

## **Closing Remarks of the EZLN at the Fourth Preparatory Meeting And Invitation to the Fifth Meeting**

Originally published in Spanish by the EZLN  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Translated by irlandesa

Zapatista Army of National Liberation  
Mexico

August 30, 2005

To all those who support the Sixth Declaration of the Selva Lacandona:  
To those attending the Meeting of NGOs, Collectives and Groups:

*Compañeros and compañeras:*

These were going to be the words for the closure of the meeting of NGOs, Collectives and Groups, but the session ran late, and, in the end, quite a few had already left. But I promised you that I was going to send you a letter, so here it goes:

I was going to begin by ranting and raving against those intellectuals who are pro-AMLO and pro-'voting for the least-worst' who, flaunting their mental laziness, content themselves with cutting and pasting sentences so, from there, they can construct "*malas lecturas*" (I imagine that someone applauds them). Or those who, after a wide detour, end up just telling us that their psychoanalyst and their chef are Argentineans. Or those who try to apply the three laws of academic dialectics to the "other campaign": "Ask me for forgiveness," "Ask for my permission," "Ask for my guidance" and (I know I said 3, but, since they're dialectics, there's always a fourth) "Ask for my direction." This after correcting that "he's going to deliver all of us a death blow" which, as no one has gone to the trouble of noting, was said at the meeting with political organizations of the left. That is, AMLO is going to deliver a death blow to the organizations of the left, not to the radio and TV announcers, intellectuals, journalists and editorial writers. To those he's going to offer grants, positions, embassies, consultancies or whatever form the most expensive caresses take. Then I was going to continue rectifying that "we're going to make them into little pieces," because they aren't even solid enough to result in pieces, so I was going to say: "We're going to make them dust."

But now you see I'm not, I'm being well-behaved. And so better that I pass on to you some reflections on what was said during the different presentations at the meeting.

Leaving aside that they *traían en carrilla* with that stuff about my tummy (they don't fool me, I was able to sense more than one lewd and lascivious glance running up and down my mouthwatering figure), and there was more than one veiled allusion to my "Pedro Infante Reloaded" style machismo, - We heard a common concern: respect for the autonomy and independence of the groups and organizations. More than one presentation pointed out that the "other campaign" should not devolve into a centralized, hierarchical structure.

There was also a tendency to seek, and hear, the mirror. They listened to their counterparts: artists to artists, feminists to feminists, anarchists to anarchists, alternative media to alternative media and so on. Histories that referred to different and even opposite realities aroused little interest. As if, even in the diversity that was convened, each one sought to shut themselves up in the place and way of their own struggle.

It is understandable that each one wants to mix with their counterparts, and it's understandable that each one sees their place in the Sexta and in the "other campaign." At the end of the day, that is the objective of the Sexta: at a common point, the anti-capitalist of the left, a place will be opened for everyone.

But not just that. The Sexta and the "other campaign" are also places for listening to what is different within the common - that which is opposed to the same system but with different ways and means.

Because, even given the many and varied colors and forms of that meeting, it is nothing compared to the wide range of differences which the Sexta has convened and is organizing in the "other campaign." There are political organizations which have been engaged in struggle and anti-capitalist resistance for entire decades. There are social organizations with a long history of struggle and achievements in demanding better work and living conditions. There are indigenous peoples and organizations with not just years, but centuries, of resistance against racism and of struggle for respect for their culture. There are persons, men and women who, within their family, in their barrio or at their job, are concerned about what is happening and want to do something to change it.

You will have the opportunity to see them and listen to them during the plenary. You will see then that there are many other others, in addition to the others who gathered here together this time. Men and women who have spent their entire lives seeking and fighting to transform the system. They have not only an organized and coherent discourse critical of the system, they also have an alternative proposal. And in order to make it real they work with unions, neighborhood associations, *campesino* and producer groups, cooperatives, student and teachers groups, indigenous peoples and communities. In some cases, their demands have a specific view: improving living, salary or work conditions, respect for the culture, caring for the environment. In others, those demands are a means for a gradual, but profound, transformation of the system. And for others the defense of human rights is the mirror in which we all see ourselves. Because at the end of the day the demand for respect for difference, for recognition of the culture, for better living conditions, for a free art, for alternative information, for gender equality, for liberty, for democracy, for justice, are nothing less than demands for the rights of human beings.

