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Editorial

Transnational corporations (TNCs) have irremediably strengthened their grip on the natural resources of the planet by dictating their will to the weakest States and exploiting the peoples. They bear an enormous responsibility either directly or implicitly in the deterioration of the human rights of these people through systematic violations. But they have the art to be everywhere and nowhere and could thus escape practically any democratic or legal monitoring.

For six years now, a Working Group made of experts from the Sub Commission on the promotion and protection of human rights has been established with the aim to respond to this issue and to set up a normative draft establishing the responsibilities of the TNCs in matters relating to human rights.

During the 56th session of the Sub Commission which took place from 26 July to 13th August 2004, this normative draft as well as the question of the future of the Working Group were the most discussed topics during the session. The following article is an appeal to NGOs and social movements to mobilise against the recurrent postponement of the TNCs question from the UN agenda because of the pressure coming from the private business. The study dedicated to the TNCs relates succinctly what happened during the last session of the Working Group as well as the different paths of thinking suggested by the CETIM in order to implement effectively the above mentioned normative draft.

From the extracts of the CETIM presentations, we advise you to read the Declaration on bilateral treaties because it denounces the generalisation of this kind of treaty which gives "the most favourable clause" to foreign investors who ever they are, prohibit assistance to national investors, do not care about the protection of the economy if they do not simply forbid it and lastly facilitate the transfer of the profits abroad.

You can find in the last page a presentation of the material published by CETIM as well as a subscription form.

56th Session of the Sub-Commission on Human Rights

*Pushing the UN to control the transnational corporations **

The UN human rights bodies, for several years now, have been inquiring into the responsibilities of transnational corporations for human rights violations. In Geneva, the High Commission for Human Rights has been entrusted with conducting consultations among member states, NGOs and international institutions regarding a draft of norms worked out by the experts of the Sub-Commission on Human Rights. Although the deadline for consultation was initially set for 13 August 2004, it was extended to 30 September [1] Given the pressure from the business community, the Europe – Third World Centre (CETIM) is calling upon NGOs and social movements to mobilize. The goal is getting the draft norms adopted in 2005.

The human rights violations committed by transnational corporations (TNCs) have been reported by the media for years, without however any effective measures being taken against them. The transnational character of the activities and the ability of these corporations to avoid national jurisdictions make it necessary to create an effective legal framework at the international level. Although there are already certain procedures at this level, most notably within the International Labor Office (ILO) [2] and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) [3], they are inadequate and voluntary.

In order to close this loop-hole, which has also been denounced by the UN human rights bodies [4], that a working group on transnational corporations [5] – set up within the Sub-Commission [6] – adopted last year "Draft Norms on the responsibilities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises with regard to human rights" [7].

The Product of Consensus

The draft norms acknowledge the responsibility of transnational corporations for harm caused in the area of human rights and imposes upon them general conditions for the respect of these rights. It requires, among other things, that transnational corporations "shall recognize and respect applicable norms of international law, national laws and regulations, as well as administrative practices, the rule of law, the public interest, development objectives, social, economic and cultural policies including transparency, accountability and prohibition of corruption, and authority of the countries in which the enterprises operate." (art. 10).

These draft norms, the product of consensus, comport loop-holes. It is not specific, for example, about the responsibility that corporations share with their affiliates, sub-contractors and licensees [8]. This is a serious omission in that TNCs more and more tend to out-source both costs and risks, so that, if there is a problem, their affiliates, sub-contractors and licensees are forced to bear the blame. The tanker that have run aground or broken up in the past few years on the French and Spanish coasts are edifying examples of this (see the following box).

Moreover, if the draft norms speak of enforcement mechanisms, this concept is not formalized. Yet without such mechanisms, the draft norms cannot be operational. This is why the overwhelming majority of NGOs that have participated in the drafting process are pleading for an enforcement mechanism that would allow for an effective implementation of the norms [9].

Pressure from Management

From the outset, management, through the International Organization of Employers and the International Chamber of

Commerce, opposed the drafting of the norms. Throughout the entire process, these organizations insisted that the Sub-Commission should draft voluntary guidelines and vehemently opposed any binding rules.

Currently, the business sector and certain governments area conducting a campaign against the draft norms [10]. In their view:

- the draft norms would damage investment, especially in countries of the South;
- the Global Compact, a voluntary partnership of TNCs and the UN, is largely sufficient as a tool; there is no need to opt for binding norms;
- TNCs are not concerned by human rights, which governments are supposed to enforce; the adoption of the norms would thus amount to "privatizing" (SIC) human rights.

