suggests that Barnett's perverse chain of logic is in the wrong order.

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The next issue of Focus on Trade will look at the other side of the story: The impact of US military bases, histories of resistance and the building of an "arc of solidarity" against US bases. For more information on Focus on the Global South's Peace and Security Campaign, check out the Jakarta Peace Consensus information on the website, [www.focusweb.org](http://www.focusweb.org). For more information see [www.ciponline.org](http://www.ciponline.org), [www.globemaster.de](http://www.globemaster.de), [www.monthlyreview.org](http://www.monthlyreview.org)

## CANCUN: THE ANATOMY OF PROTEST

by Josep Maria Antentas and Josu Egireun\*

The Mexican students and artists group Tekpati Sin Fronteras rendered homage to Lee Kyung, the Korean farmer who took his own life in protest against the WTO, by painting a wall. They wrote: In water, patience/ in the wind, illusion/ in the earth, hope/in the future, our heart.

THE 5th WTO ministerial summit presented a double challenge for the movement against neo-liberal globalization. First, to bring the summit to failure after the Seattle disaster and the Doha "success" and second, to deepen the coordination amongst social movements, especially after the establishment of the social movements network in Porto Alegre in 2003 and which would have in Cancun its first practical experience after the World Social Forum.

The situation was contradictory. The lack of consensus in the WTO before the summit was summoning the ghosts of Seattle upon the meeting in Cancun and the constitution of the Group of 21, headed by Brazil, which was challenging the US-EU domination, generated favorable conditions for the movement. However, the small number of people that made it to Cancun, due in part to its location and to the internal division of Mexican movements – expressed through the separate International Indigenous and Farmers' Forum and the People's Forum—limited the movement's potentialities. The great majority of the activists came from Mexico, but the significant presence of North American activists, mainly from NGOs and non-violent direct action groups, as well as the 180-strong delegation from South Korea, are also important to mention. The number of Europeans was very limited, almost symbolic.

From a general viewpoint, the WTO summit was taking place in the context of contradictory conjuncture. On one hand, we are witnessing an incremental crisis of capitalism and neo-liberal policies – for which time seems to be running out—and mounting social resistance. But, at the same time, the concrete victories achieved by social movements both at the national and international level are still very poor. The summit also begun with people having the sensation that Iraq could turn into a swamp for those who invaded it, though it is difficult to believe the anti-globalization movement can repeat the powerful show of forces it performed on February 15th.

The mobilizations in Cancun confirmed that there is much work to do on the relationship between the struggle against the war and campaigns against neo-liberal policies, even though the critique of neo-liberal policies has been closely linked to the logic of war and one of the key arguments against the WTO is provides an avenue to impose political, military and economic power over the rest of the world.

One of the achievements of the movement against neo-liberal globalization was to trigger the greatest ever protest against an announced war, yet translating the political potential of the opposition to the war into social mobilization against neo-liberal policies has been poor. The years of political defeat suffered by the workers movement facing neo-liberal policies, as well as the dominant policies within the established trade union confederations, still weigh heavily. But this is not all. The anti-globalization movement did not manage to propose a single and unified day of mobilization against the WTO and war around the Cancun summit, and there has been some dispersion of efforts, between the week of protests against the WTO and the 27 September mobilisations against the invasion of Iraq and Palestine. In general, there have been lots of difficulties introducing the Cancun summit into the political and activities agendas of the social movements in each country, and to get those sectors who mobilized against the war but are not part of the anti-globalization movement, to join.

In spite of all this, more than 20,000 people opposing the meeting in Cancun, plus the unyielding position of the Group 21, finally contributed to defeat the US and European goals for the summit. This is obviously a victory for the movement, a victory that will mark its future both within Mexico and abroad, and which constitutes an important injection of strength and moral legitimacy in the stand against the FTAA at the November Miami summit.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF CANCUN

There are several characteristics of the Cancun mobilisation. Most important is the irruption of indigenous and peasant communities. Second is the context in which the mobilizations were taking place and the impetus of radical, direct and diverse struggles; and third are the events that took place within the summit.

