

CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

The committee of Brazilian organizations that organized the first World Social Forum, held in Porto Alegre from January 25 to 30, 2001, after evaluating the results of that Forum and the expectations it raised, consider it necessary and legitimate to draw up a Charter of Principles to guide the continued pursuit of that initiative.

While the principles contained in this Charter – to be respected by all those who wish to take part in the process and to organize new meetings of the World Social Forum – consolidate the decisions that were adopted at the Porto Alegre Forum and ensured its success, they extend the scope of those decisions and define orientations that flow from their logic.

1. The World Social Forum is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and forging effective action on the part of organizations and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and the domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are also committed to building a global society directed towards fruitful relationships among people and between humankind and the planet.
2. The World Social Forum at Porto Alegre was an event localized in time and place. From now on, in the certainty proclaimed at Porto Alegre that “another world is possible”, it becomes a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives, which cannot be reduced to the events supporting it.
3. The World Social Forum is a worldwide ongoing initiative. All the meetings that are held as part of this initiative have an international dimension.
4. The alternatives proposed at the World Social Forum stand in opposition to globalization led by the large multinational corporations and by the governments and international institutions at the service of their interests, with the complicity of national governments. They are designed to consolidate a globalization based on the values of solidarity that, as a new stage in world history, will respect universal human rights and all citizens – men and women – of all nations, as well as the environment and will be underpinned by democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality, and national sovereignty.
5. The World Social Forum brings together and interlinks organizations and movements of civil society from all the countries in the world, but does not seek to be a body representing world civil society.
6. The meetings of the World Social Forum do not have a deliberative character. That is, no one will be authorized, on behalf of the Forum or in any of its regularly held meetings, to express positions to be considered attributable to all its participants. The participants in the Forum shall not be called on to take decisions in the name of the body, whether by vote or acclamation, on declarations or action proposals that would be binding on all or the majority, and that are proposed to be the decisions of the Forum as such.
7. Nonetheless, organizations that participate in the Forum’s meetings must be assured the right, during such meetings, to deliberate on declarations or

actions they may decide on, whether singly or in coordination with other participants. The World Social Forum undertakes to broadly circulate such decisions, through the means at its disposal, without directing, hierarchizing, censoring, or restricting them, but as deliberations of the organizations or groups of organizations that made the decisions.

8. The World Social Forum is a plural, diversified, non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party space that, decentralized and based on network functioning, interrelates organizations and movements engaged in concrete action from the local to the international level to build another world.
9. The World Social Forum will always be a space open to pluralism and to the diversity of activities of the organizations and movements that decide to participate in it, as well as the diversity of genders, ethnicities, cultures, generations and physical capacities, providing they abide by this Charter of Principles. Neither party nor military organizations shall participate in the Forum. Government leaders and members of legislatures who accept the commitments of this Charter may be invited to participate in a personal capacity.
10. The World Social Forum is opposed to all totalitarian and reductionist views of economy, development and history and to the use of violence as a means of social control by the State. It upholds respect for human rights, the practicing of real democracy, participatory democracy, peaceful, equal, and solidarity-based relations, among individuals, peoples, ethnicities, and genders and peoples, and condemns all forms of domination and all subjection of one person by another.
11. As a forum for discussion, the World Social Forum is a movement of ideas that prompts reflection, and the transparent circulation of the results of such thinking concerning the mechanisms and instruments of domination by capital, on the media and actions to resist and overcome that domination, and on the alternatives proposed to solve the problems of exclusion and social inequality that the process of capitalist globalization with its racist, sexist and environmentally destructive dimensions is creating internationally and within countries.
12. As a framework for the exchange of experiences, the World Social Forum encourages mutual recognition and understanding among its participating organizations and movements. It places special value on the exchange among its participants, particularly on what society is doing to center economic activity and political action on meeting the peoples' needs and respecting nature, in the present and for future generations.
13. As a space for interaction, the World Social Forum seeks to strengthen and create new national and international links among organizations and social movements, that – in both the public and private spheres- will increase the capacity for non-violent social resistance to the process of dehumanization the world is experiencing and to the violence employed by the State, in addition to strengthening socially oriented initiatives current being undertaken through the activities of these movements and organizations.
14. The World Social Forum is an ongoing effort that encourages its participating organizations and movements to place their activities, from the local level to

the national and international level as questions of global citizenship, and to introduce onto the global agenda the change-inducing practices that they are experimenting with in building a more solidarity-based new world.

Approved and adopted in são paulo, on april 9, 2001, by the organizations that comprise the world social forum organizing committee, approved with modifications by the world social forum international council on june 10, 2001