

The 'GlobalMay Manifesto' of the International Occupy Assembly

We are living in a world controlled by forces incapable of giving freedom and dignity to the world's population. A world where we are told "there is no alternative" to the loss of rights gained through the long, hard struggles of our ancestors, and where success is defined in opposition to the most fundamental values of humanity, such as solidarity and mutual support. Moreover, anything that does not promote competitiveness, selfishness and greed is seen as dysfunctional.

But we have not remained silent! From Tunisia to Tahrir Square, Madrid to Reykjavik, New York to Brussels, people are rising up to denounce the status quo. Our effort states "enough!", and has begun to push changes forward, worldwide.

This is why we are uniting once again to make our voices heard all over the world this 12 May.

We condemn the current distribution of economic resources whereby only a tiny minority escape poverty and insecurity, and future generations are condemned to a poisoned legacy thanks to the environmental crimes of the rich and powerful. "Democratic" political systems, where they exist, have been emptied of meaning, put to the service of those few interested in increasing the power of corporations and financial institutions.

The current crisis is not a natural accident; it was caused by the greed of those who would bring the world down, with the help of an economics that is no longer about management of the common good, but has become an ideology at the service of financial power.

We have awakened, and not just to complain! We aim to pinpoint the true causes of the crisis, and to propose alternatives.

The statement below does not speak on behalf of everyone in the global spring/ Occupy/ Take the Square movements. It is an attempt by some inside the movements to reconcile statements written and endorsed in the different assemblies around the world. The process of writing the statement was consensus-based, open to all, and regularly announced on our international communications platforms. It was a hard and long process, full of compromises; this statement is offered to people's assemblies around the world for discussions, revisions and endorsements. It is a work in progress.

We do not make demands from governments, corporations or parliament members, which some of us see as illegitimate, unaccountable or corrupt. We speak to the people of the world, both inside and outside our movements.

We want another world, and such a world is possible:

1. The economy must be put to the service of people's welfare, and to support and serve the environment, not private profit. We want a system where labour is appreciated by its social utility, not its financial or commercial profit. Therefore, we demand:

Free and universal access to health, education from primary school through higher education and housing for all human beings. We reject outright the privatisation of public services management, and the use of these essential services for private profit.

Full respect for children's rights, including free childcare for everyone.

Retirement/pension so we may have dignity at all ages. Mandatory universal sick leave and holiday pay.

Every human being should have access to an adequate income for their livelihood, so we ask for work or, alternatively, universal basic income guarantee.

Corporations should be held accountable to their actions. For example, corporate subsidies and tax cuts should be done away with if said company outsources jobs to decrease salaries, violates the environment or the rights of workers.

Apart from bread, we want roses. Everyone has the right to enjoy culture, participate in a creative and enriching leisure at the service of the progress of humankind. Therefore, we demand the progressive reduction of working hours, without reducing income.

Food sovereignty through sustainable farming should be promoted as an instrument of food security for the benefit of all. This should include an indefinite moratorium on the production and marketing of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and immediate reduction of agrochemicals use.

We demand policies that function under the understanding that our changing patterns of life should be organic/ecologic or should never be. These policies should be based on a simple rule: one should not spoil the balance of ecosystems for simple profit. Violations of this policy should be prosecuted around the world as an environmental crime, with severe sanctions for those convicted.

Policies to promote the change from fossil fuels to renewable energy, through massive investment which should help to change the production model.

We demand the creation of international environmental standards, mandatory for countries, companies, corporations, and individuals. Ecocide (wilful damage to the environment, ecosystems, biodiversity) should be internationally recognised as a crime of the greatest magnitude.

2. To achieve these objectives, we believe that the economy should be run democratically at all levels, from local to global. People must get democratic control over financial institutions, transnational corporations and their lobbies. To this end, we demand:

Control and regulation of financial speculation by abolishing tax havens, and establishing a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT). As long as they exist, the IMF, World Bank and the Basel Committee on Banking Regulation must be radically democratised. Their duty from now on should be fostering economic development based on democratic decision making. Rich governments cannot have more votes because they are rich. International institutions must be controlled by the principle that each human is equal to all other humans – African, Argentinian or American; Greek or German.

As long as they exist, radical reform and democratisation of the global trading system and the World Trade Organization must take place. Commercialisation of life and resources, as well as wage and trade dumping between countries must stop.

We want democratic control of the global commons, defined as the natural resources and economic institutions essential for a proper economic management. These commons are: water, energy, air, telecommunications and a fair and stable economic system. In all these cases, decisions must be accountable to citizens and ensure their interests, not the interests of a small minority of financial elite.

As long as social inequalities exist, taxation at all levels should maintain the principle of solidarity. Those who have more should contribute to maintain services for the collective welfare. Maximum income should be limited, and minimum income set to reduce the outrageous social divisions in our societies and its social political and economic effects.

No more money to rescue banks. As long as debt exists, following the examples of Ecuador and Iceland, we demand a social audit of the debts owed by countries. Illegitimate debt owed to financial institutions should not be paid.

An absolute end to fiscal austerity policies that only benefit a minority, and cause great suffering to the majority.

As long as banks exist, separation of commercial and financial banks, avoiding banks that are "too big to fail".

An end to the legal personhood of corporations. Companies cannot be elevated to the same level of rights as people. The public's right to protect workers, citizens and the environment should prevail over the protections of private property or investment.

3. We believe that political systems must be fully democratic. We therefore demand full democratisation of international institutions, and the elimination of the veto power of a few governments. We want a political system which really represent the variety and diversity of our societies:

All decisions affecting all mankind should be taken in democratic forums like a participatory and direct UN parliamentary assembly or a UN people's assembly, not rich clubs such as G20 or G8.

At all levels we ask for the development of a democracy that is as participatory as possible, including non representative direct democracy .

As long as they are practised, electoral systems should be as fair and representative as possible, avoiding biases that distort the principle of proportionality.

We call for the democratisation of access and management of media. These should serve to educate the public, as opposed to the creation of an artificial consensus about unjust policies.

We ask for democracy in companies and corporations. Workers, despite wage level or gender, should have real decision-making power in the companies and corporations they work in. We want to promote co-operative companies and corporations, as real democratic economic institutions.

Zero tolerance of corruption in economic policy. We must stop the excessive influence of big business in politics, which is today a major threat to true democracy.

We demand complete freedom of expression, assembly and demonstration, as well as the cessation of attempts to censor the internet.

We demand respect for privacy rights on and off the internet. Companies and the government should not engage in data mining.

We believe that military spending is politically counterproductive to a society's advance, so we demand its reduction to a minimum.

Ethnic, cultural and sexual minorities should have their civil, cultural, political and economic rights fully recognised.

Some of us believe a new Universal Declaration of Human Rights, fit for the 21st century, written in a participatory, direct and democratic way, needs to be written. As long as the current Declaration of Human Rights defines our rights, it must be enforced in relation to all – in both rich and poor countries. Implementing institutions that force compliance and penalise violators need to be established, such as a global court to prosecute social, economic and environmental crimes perpetrated by governments, corporations and individuals. At all levels, local, national, regional and global, new constitutions for political institutions need to be considered, as in Iceland or in some Latin American countries. Justice and law must work for all, otherwise justice is not justice, and law is not law.

This is a worldwide global spring. We will be there and we will fight until we win. We will not stop being people. We are not numbers. We are free women and men.

For a global spring!

For global democracy and social justice!

Take to the streets in May 2012!