### THE INDIGENOUS AND PEASANT EXPLOSION

The mobilization in Cancun was articulated through different organizational spaces: the International Indigenous and Farmers Forum, the Peoples Forum, the International Women's Forum, the International Trade Unions Forum organized by the Mexican independent trade unions, several activities organized by NGOs and foreign organizations, the Youth Camp by students and youth coming from Mexico D.F. and Chiapas, the Indymedia Center and the International Parliamentary Forum. There were also coordination meetings for social movements, especially around the issue of war, as well as meetings of the Network of Social Movements created in Porto Alegre. Throughout the week these activities provided meeting and reflection spaces on lots of subjects, although the real dynamics of the mobilization revolved around the demonstration on the 10th September, mainly under the responsibility of the peasants and Indigenous People's movements and the protests of the 13th that were articulated mainly by independent trade unions and the students and youth caravans.

One problem was that there was a serious 'misalignment' of arrivals and departures of the main groups in Cancun, which meant that there was not one climax of the protests, but two – one on the 10th September and another on the 13th September. The farmers movements developed their activities during the first days and left Cancun on the 10th, while other Mexican groups, such as trade unions and others, arrived just before the protest of the 13th or on the day itself. Students and international delegations stayed in Cancun almost the whole week. From the 9th –13th a lot of minor initiatives (the strongest of them, on the 9th, was a march of about 1000 youth towards the fence that 'protected' the official area) held the summit at bay. Some protests took place in the building where the official summit was held or in the restricted red zone area. Those were the inside mobilizations that were complementing the outside mass mobilizations and protests. Many such protest actions were carried out by accredited NGOs at the official Convention Center while others, such as the four-hour blockade of the main street on the 12th, happened just outside of the Convention Center, with some 150 activists participating.

The most relevant organizational space was the International Indigenous and Farmers Forum. This was partly because the agreement on agriculture –which is particularly aggressive on agricultural and peasant communities—was the key to the negotiations at the WTO. But, more importantly, the indigenous and peasants movements, exemplified by Via Campesina, not only had a correct political understanding of the phenomenon, but also met a challenge that seemed impossible at the beginning: to mobilize 10,000 peasants and Indigenous Peoples to Cancun to oppose the WTO and to define, at the same time, an alternative project and seal an alliance between Indigenous Peoples and peasants movements.

This alternative project is based on the protection of food sovereignty, bio-diversity and natural resources (seeds, water and land) as peoples' heritage at the service of humanity and on the linking of current peasants struggles with the 500 years of indigenous resistance against land usurpation. This alliance is open for other social movements to join. It was through the peasants forum that the Zapatista front, the EZLN, added its voice to the mobilizations of Cancun through comandante Esther, comandante David and subcomandante Marcos. This was the main participation of Zapatism in Cancun, which was important from a symbolic and moral point of view, but less important than expected. The irruption of these 10,000 peasants from indigenous communities (humble people who travelled more than 40 hours to camp unsheltered) is an important step in the development of the movement, and is one of the distinctive features of the Cancun mobilizations.

## THE MOBILIZATIONS: A DIRECT, RADICAL AND DIVERSE STRUGGLE

The demonstration on the 10th was the first great action in Cancun. It was aimed to show the unyielding deter-

mination of the movements to derail a WTO that was already “hurt” when arriving to Cancun. About 10,000 people – the great majority of whom were peasants – marched from the Casa de la Cultura up to ‘km zero’ — the starting point of the single avenue that leads into the exclusive tourist hotels area, with a restricted entrance and a metal fence to prevent demonstrators from entering. Once at the fence, the tenacious effort of dozens of hands, initiated and lead by the Korean peasants, successfully broke a hole in the fence thus showing the determination of the people during the first great action of the summit. Events were not pushed further because that would have turned into a battle between people and police, and that was not the objective of the action. That was Vía Campesina’s understanding and they organized an orderly retreat of the demonstration.

