

# Kathmandu Resolution, English

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March 24, 2016

## Resolution of Kathmandu

### Women will conquer the highest mountains!

Kathmandu, March 17, 2016

The **Second World Women's Conference of grassroots women** under the motto "Women are climbing the highest mountains!" took place in Kathmandu Nepal from 13<sup>th</sup> until 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2016. Two thousand women, and also some men, participated in the militant opening rally on March 13<sup>th</sup>. One thousand three hundred participants from 48 countries, including more than 200 Nepali and international volunteers, took part in the conference. Women from 61 countries were directly involved, not all of them could make it to Kathmandu. The opening program was inaugurated by Ms. Onsari Gharti Magar, the Speaker of the Parliament. Workshops followed on March 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> where 560 participants discussed ten main women's issues.



The **General Assembly** on March 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> was attended by 74 delegates from 40 countries representing 13 countries from Africa (5\*), eight countries from Asia (4\*), 13 countries from Europe (12\*), four countries from the Middle East (4\*) and two countries from Latin America (9\*).

The women **youth** – as well as many male youths as volunteers/brigadists – took on a new role and carried on responsibilities in the Second World Women Conference towards the future processes.

The **principles** of the World Women's Conference, to call on all militant women and women's organizations working at the grassroots level in all parts of the world, and the principle of working on the basis of the broadest possible democracy, have served to bring more and more grassroots women and women's organizations, fighting against patriarchal structures, against imperialism and for the emancipation of women, into the process.

This is particularly important, because the challenges facing the worldwide women's movement are growing with the intensification of the crisis of imperialism and the shifting of the burden of their crisis upon the shoulders of the working people of the world, especially the women. As a result, we see growing unemployment and worsening poverty. Women are the first to suffer wage cuts, the first to be fired. Women all over the world are still paid far lower wages than men for the same jobs.

**Asia** is in the grip of a larger crisis with imperialism tightening its control in the region. There is large-scale poverty, unemployment, displacement and increasing oppression of the working people. The states, run by the ruling class, have opened up the region's rich natural resources to the transnational corporations. They have also opened countries to imperialist militarism, resulting in a virtual war against the people and grave cases of violence against women. Moreover, feudal norms, still dominant in large sections of many Asian countries, continue to worsen the condition of women. Women remain socially inferior, bound by a thousand shackles of customs and traditions. Thousands of women from poor countries are forced to leave their country, many become migrant workers in the Gulf countries. They suffer the torture of being away from home and their human rights are violated. Migrant

domestic workers have to work like slaves, especially those in the Gulf countries. Hundreds return home in coffins every day.

In the **Middle East**, the imperialist forces continue to redesign the region according to their interests. For more than a century now, the women and their menfolk continue to suffer from the impacts of the war. Now, the Daesh is waging a systematic war against women, especially against women's movements that are integral to the democratic revolution. The Daesh aims to destroy the revolution. It is not only enslaving women, it is systematically killing women. Today the Daesh is the main threat, but the deepening of sectarian conflicts present a serious danger for the whole region.

**North Africa**, which has led the "Arab Spring" in 2011, a mass uprising for political freedom and social justice against authoritarian rule, is now in the throes of imperialist wars amid the rising fundamentalism. In the last few years, **Africa** has become the focus of imperialist plunder. The African people, who fought to free themselves from the grip of colonial rule in the last century, are again in the grip of the imperialist forces and their ruling elite lackeys, who are allowing them to plunder the resources of Africa at the expense of the people.

**Latin America**, which has shown the world that a better system is possible and has courageously risen against the power of US imperialism, is again witnessing a rise in right-wing reaction, as evident in the results of elections in Venezuela and Brazil.

In **Europe**, equality in terms of laws and improvements in the lives of women were achieved through the struggles of women. However, double exploitation and oppression have remained, if not worsened, at the same time. Wherever women stand up and fight, they have become the main link to other militant movements. Women who organize themselves and fight back become target of discrimination and are attacked by anti-communist forces. The struggle against these attacks has made the European women stronger.

The conflict imposed by imperialism on countries of West Asia and Africa has resulted in a refugee crisis. Millions of migrants, uprooted from their homes and countries by imperialist wars of aggression, are seeking refuge in Europe. But they are getting turned down by the authorities; they are barely surviving under inhuman conditions, including violence against women. Tens of thousands of refugees drowned in the Mediterranean sea. The masses of migrants who still manage to enter European countries are blamed for the problems there and the resulting crisis of the EU.

All over the world, there is a rise of fascist, fundamentalist forces. In America and Europe as well as Asia, we are witnessing the rise of right-wing reaction which primarily targets women among oppressed sections of society. On the other hand, many women have become politically active and are challenged to take on the struggle against sexism, racism and religious intolerance, to set a signal of international solidarity.

Worldwide, **women's emancipation** remains a challenge. Patriarchal structures are championed by imperialism to divide the masses and keep women subjugated. But women continue to strengthen their movements to rise up against imperialism! Private property has strengthened the handful of ruling monopolies who continue to rule and loot the whole world. The philosophy of capitalism is to treat women like private property, whose main role is to give birth to children in a monogamous marriage. While the main role of men in society, to be a part of social production for the benefit of the imperialists, is also strengthened by capitalism. A year before the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Russian Revolution, women are still denied equal opportunities, equal rights, regular jobs, equal pay for equal work, a prominent role in social production and many other rights that had been achieved by women after years of struggle. Women are still viewed as commodities; the number of trafficked women and children has ballooned in the recent years. Legalizing prostitution in many European countries, misusing women's rights, has contributed to the Mafia structures, who use the Prostitution Act as a shield for the exploitation of women. This is also reflected in the habits of troops in various UN peacekeeping missions. In almost all war zones brothels are established where young women are coerced into prostitution by force or "voluntarily".