With regard to the first point, there is no lack of examples to show that investments by TNCs are often ephemeral and do not correspond to the needs of the local population, or are harmful to the local population and the environment. The control of the activities of the TNCs is growing more and more urgent in a world where they blackmail almost all governments, threatening them with moving their plants elsewhere.

Regarding the Global Compact, launched in July 2000 with great pomp and circumstance by the current Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, it provides for the commitment – on a voluntary basis – by TNCs to respect nine principles based essentially human rights. If, at first, several "major" organizations (NGOs and trade unions, in particular) supported this undertaking, the overwhelming majority of NGOs and social movements disapproved of it, calling it a sham.

In point of fact, this agreement has no dear legal basis, and at no point does it describe the ways and means envisaged to verify if the TNCs are observing their commitments.

In many ways, this partnership seems essentially designed to offer the TNCs that sign on to it, often accused of violating human rights, the means to rebuild their reputation with the general public. Certain NGOs that originally supported it have acknowledged its limitations and are now in favor of the draft norms. As for the TNCs, their efforts are bent toward trying to make the Global Compact credible by organizing a summit with the UN in New York (at the end of June 2004), with the participation of a group of NGOs.

As for the third point, the TNC are not above the law. Although states are the only subjects of international law and by virtue of this are entrusted with the respect and promotion of human rights, the TNCs are also are required to respect them, just like anybody else. Indeed, the last article (art. 30) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states clearly that "Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein."

The Commission on Human Rights Seized of the Matter

The draft norms were submitted to the 60th session of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) [11]. In its decision, adopted 20 April 2004, the Commission confirmed "the importance and the priority rank" [12] that it accords to the question, while requesting the High Commissioner for Human Rights to 'to compile a report setting out the scope and legal status of existing initiatives and standards relating to the responsibility of transnational corporations and related business enterprises with regard to human rights, inter alia, the draft norms (…) in order for it [CDH] to identify options for strengthening standards on the responsibilities of transnational corporations and related business enterprises with regard to human rights and possible means of implementation".

It is worth pointing out that the decision in question forbids the Sub-Commission experts to assume the role of monitoring of the application of the draft norms. If the CHR muzzled the Sub-Commission on this point and differed dealing with the question, thus buying some time, it did not either give in entirely to the pressure from "Big Capital" [13], which wanted to prevent any discussion on the question. The Commission thus remains seized of the matter.

Although there already are international human rights norms applicable to TNCs, the draft norms constitute a complete entity, clarifying the responsibilities of TNCs. Even they are far from perfect, they fall into line with a legal framework that aims to establish an effective control over the harmful activities of TNCs. The draft norms will surely help governments to clarify their own obligations and to establish binding norms for TNCs in their legislation.

For this, the draft must follow the usual procedure within the UN system, to wit its adoption by the Commission on Human Rights, then by the Economic and Security Council (ECOSOC) and finally by the General Assembly. Then the member states must ratify it for it to become binding for them.

However, as we emphasized above, there must be an enforcement mechanism, for, without that, there will be no sanction, hence no dissuasion.

Adoption in 2005?

Given the pretensions of the TNCs, which continue to operate outside the purview of the law, it is up to governments and to pertinent UN bodies to show determination in fulfilling their mandates and their obligation to defend democracy and human rights.

Civil society has great expectations of seeing the High Commissioner for Human Rights support the draft norms with a view to bringing the project to a successful conclusion. As for our governments, in particular those that are members of the Commission on Human Rights, They should work along these lines and accord the matter the attention it deserves.

Today, the draft norms are on the agenda of the Commission. If we want to prevent them from being relegated to the dustbin of history, as happened to the Guidelines for transnational corporations drafted by ECOSOC ten years ago, a major mobilization of social movements, of NGOs and of the university communities is necessary. They must, in particular, intervene with their respective governments so that those governments will not give in to the pressure from the transnational corporations and so that they will adopt the norms with the pertinent amendments.

* Article published in *Le Courrier* under the by-line of Malik Özden, 17 September 2004

[1] Commentary can be sent to the following address: Mr Dziek Kedzia, High Commissioner for Human Rights, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10; e-mail: businessandhumanrights@ohchr.org

(see in this regard the campaign being conducted by the CETIM at: www.cetim.ch).