The dramatic and determining factor of the action that day was the suicide of Lee Kyung Hae. As a peasant leader from the Korean Advanced Farmers Federation, (a moderate organization) who was honoured in 1985 as a ‘universal farmer’ by the Korean government and the FAO, Mr Lee’s death acquired a symbolic meaning. It was a death provoked by the desperation caused by the policies of the WTO, a WTO that, as some of the posters and banners showed from that moment on, “kills peasants”. His death catalyzed the mobilization and, from that moment, the different activist headquarters became bubbling springs of discussions and proposals. What to do next? How to do it? What are the goals? During the two following days several events took place in memory of brother Lee, both at km zero (re-named the Lee Camp, as it became the camping site for the Korean civil society delegation) and at the Casa de la Cultura –where the Indigenous and Peasants Movement was sheltered as well as protest actions within the summit’s Convention Center.

The death of Lee influenced heavily the organization of the march of the 13th, despite the fact that the great majority of peasants could not stay in Cancun up to that date. The way in which the movement dealt with the action on the 13th – both Vía Campesina and the students and the direct action groups—was clear. It was considered that the events at the metal fence and the death of Lee allowed the accumulation of a political capital that should not be wasted by an ambiguous or mistaken resolution about the character of the protests of the 13th. At the same time, it was clear that the demonstration on the 13th could not simply be a march with speeches at the end. As Paul Nicholson from Vía Campesina said, the effort was to make a mobilization “that would mean a qualitative leap forward in relation to the 10th, that could transmit a strong political message and that could show the restrained anger of the people at Lee’s death, but which would not turn violent in order not to loose the political capital already accumulated.”

## EFFECTIVE DIRECT ACTION

The following agreement was reached: the demonstration would arrive at the km zero where there would be the final meeting with speeches. After that, those who wanted to would march to the fence (which had been reinforced and moved 100 meters further into the hotel zone by the police after the 10th) together with the Korean delegation and attempt to pull down the fence with the help of ropes. Those not marching with the Korean delegation to the fence were asked to stay at km zero to show solidarity. It was also agreed that women would stand in the first line, carrying eggs to throw at the police and with a mission to stop anybody wanting to throw stones. They would only ask men for help if they could not handle the situation. The Black Block was on charge of security. They had agreed to the mobilization project in the preparatory meeting and expressed their determination to prevent infiltration of their ranks during the demonstration.

The demonstration gathered about 10,000 people, but with a different composition to the one on the 10th. There were fewer peasants but lots of youth and students. There was also a strong delegation of Mexican independent and democratic trade unions, especially the Electricity Workers Trade Union, as well as some representatives from the Authentic Work Front and other labor organizations.

Once the demonstration arrived at its endpoint, the action at the fence worked out perfectly. Giving in to persistent efforts, the welding of the double-metal fence was broken with three thick ropes handled by hundreds of people. After that, the homage to Lee Kyung was done on the other side of the fence, in front of a strong police chain, without any kind of provocation or problems. The symbols of the WTO and the American flag were burnt down at the site.

This action was a good expression of what a direct action is – one that integrates mass mobilization and highlights not the physical damage the action can cause, but the political effect of the action. One can say that understanding this fact, defining which was the element that made a political difference, and ensuring an organized closing of the march were the main achievements that day.

The action took place within a very particular political context, marked by the leadership and moral authority the Korean delegation and the peasants movement obtained after the death of Lee, which allowed for the creation of a community of interest among the different sectors that participated in the mobilizations on the 13th. The above facts together with the way of working of Vía Campesina and of the non-violent direct action groups, allowed the establishment of an open dialogue between all the sectors involved in the action, avoiding friction and problems amongst them. The only weak link was the lack of integration and participation of the independent Mexican trade unions in the action after the demon-

stration, which they felt did not concern them, maybe because of the lack of a previous discussion.

The participation of Mexican independent trade unions in Cancun, apart from its presence during the demonstration on the 13th, was visible in the organization of the International Trade Unions Forum with about 300 participants. There were also other trade union forums such as the “southern voices towards a real north-south solidarity” organized by the Brazil’s CUT, South Africa’s COSATU and the South Korean KCTU, plus the Global Trade Unions of the ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions). The latter had a moderate orientation and an internal logic that was different to the rest of the activities of the counter-summit.