However, despite the grip of the rule of private property in whichever form – be it feudalism, neocolonialism or

capitalism – women are rebelling against their double exploitation and oppression through patriarchal structures, patriarchal modes of thinking and imperialist reality and are rising for their liberation in different countries throughout the world.

It is in this context that the **World Women's Conference** will fulfill an important role in mobilizing militant women and women's organizations from all over the world, in practicing solidarity with women's struggles in all countries and in attempting to develop an international platform, that will become an international challenge to the domination by imperialism and patriarchal structures. And this is precisely what we have been trying to do over the past few years.

The 6-day World Women's Conference was hard work, but we have been very successful. We have already had many successes since the First World Women's Conference in 2011 in Caracas, Venezuela. More women from different countries participated in organizing the three **days of joint action and struggle** – March 8<sup>th</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup> and November 25<sup>th</sup> – worldwide and linked with one another. Women have kept each other's movements informed about important struggles, developments and debates. Women have supported each other's campaigns and struggles – against increasing violence against women, against the wars of aggression, against environmental catastrophes, against the closing of factories and workplaces, against land grabbing. The support for the struggle in Rojava/Syria was of special importance because it was not only a struggle **against** the exploitation and oppression of women, but a focal point of the worldwide struggle **for** freedom and democracy and **for** the realization of the liberation of women. We learned that a seemingly invincible enemy like Daesh can be defeated and a new society can be built. **Rojava, Kurdistan**, is a shining example of what militant women can achieve and is a model of struggle against patriarchal structures.

The World Women's Conference developed its **structures**, its coordination and cooperation processes. The World Women's Conference learned more ways to link its political activities and ensure self-reliance through fund-raising activities. It was able to give mutual support and finance all its activities independently.

The World Women's Conference encountered **problems** too. Many new tasks and activities have emerged in the different countries and/or regions, so that our international cooperation was often pushed aside spontaneously. Sometimes the coordinators of the regions/continents could not do World Women's Conference work continuously or they had to do their work alone. The need to finance the World Women's Conference work independently was still a big challenge.

We need to draw lessons from the **preparatory process** of the Second World Women's Conference, it is a firm basis for the future of the World Women's Conference. The slogan "Women are climbing the highest mountains" was realized. First, there was the devastating earthquake, then the unofficial blockade and the expansionist politics of the Indian government, that threatened the national sovereignty of Nepal. The Nepali women, in cooperation with other sections of the people, have to defend the national sovereignty and integrity of their country. The realization of the Second World Women's Conference was seriously jeopardized. Financing was also a huge challenge. But the strong Nepalese women of the United Women's Association (UWA) together with international efforts surpassed the challenges. **Let us learn from the experience of the Second World Women's Conference! Let us consolidate our successes and overcome all challenges!**

The increasing **crises of imperialism**, the environmental disasters, economic crises and increased wars of aggression will be a challenge for us. But they also challenge the masses, especially the women of the world, to take up the struggle for their future. Increasingly, we need to discuss and search for alternatives. We need to look for answers. To sharpen our strategies and our viewpoint, we have also planned theoretical discussions, seminars and/or conferences. One such discussion should focus on women's liberation. The new World Coordinators are requested to make a plan for an international theoretical women's seminar between the second and third World Women's Conference. This seminar is to be prepared by women from different countries.

We are on the way to an **international movement of the world's women** on the basis of our principles – that is,

first: We work above party lines. Second: We work and decide in a democratic way; third: We are independent, but do not separate ourselves from one another. We strengthen our own financial basis! Fourth: We learn to work and think like internationalists. Fifth: We practice a democratic culture of debate. And the **most important criterion for our work is, does it strengthen the women's movement in a sustainable way!**

- Let us resolutely develop our **structures** for worldwide, continental and regional coordination and bring it to a higher level. Let us improve our **organizational work**
- Let us develop our **communication** by using all technical means without neglecting the security aspects!
- Let us coordinate our **struggles!** In every struggle, women must feel certain that they will be supported and that their struggles are made known all over the world!
- Let us develop our own **identity and culture. We need to raise the consciousness** of men and women against patriarchal structures and modes of thinking!
- Let us promote examples of **women's self-defense** as an effective and legitimate answer for women against any kind of violence against women!
- Let us cooperate with **other social movements**, the movement of the workers, the peasants, the environmentalists, of peace activists, of activists fighting against oppression based on sexual orientation, caste, color, race and religion, with revolutionaries, in short: With all those who are struggling for liberation!
- Let us seek, discuss, find and struggle for **alternatives to this capitalist system!** There cannot be radical change in the situation of women unless a drastic change takes place in the political, economic and social system. To achieve such a goal, the movement for the liberation of women should unite with the revolutionary struggle of the people to change the existing system.
- Let us develop as a militant **movement of "world women"** that cooperates continuously, effectively and with a vision!
- Let us strengthen the **young women** in their resolve to take on responsibility as "young world women" for the future of the women's movement!

We are guided by the success of the three joint days of action and struggle and are looking forward to the next World Women's Conference in five years in 2021 in another continent!

**The women of the world will conquer the highest mountains!**

**We will build a society where women are not discriminated, exploited and oppressed.**

\* numbers of countries present at the 1st World Women's Conference 2011