[2] Cf. the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, adopted in 1976.

[3] Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, adopted in 1976.

[4] Cf. inter alia, "General Observations", Nos 3, 12 and 15 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food and the Working Document of the Sub-Commission on the activities of transnational corporations regarding the implementation of economic social and cultural rights.

[5] It was created in 1998, following the adoption of the resolution "The relationship between the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, and the working methods and activities of transnational corporations" (cf. E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1998/8).

[6] Subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Rights, the UN Sub-Commission for the Promotion and the Protection of Human Rights is composed of 26 independent experts.

[7] Cf. E/CN.4/Sub.2/2003/12/Rev.2, adopted 13 August 2003 by Sub-Commission resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/2003/16.

[8] For further information on the activities of the Working Group and the follow-up conducted by the CETIM on this file, see the CETIM internet site.

[9] It is worth noting that during the 56th session, (26 July to 13 August 2004), following bitter negotiations, the Sub-Commission finally decided to extend the Working Group's mandate so that it might, among other things, draft a follow-up mechanism for the draft already mentioned (cf. E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/2004/16).

[10] This year, the IOE and ICC sent a document of 40 pages to all the states members to pressure them to ask the Commission on Human Rights not to open the debate on the subject (cf. "Joint View of the IOE and ICC on the draft Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights").

[11] Composed of 53 member states, the Commission on Human Rights met in Geneva from 15 March to 23 April 2004.

[12] Cf. E/CN.4/DEC/2004/116.

[13] Cf. article from the French daily *Libération*, 20 March 2004.

The Case of the "Prestige": Those Responsible Go Unpunished

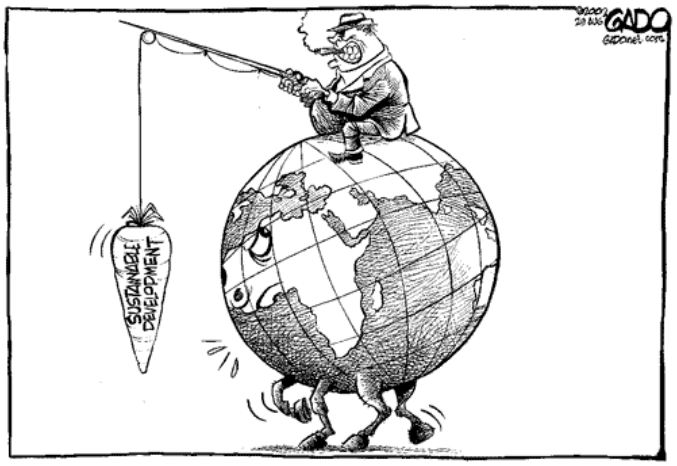
Corporations often recur to complex subterfuges when transporting dangerous and highly polluting products in order to avoid assuming their responsibility and the real costs of their activities. As an example, the oil tanker "Prestige", sunk on 13 November 2002 with 77,000 tons of oil on the coasts of France Spain and Portugal, was registered in the Bahamas, managed in Greece (Coulouthros) and was transporting oil for a Swiss company (managed largely by English people) whose current owners are Russian (Crown Resources d'Alfa Group).

In many cases, it's the captain or the crew of the boat who are indicted, if, indeed, there is any indictment. In general, it is the public – the tax payers – who pay to repair most of the damage caused.

In the case of the "Prestige", the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPCF) [1] announced that it would pay the cleaning bills and compensation for victims only up to 150 million euros. Yet the IOPCF itself had estimated that the total losses would reach a billion euros [2].

[1] Based in London and financed mostly by taxes on the petroleum industry.

[2] Press release from the Friends of the Earth, 9 May 2003



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CETIM's Work on Transnational Corporations

The sixth session of the Working Group on the Activities and Methods of Transnational Corporations (TNCs) was held on 29 and 30 August 2004. As usual, the CETIM participated in it actively.

Two points, primarily, were raised by the experts. The first concerned the follow-up to be accorded to the "Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Commercial Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights" [1] after the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to postpone to next year the discussion of the draft and to request the High Commissioner for Human Rights to conduct consultations with member states, NGOs and international institutions [2]. The second appertained to future work of the Working Group.

A majority of the experts insisted on the necessity of reflecting on the setting up of a follow-up mechanism to the draft norms within the framework of already existing UN bodies. Several pointed out that this would be the only way of making the norms operational.