## CHALLENGES FOR THE COORDINATION OF MOVEMENTS

Despite all the difficulties, the mobilization both in the streets and inside the Convention Center together with the resolve and determination of the Group 21 finally derailed the 5th Ministerial Summit. It does not mean the death of the WTO, but it does mean an important victory for the movement, and though difficult to predict, its effects will certainly be felt in the movement. Farmers, Indigenous Peoples and trade union organizations were expressing already on the 14th that nothing would be the same after Cancun, in a reference to the degree of dialogue and understanding they had reached, or, if you wish, to the degree to which they were split amongst each other. The FTAA summit in Miami next November will be the next test for the movement in the American continent.

But to be able to build a future of hope we need to link and coordinate our struggles, and during the last World Social Forum in Porto Alegre a Global Network of Social Movements was established. It was baptised in Cancun. What is our assessment? What lessons can be drawn from the Cancun experience?

During the first assembly of the network in Cancun on the 8th, the difficulty of translating the activity of the network into practical commitments and dynamics became evident, as well as the small numbers of international representatives that came to Cancun from the movements that are committed to the network. Both of these factors tended to weaken the practical work of coordination and articulation to be done during the summit. The need for better local-global level articulations, and the need to link and better coordinate the different local and national struggles at an international level were also pointed out as necessary goals. The activity of the network at this type of event shouldn’t be limited to meetings amongst those that happen to come, but should focus instead on building a process and a movement that is committed to the achievement of its goals in a more stable manner, both at the local and the international level.

The specific situation in Cancun, where the different Mexican movements had little contact with each other, contributed substantially to weaken the articulation and coordination of the social movements, despite the efforts of the international movements and of the Brazilian team of the secretariat of the social movements network, which tried to act as a unifying element at the different Mexican spaces and stimulated the creation of daily coordination meetings to plan the work. It is important to take note of these problems for future events, and try to find ways to strengthen and reinforce the work of the social movements network between the summits, in order to get a greater commitment and real articulation amongst the movements. At any rate, the meetings of the social movements produced a joint statement, which is in itself a positive fact.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Finally, there are three more questions in relation to the WTO that need to be reflected upon looking into the future.

The first one has to do with the dialectics between the social movements and the governments of the countries that stood against the dictates of the powerful majors in the WTO. Social movements are not indifferent to the actions and positions of those countries’ governments, and the reference to their attitude and the support to the block they formed during the summit have been a structural element of the struggle, as was clearly witnessed in Cancun. Up to now the problem has been solved satisfactorily: support to those countries, but retain a clear political independence. This means we are not supporting their agenda, which in this case was calling for more free trade but under different conditions. Nevertheless, some sectors of the movement do not have such a clear position, as became obvious at the time of the Johannesburg summit on sustainable development with the proposals tabled by Oxfam, which were rightly criticized by Vandana Shiva and Walden Bello.

Second, after having defeated the 5th Ministerial Summit, the question that arises: what now? For the major powers, the alternative to the stagnant multilateralism of the WTO are the bilateral agreements, which leave the developing and least developed countries in a very weak position. (A telling precedent is the Brady Plan which caused the collapse of the united front against foreign debt when the negotiations turned into bilateral deals.) It is thus important to strengthen the mobilizations against the bilateral free trade agreements, both inside the major powers and in the poor countries, aiming at a better coordination of struggles and resistance.

The third point is that the failure of Cancun does not mean the death of the WTO, nor that we have created the conditions to begin talking about another model of multilateral organization. This failure did not touch the Doha program (on GATS, etc.) whose deadline is in 2005, and we will have to make great efforts to derail it. Declarations such as those made by the European Commis-

sioner Pascal Lamy calling for another model of negotiations that is not so “democratic” can be taken as a warning of much more aggressive positions from the major powers in the immediate future.