They will find us, the neo-Zapatistas, at their side in their individual, local, regional and national struggles. We believe that we all have to make an effort to listen to them, to respect them. Because you should understand that they also have a place in this large "we" that we want to build collectively.

But listening and respecting does not mean subordinating oneself, obeying, being silent. You have made criticism and questioning your banner and methods: questioning the machismo which seeps even into the language. Criticizing the large media outlets that impose even what we drink and how we drink it. Questioning one method of producing and circulating art. Criticizing the multiple pyramids of command and obedience which are repeated above...and below to the left. Questioning the fashions and methods with which difference is influenced. You criticize the deaf ears turned to the people's anger.

Because if an anti-capitalist movement does not aspire to transform everything, and not just the relationships between property and production, then there's no point, and it will only repeat ancient injustices, but now with a new alibi.

If the transformation we are attempting does not include the radical transformation of gender relations between men and women, the generational ones between the "mature" and young people, those of coexistence between heterosexuals and 'everyone in their own way,' then that transformation will end up being just one more caricature among those which abound in the book of history.

Someone said here that if we can't dance in this revolution, then it's not our revolution. I would have to add that if the relationships between the differences which abound in human beings do not change, then it is not our revolution. And then another will have to be made, and another, and another yet, until the "No one" we are shines with all the colors we are and in all the forms we have.

While you should understand that those others, different from you, have a place, they should also understand that you have a place in the world, in the Sexta and in the "other campaign."

A few days ago, during the meeting with Indian Peoples and Indigenous Organizations, we noted that the neo-Zapatistas would be with the indigenous in the defense of their difference and their specific condition as indigenous. Now we are telling you that the EZLN and their Sixth Committee will be with you in the defense of your autonomy and independence, in your opposition to the creation of a centralized and hierarchical organizational structure. Our idea is not one but many organizations, not one but all colors which, from below and from the left, will paint rebellion.

As we will be with the political organizations of the left who are struggling against capitalism and who are proposing a new social relationship, with the Indian peoples who are remaining firm in their rights and culture, with the social organizations and movements who are demanding better living and working conditions.

But we will also be with the artists of the street or of little or nor at all known places, in the alternate media, with hip-hoppers or rappers or skaters or irketos or etceteras, with the gang, with homosexuals and lesbians, with transvestites, transsexuals and transgender persons, with feminists, with human rights defense organizations and those for the release of political prisoners, with the ways of young men and women, with the raza, with individuals, in short, with all those who have embraced the Sexta and who are now building, with us, the "other campaign."

I could end by telling you not to let yourselves be co-opted or absorbed, to defend your space and your work, but I'm sure that all of you know that the spirit of the Sexta and of the "other campaign" is not to tell anyone what to do or not do, but to listen, learn and join what everyone does.

And *tan-tan*. Have a good trip. We'll see you on September 16.

I'd forgotten - I also want to let you know that the next preparation meeting is the one with Women, Men, Old Ones, Boys and Girls, on their own, as families, from communities, barrios or neighborhoods. Arrival is on Friday, September 2, the meeting on Saturday, the 3rd and return on Sunday, September 4. The meeting will be in the village of Dolores Hidalgo, in the land of the San Manuel MAREZ, Caracol of La Garrucha. Dolores Hidalgo is the village where the meeting with Social Organizations and Movements was held. The compa~eras and compa~eros of Frayba will give you directions on how to get there without getting lost and, if anyone asks, how to not get there while getting lost.

Don't be late, because I'm a little sick with the flu, and I'm noting, appalled, that I'm losing my succulent waistline.

By the Sixth Committee of the EZLN

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast  
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos  
Mexico, August of 2005