Regarding the future of the Working Group, whose mandate was to be renewed this year, there were two conflicting views on it. On the one hand, dissolve the Working Group and let the question of TNCs be treated in subsidiary items of the Sub-Commission agenda; on the other, the drafting of the norms was only one of the tasks for which the Working Group had been set up, and it still had much work to do in order to complete its mandate, such as the drafting of a follow-up mechanism. After long discussions, an initial proposal for a resolution requesting the end of the Working Group was withdrawn. The Sub-Commission finally decided to extend the Working Group's mandate for a period of three years [3].

The CETIM's Proposals

The CETIM representative took the floor twice. He denounced the human rights violations committed by various TNCs and gave examples, and he suggested several plans for putting the norms into practice. Thus:

1. the treaty bodies could ask the member states to furnish information on the activities of the TNCs operating on their territory; the bodies having a procedure for filing complaints should receive the complaints of the human

rights violations, for it is as much a case of civil and political rights as economic, social and cultural rights;

2. the member states should be encouraged to hasten the process of drafting a optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights; this would allow plaintiffs to seize the Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights in the case of a violation of these rights by transnational corporations;
3. the Sub-Commission should recommend to the member states the amendment of the Statute of the International Criminal Court so that plaintiffs could loge complaints there for violations of economic, cultural and social rights.

Considering that the procedures mentioned do not yet exist or cover only partially the activities of TNCs, the CETIM is proposing the setting up of a specific mechanism within the framework of ECOSOC, for example, the creation of a new committee or a working group that would be entrusted with overseeing the implementation of the norms.

Within the framework of the consultation requested by the Commission on Human Rights, the CETIM, in collaboration with the American Association of Jurists, filed a declaration with the High Commissioner, supported by more than 80 associations and social movements [4] asking that she reaffirm her position regarding the project [5].

[1] Adopted by the Sub-Commission on Human Rights last year (cf. E/CN.4/Sub.2/2003/12/Rev.2).
[2] Cf. Decision 2004/116 of the Commission on Human Right.
[3] E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/2004/16.
[4] This declaration, along with a complete list of the signatories, is available on our internet site: http://www.cetim.ch/en/act_stn04.php.
[5] In this regard, see that article on the first page.

Extracts of CETIM's Interventions

Bilateral treaties on free trade and promotion and protection of investments: "arms of massive destruction" to national and international public law and human rights law

« Our planet is wrapped in a thick weft of international, regional and bilateral economic and financial agreements and treaties that have subordinated or taken the place of the basic tools of international and national human rights law (including the right to a safe environment), national Constitutions, economic legislation directed to national development and labour and social laws that tend to alleviate inequalities and exclusion.

This weft, as a consequence of the application of "the most favourable treatment" "national treatment" and "most favoured nation" clauses, that appear in almost every treaty, works as a communicating glasses system, that allows neo-liberal policies circulate freely on a planetary scale and get into States, where they disintegrate national economies and provoke grave social harms.

All this involves the primacy of capital rights over democratic and human rights of peoples. Liberalisation and privatisation policies are consolidating –as a legally binding legal system-. It is a matter of making these policies non reverted through international agreements.

It is the regression to a sort of feudal or corporative law, opposed to national and international public law, that works in the exclusive interest of the big transnational capital and those of rich states and to the detriment of fundamental rights of the so-called peripheral states and their peoples.

With the aggravating circumstance that such corporative law is accompanied by a strong coercive system in order to grant its application: fines, economic sanctions, economic and military pressures, etc. To settle differences between parties, "discretional tribunals" have been created outside the judiciary systems of national and international public law, amongst which it is noticeable those created within the ISCID.

International and regional Agreements are part of this system of corporative law.

Bilateral treaties (approximately 2000 in force in the whole planet), are not very visible to public opinion, many of them have been reached on the sly and are even more harmful to rights of peoples than international or regional treaties in force or in process.

Bilateral treaties include treaties of promotion and protection of foreign investments (TPPI), free trade, intellectual property rights, cooperation and science and technology. These treaties are the result of a tactics by the centres of planetary economical and political power, particularly of the United States, which consists of negotiating one by one with weak and/or corrupted governments ready to give up.

At the regional level something similar occurs. The United States got the CAFTA approved against the clock in Central America in order to be in a better position to negotiate the FTAA.