The failure of the WTO is an important achievement for the movement against neo-liberal globalization. There were two sentences repeated by everyone on the 14th in Cancun: “We succeeded” and “It is a victory for humanity”. Nevertheless, it is only a step in a road in which there is still much to do, and in which we are running against the clock of neo-liberal policies. That is why we now face a double challenge: to strengthen and make the movement grow (by amplifying the crisis of neo-liberal policies and building alliances amongst social movements) in the minimum of time, and advancing swiftly in our coordination and articulation. Not on paper, but in reality. This is the only way in which the future can be turned into hope.

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## GLOBALIZATION OR NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE: AN OUTDATED DEBATE

by Raúl Zibechi\*

THE President of Argentina, Néstor Kirchner is responsible for reviving the debate about the necessity for a national bourgeoisie to make possible an alternative national project.. No, we are not in the 60s. It is worse: half a century seems to have passed in vain.

“It is crucial that national capital partakes in the process of reconstruction of the society. It is impossible to build a national project if we do not consolidate a national bourgeoisie,” said Kirchner on September 29th during a meeting with “national” bankers who signed a 150 million dollar loan to the Argentinian government to finance public infrastructure works.

Three months earlier, the President of the Industrial Union of Argentine (UIA), Alberto Alvarez Gaiani, seemed to be thinking along the same lines: “There is a need for a national bourgeoisie. A country is stronger when you have the owners of the most important companies in the country sitting around the decision making table. Nobody is going to invest a single penny in this country for a long time.” Notwithstanding that, the chairman of UIA said he had no expectations related to an economic improvement in the country. “Taking into account the very deep crisis we have passed through and the present global insertion in the business structure of Argentine, there are no possibilities of going back to an economic model such as the one we had during the 70s.” (1)

Forty years after the theoretical and political debates in Latin America about the role national bourgeoisies could play in national development and to overcome dependency, the issue reappears once again after the electoral victories of Kirchner in Argentina and Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva in Brazil. But this time the debate on national bourgeoisies rather seems to be the comedy of that past and uncompleted debate.

## AGONY WITH NO RETURN

When asked about the “Kirchner project” in Argentina, the Egyptian economist Samir Amin said he did not believe that was a realistic approach. “There no longer exists a national bourgeoisie,” he said. Capitalism as a global system, he said, is, by nature, a “polarizing system”. He criticized a simplistic vision that consists of believing that “the centers, peripheries and the different social formations participating in this global system are not only ‘unequally developed formations’ but also interdependent formations within this inequality.” Furthermore, he said the last national bourgeoisie project in Argentina was the one led by Perón, and that perhaps the only countries where a national bourgeoisie can exist nowadays are the ex-socialist countries, particularly in Russia and China. (2)

Immanuel Wallerstein echoes these thoughts: “Concerning the possibility of national development within the global capitalist economy, it is simply impossible that every country can achieve it. The process of capital accumulation demands a hierarchical system in which surplus value is distributed unequally, both geographically and amongst social classes.” (3) He concludes that historically, capitalist development has generated and demands an increasing geographic, demographic and socio-economical polarization of the world population.

At this point, it seems to be advisable to look at the past. National bourgeoisies emerged as a part of national development processes and benefactor states. This is to say: sovereignty, national identity, universal voting rights and income re-distribution. These elements were part of the integration project of the so called “dangerous classes” and was only possible thanks to a conjunctural combination of difficulties within the ‘central’ countries (as a consequence of World War II) and the potent emergence of new actors in the global and local scenarios: national liberation movements in Africa and Asia, and workers and peasant movements in Latin America. In fact, in the Latin American subcontinent the “national development” processes were in a certain way a consequence of powerful popular struggles, such as that on 17th October 1945 in Argentina and the 1952 revolution in Bolivia, among the most important.

But national bourgeoisies could not have existed without the protection of the state. Their projects were built on an alliance between industrial bourgeoisies, working classes and government institutions, and a shared interest in development by means of imports substitution. For some time such alliances worked, despite the threats posed by the expansion of the ‘central’ economies after the war. But these alliances collapsed when industrial workers pressed for their demands and resisted industrial discipline until they finally neutralized it.

In this way, workers insurgency pushed the so called “national capitalists” to build alliances with international capital, which was the way of keeping their interests untouched, shifting their investments and associating themselves with the financial sector.

**GLOBALIZATION: THE ESCAPE ROUTE FOR CAPITAL**  
We can understand the present globalization as the option made by capital to “escape their incapacity to dominate labor”. The so-called “geographical escape” of capital (synonym of globalization) is the search for more mobility to avoid the increasing insubordination of labor – a point of view supported by evaluating the crisis as “an expression of the power of labor” (4). In this respect, most leftist specialists agree. This is also the point of view that social movements are increasingly supporting. Neozapatism, for example, states that globalization has been traumatic for humanity as a whole, even for the elites in power.

“The power elites have not yet fully digested the globalization of the world, neither in terms of time or space.

The ‘other’ is no longer ‘somewhere else’ but everywhere and at every time. And for power, the ‘other’ is a threat” said subcomandante Marcos. Regarding the process we are presently living, he makes a double reading: on one hand he says that nation states are dying, giving way to the emergence of supra-national power regulating entities as the WTO (something which, in spite of slight differences, all analysts agree) and on the other hand he says that “at the time the supra-national government is being built” power “shelters itself again in a nation state that is fading”. (5)

This is where president Kirchner’s proposal of “creating” a national bourgeoisie comes to bear. It is essentially the same process that brought Kirchner, Hugo Chávez and Lula to government. Popular struggles, or, let us say it in a more elegant way, the democratization of societies (either real or perceived as the demand for democracy increases in all the fields) undermined national bourgeoisies and weakened states. Kirchner is a product of the 19th and 29th December 2001 uprisings as much as Chávez is a product of the ‘Caracazo’ in 1989 or Lula a product of a decade and a half of popular struggles. This is why there is a need to “take shelter” in the state, as indicated by the Zapatistas, which is a sphere on which the elites rely to fulfill their main goal as administrators: that is, to neutralize protests and movements.

The limitations that weigh on any proposal for a national development project do not rest where Kirchner suggests. In fact, what has undermined the peripheral nations is not the lack of a national bourgeoisie but the three elements that took us to the present crisis: the ‘alienation’ (estrangement) and ‘financialisation’ of the economy and the elites, and the increasing weakness of the state and the popular movements.

In Argentina, a recent report by the Center of Studies and Education of the Argentinian Workers Union (CTA) states that the winning economic groups in the 2001 crisis (in relation to the IMF, foreign creditors and the financial sector) were the “foreign conglomerates and the transnationalized fractions of capital linked to exports”. (6) This suggests that the substitution of Menemism is not going to be anything like Kirchner’s dreams. In Brazil, the leftist economist Cesar Benjamin has announced the end of the hypothesis of a crisis that would lead to a moratorium of payments to creditors, and says that it is no longer necessary to sign a new agreement with the IMF, given that Brazil is at a new stage in its relations with the Fund characterized by the fact that “pressures from the outside to the inside are no longer necessary.” On the contrary “the conventional conditionalities imposed by the IMF have been internalized into Brazilian laws and made concurrent with national economic policy options”. Benjamin, an advisor to the landless peasants movement MST, concludes that “the IMF’s structural adjustment program has been turned into our own business,” that is to say, “we are going to pay the costs of

IMF policy anyway, given that we have already internalized that decision.” (7)

Both analyses coincide in the following: as a consequence of the changes that took place within both societies and in the world during the last 50 years, there no longer exists a national(ist) bourgeoisie. Furthermore, one can say that if Brazil became the eighth industrial power in the world it was because they are world champions on inequality. The democratization of societies leads inevitably to economic crisis.

In the end, the key seems to rest with the social movements. Lula's government began signing agreements with member organizations to the MST, which is becoming increasingly dependent of government support. Since last June, two of the MST institutions, the Confederation of Cooperatives (CONCRAB) and the Association for Agricultural Cooperation (ANCA), have received several government grants for literacy campaigns and training courses for youth and adults. These grants that were signed with the Ministry of Education, which contributed more than one million dollars to the MST, while CONCRAB received about US\$ 600.000, only in the month of August and it is expected that more money will come. (8) In Argentina, government subsidies to the unemployed have “silenced” the social protests, as they say at the Casa Rosada (the Presidential house). This seems to be the only reason why Argentinian elites still support Kirchner.