And in the FTAA negotiation, the proposal of a "light" FTAA is an application of the same tactics to leave to bilateral negotiation the most controversial questions."

FTAA will bring prosperity from Alaska to Chile
« Where are we going to put our new second car ? »

Cartoon found on the ATTAC website : http://bombi.net/attac/

Resolution 1546 (2004) of the Security Council

« Resolution 1546 (2004), on Iraq, adopted by the Security Council on the 8th June 2004, that declares the end of the occupation and the setting of a sovereign interim government, does not disguise a totally different reality, that the Resolution tries to legitimate.

The Resolution states, among other things, the following:

1. Endorses the formation of a sovereign Interim Government of Iraq, as presented on 1 June 2004, which will assume full responsibility and authority by 30 June 2004 for governing Iraq while **refraining from taking any actions affecting Iraq's destiny beyond the limited interim period** (the underlining is ours) until an elected Transitional Government of Iraq assumes office as envisaged in paragraph four below;

On the one hand, the paragraph refers to "a sovereign Interim Government" (as in paragraph 2, that refers to "full sovereignty") and on the other hand, the sentence underlined applies the theory of the "limited sovereignty".

One might ask whether, under these circumstances, the Interim Government has the power to repeal the *Coalition Provisional Authority Orders*, amongst which n. 39, that left wide open and with no limits the doors of Iraq to foreign investments (in fact, only to United States companies linked to the country's present administration) repealing previous legislation on the matter, *Coalition Order* 37 that exempts from taxes the occupation forces and the Coalition Authority, or *Coalition Order* 17 that gives jurisdictional immunity to occupants and their **contractors** (the underlining is ours). It is worth supposing that specialists in questioning of the private companies *CACI International* and *Titan International*, contracted by the occupant, that act in Abu Ghraib prison and are accused of torturing, are amongst those "contractors" enjoying immunity. (…)

Paragraphs 24 to 27 of Resolution 1546, related basically to the management of profits out of the selling of petroleum and gas, keep the monitoring by the self-called "international community" over those resources, although it is graciously granted to the Government of Iraq the right to designate an individual with the right to vote to be integrated in the International Advisory and Monitoring Board. (…)

Member States of the Security Council, with Resolution 1546 of 8 June, gave in obediently to the exigencies of the United States who will, anyway, apply this Resolution only as far as it is of its interest. They skipped once more the opportunity to solve the Iraqi problem, be it voting, on agreement of all groups representing the Iraqi people, the sending of a neutral multinational force in replacement of the occupying Army, as a first step to restore peace and initiate a real political process with no external interferences, or resending the question to the General Assembly, should there be veto by United States. (...)".

THIS BULLETIN IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN FRENCH AND SPANISH

Legislative Reform and situation of the Kurdish People in Turkey

« With a view to joining the European Union, Turkey has undertaken legislative reform, in line with which, it has, fortunately, abolished the death penalty. Nevertheless, regarding the Kurds, the legal reforms undertaken are spurious and allow the violations of this people's human rights to continue.

Thus, regarding the Kurds' right to express themselves in their own language and to teach it, the reforms have not brought any improvement.

Indeed, the authorization to use the Kurdish language is subject to such restrictions as the following [1]:

- only private schools may teach Kurdish;
- authorizations are required to teach and they are given only sparingly;
- radio and TV programmes must be designed for adults only, they are limited to 4-5 hours a week and broadcast only by government channels;
- programmes in Kurdish must be subtitled or followed by a Turkish translation.

In practice, the use of the Kurdish language is still repressed. This is the case with former MP Leyla Zana and her three colleagues who, released from prison in June 2004 with much media fanfare, are currently being prosecuted for having spoken Kurdish in public [2].

Moreover, there are allegations about the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish army against six Kurdish fighters during the clash of 6th May 2004 on Mount Caçi (Eruh/Siirt). The inquiry conducted by the Turkish Human Rights Association (IHD) concludes that serious causes for concern exist, given that the killed guerrillas' bodies were not returned to their families but were buried on the scene and that the autopsy report has been kept secret [3]. One can also point out the disturbing intensification of clashes between the Turkish army and the Popular Defence Forces (HPG). (…)

Furthermore, the situation of the displaced Kurdish peasants remains worrying. Indeed, three to four million Kurdish peasants, victims of this situation, are still waiting for permission to return home and for compensation. The implementation of the new law just passed concerning these peasants risks encountering obstacles, for, to get any compensation, the peasants must prove their lack of collaboration with the Kurdish movement considered terrorist [4]. Such a condition alone is sufficient to nullify the beneficial effects one could expect from such legislation and raises doubts about the good faith of the authorities.