Is the domestication of the social movements advancing rapidly or slowly? Ironically, the best organized and militant sectors tend to be the most easily neutralized or the most easily co-opted. It remains to be seen how the 44 million Brazilians that earn only one dollar a day to eat will react, or the fifty per cent of Argentinians who are presently live under the poverty line. At any rate, neither the plans that are already underway nor the sympathy and popularity of presidents Lula and Kirchner seem to be sufficient to reverse the long-term tendency towards democratization of societies or, in other words, the long-term tendency to workers' insubordination.

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#### NOTES

- (1) Clarín, May 26, 2003.
- (2) Gabriela Roffinelli and Néstor Kohan, interview with Samir Amin, “I have been and I am still a communist”, [www.rebellion.org](http://www.rebellion.org)
- (3) Immanuel Wallerstein, “After Liberalism”, *Siglo XXI, México*, 1996, page 169.
- (4) John Holloway, “Marxism, State and Capital” *Tierra del Fuego*, Buenos Aires, 1994.
- (5) Subcomandante Marcos, “The New World”, [www.revistarebeldia.org](http://www.revistarebeldia.org)
- (6) “The dismantling of the neoliberal model and the construction of a new alternative” [www.cta.org.ar](http://www.cta.org.ar)
- (7) Cesar Benjamin, “As relações do Brasil com o FMI”, [www.outrobrasil.net](http://www.outrobrasil.net)
- (8) O Estado de São Paulo, October 5, 2003.

## WALDEN BELLO RECEIVES ‘ALTERNATIVE NOBEL’

THE Right Livelihood Award, also known as the ‘Alternative Nobel Prize’ was recently awarded to Walden Bello, Executive Director of Focus on the Global South, in recognition of “playing a crucial and complementary role in developing the theoretical and practical bases for a world order that benefits all people.”

The 2003 Right Livelihood Awards go to individuals and organisations from New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea and Egypt working for disarmament, justice, partnership and environmental sustainability. The 2003 Right Livelihood Honorary Award honours New Zealand's former Prime Minister David Lange, whom the Jury recognises “for his steadfast work over many years for a world free of nuclear weapons”

Four recipients share the 2003 Right Livelihood cash award of SEK 2 million:

Walden Bello and Nicanor Perlas from the Philippines play crucial and complementary roles in developing the theoretical and practical bases for a world order that benefits all people. The Jury honours Bello and Perlas “for their outstanding efforts in educating civil society about the effects of corporate globalisation, and how alternatives to it can be implemented”.

The Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (South Korea) has since 1989 worked successfully to make Korean economic development more just, inclusive and democratic. The Jury commends “the rigour with which it has developed and disseminated its wide-ranging reform programme, based on social justice and accountability and the skill with which it is now applying the same values to promoting reconciliation with North Korea”.

SEKEM (Egypt) shows how a modern business can combine profitability and engagement in world markets with a humane and spiritual approach to people and respect for the natural environment. The Jury sees in SEKEM “a business model for the 21st century in which commercial success is integrated with and promotes the social and cultural development of society through the ‘economics of love’ “.

## CITATION FOR WALDEN BELLO Philippines (2003)

Walden Bello is one of the leading critics of the current model of economic globalisation, combining the roles of intellectual and activist. As a human rights and peace campaigner, academic, environmentalist and journalist, and through a combination of courage as a dissident, with an extraordinary breadth of published output and personal charisma, he has made a major contribution to the international case against corporate-driven globalisation.

Bello was born in Manila in the Philippines in 1945. He was studying in Princeton for a sociology Ph.D in 1972 when Ferdinand Marcos took power, and plunged into political activism, collecting his Ph.D, but not returning to the university for another 20 years. Over the next two decades, he became a key figure in the international movement to restore democracy in the Philippines, coordinating the Anti-Martial Law Coalition and establishing the Philippines Human Rights Lobby in Washington.

He was arrested repeatedly and finally jailed by the US authorities in 1978 for leading the non-violent takeover of the Philippine consulate in San Francisco. He was released a week later after a hunger strike to publicise human rights abuses in his home country.

While campaigning on human rights he saw how the World Bank and IMF loans and grants were supporting the Marcos regime in power. To expose their role, he took the risk of breaking into the World Bank headquarters in Washington, and brought out 3,000 pages of confidential documents. These provided the material for his book *Development Debacle* (1982), which became an underground bestseller in the Philippines and contributed to expanding the citizen's movement that eventually deposed Marcos in 1986.

After the fall of Marcos, Bello joined the NGO Food First in the USA, and began to expand his coverage of the Bretton Woods institutions, in particular studying the 'newly industrialised countries' of Asia. His critique of the Asian economic 'miracle', *Dragons in Distress*, was written six years before the financial collapse that swept through the region.

His recent work has been criticising the financial subjugation of developing countries and promoting alternative models of development that would make countries less dependent on foreign capital.

In 1995, he was co-founder of Focus on the Global South, of which he is now executive director. Focus seeks to build grassroots capacity to tackle wider regional issues of development and capital flows. When the Asian Financial Crisis struck two years later, Focus played a major role advocating a different way forward.

Bello argues that "what developing countries and international civil society should aim at is not to reform the WTO but, through a combination of passive and active measures, to radically reduce its power and make it simply another international institution co-existing with and being checked by other international organisations, agreements and regional groupings... It is in such a more fluid, less structured, more pluralistic world with multiple checks and balances that the nations and communities of the South will be able to carve out the space to develop based on their values, their rhythms, and the strategies of their choice."

At the abortive WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999, Bello played a leading role in the teach-ins around the protest

events and was later beaten up by the Seattle police. He was detained again by the Italian police and nearly run over by a police car at the 2001 G-8 summit in Genoa. He also played a key role in civil society circles in elaborating the strategy to derail the WTO Ministerial in Cancun in September 2003.

He has also played a leading role as an environmentalist, and is former chairman of the board of Greenpeace Southeast Asia. His 1998 book *A Siamese Tragedy*, documenting the environmental destruction of Thailand, became a bestseller there and won praise from former Thai Prime Minister Anand Oanyarachun. It received the Chancellor's Award for best book from the University of the Philippines in 2000.

Bello has campaigned for years for the withdrawal of US military bases in the Philippines, Okinawa and Korea, and has helped set up several regional coalitions dedicated to denuclearisation and demilitarisation, and a new kind of security plan based on meeting people's needs.

After September 11 2001, he was a leading voice from the South urging the USA not to resort to military intervention – which he believed would exacerbate the problem – but to tackle the root causes of terrorism in poverty, inequality, injustice and oppression. In March 2002, he led the peace mission to the southern Philippine island of Basilan, where the US army recently sent their special forces. He was also one of the leaders of a peace mission of Asian parliamentarians and civil society activists that visited Baghdad in March 2003 in a last-ditch effort to stop the US invasion of Iraq.

Bello's current and immediate past roles include:

National Chair Emeritus and National Chair of the party Akbayan, one of the fastest growing parties in the Philippines, which has two members in the National Assembly.

Professor of sociology and public administration at the University of the Philippines.

Executive director of Focus on the Global South.

Member and former Chair of the board of Greenpeace South East Asia.

Visiting Professor in Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Board member of Food First, the International Forum on Globalisation, and the Transnational Institute.

Bello has won praise for his writing, as the author or editor of 11 books on Asian issues and a range of articles, notably *American Lake: The nuclear peril in the Pacific* (1984) (co-authored with Peter Hayes and Lyuba Zarsky), *People and Power in the Pacific* (1992), *Dark Victory: The United States and Global Poverty* (1999), *Global Finance: Thinking on regulating speculative capital markets* (2000) and *The Future in the Balance: Essays on globalisation and resistance* (2001). He won the New California Media Award for Best International Reporting in 1998. The Belgian newspaper *Le Soir* recently

called Bello “the most respected anti-globalisation thinker in Asia”.