Finally, the special forces and the Turkish army are still conducting operations against Kurdish villages. For example, last year, 12 villages were evacuated by force and 153 villages and hamlets have been the scene of various exactions [5].

In conclusion, the CETIM exhorts the Turkish authorities to carry out true democratic reforms so that the Kurdish people may recover their fundamental rights."

[1] See law n°4928 of 15th July 2003 and Turkish Radio & TV (RTÜK) Superior Council's circular n°25357 from 25th January 2004.
[2] See AFP Dispatch from 9th July 2004.
[3] See the inquiry report of the IHD, May 2004.
[4] See law entitled "compensation for the harm suffered during terror and the fight against terrorism", adopted by the Turkish Parliament on 17th July 2004.
[5] See 2003 Annual Report of human rights defence association Mazlum-Der.

NEXT CETIM PUBLICATIONS

ONU. Droits des faibles ou loi du plus fort?

Pour une ré-appropriation de l'ONU par les peuples

Have contributed to this book, among others: S. Amin, R. Charvin, G. Massiah, E. Toussaint, M. Warschawsky, J. Ziegler.

As the years pass by, the UN has mistrusted a lot of hopes. The multiplication of wars worldwide, the constant advancement of poverty and inequalities, the expansion of a new liberal destructive and without limits globalisation, etc, are among the numerous ills that the UN seems completely incapable to heal or at least to alleviate. Anti globalisation movements and social movements are largely imbued by this vision. For some, the UN is nothing more than a tool in the hands of American and western imperialism. For others, it is simply useless. But would the world be better without the UN? The Organisation is a reflection of the reality of the of ratio forces. But is it that all what it is? Is it not also a forum for the most unfortunate, that is to say those less influent on their faith and for some other discordant voices? Is it not more than that?

CETIM has made the challenge to launch a debate among the social movements on this institution. It suggests to examine in which capacity the UN has been and could be in the future a place for recording the advancement of the political and social struggles, of their recognition, their transformation and theoretical improvement into a law of a progressist and universal nature. Being the product of the dynamic of the field struggle, this law can and must in turn, serve as a reference, justification and support to the struggle of the social movements.

In a world dominated by unilaterism, social movements should get more involved directly in the faith of this institution, especially by putting pressure on their own governments in order to contribute to bring about the necessary changes. It is within this spirit that CETIM has envisaged to publish a study on the UN and to give those militants who believe in the rejuvenating process of this organisation, the possibility to speak in order to return it under peoples' command.

The first part of the book looks at the main factors leading to the disillusion towards the UN in matters relating to the maintaining of security and the protection of human rights. The second part explores the various ways for the UN to become an instrument to combat the neo liberal globalisation and elaborate on how the militant action can contribute to its reforming.

Date the book is due: beginning of January
Nbr of pages: app. 340
Subscription fees Sfr. 20 / € 13 (+ sending fees)
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La ZLEA et les résistances populaires

Have contributed to this book, among others: D. Brunelle, R. Herrera, C. Katz, J.-P. Larche, A. Moro, A. Teitelbaum.

The Free Exchange Zone of the Americas (ALCA-ZLEA-FTAA) established between 34 countries of the American continent is in the process of negotiation. Very few information on the subject reach the French speaking countries, yet the interests at stake are huge. With a population of 800 millions inhabitants, and a GDP of 13.000 billions US Dollars, but also new rules of exchange which will influence the relations between sovereign States and the life of citizens in a very deep and irreversible manner.

However FTAA is neither a new project nor an isolated one. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is its big brother whereas the Puebla Panama Plan, the Columbian Plan and the IIRSA (Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America) are its complement. But how can these different projects come together? What could be the fullness and the content of the consequences on the peoples concerned? What are the links with a so far Europe? And above all what are the reactions and answers of the populations directly concerned? We all remember the gas war in Bolivia in October 2003 which has been started by the popular opposition to the sale of the gas natural resources … We are at the very heart of the issue.

This book attempts to give a hint to these and other questions raised, in order to understand better a subject which is on the top of the current events and which seems somehow complicated.

Date the book is due: December
Nbr of pages: app. 190
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