

An invitation for the First Plenary Session of the Other Campaign

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Zapatista Army of National Liberation

Mexico
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To all those who signed on to the Sixth Declaration of the Selva Lacandona:

SUBJECT: Invitation

Compañeros and compañeras:

Greetings. We are verrrry happy. In fact, we haven't been this happy since we survived the Salinas and Zedillo military offensives. It was no small thing to have withstood the six preparation meetings. That's why we celebrated, doubling the rations of *pozol* and with a plentiful dosage of Hydrocarbons and carbohydrates in order to reinforce the "few extra kilos." Even so, don't doubt that we'll be coming, like in this plenary, with the intention of authoritarian and "Stalinist" imposition (you've seen how the anti-Sexta cartoonists and intellectuals are letting fly at us), we're going to propose that the time limit for participating in the discussion will be 5 minutes for everyone...except for the EZLN. Now, after my brief greeting, I'll move on to the following:

First - I'm writing in order to formally invite you to the First Plenary Session of the "Other Campaign." The authorities, *compañeros* and *compañeras*, of the MAREZ of the Selva Tzeltal region and of the Good Government Junta, have accepted our request that La Garrucha Caracol be the site of this meeting. La Garrucha is just where it is (about two hours from Ocosingo, heading towards San Quintín - the *compas* at Frayba have now made a sketch that's so exact even the potholes are marked), and it's easy to identify these days: according to what they're telling me, *compañeros* and *compañeras* are already arriving from all over to participate in the plenary, so it's the place where there's a lot of commotion going on.

Second - Arrival is on September 15 (they inform me that on the night of the 15th the Good Government Junta will give the Grito) or, if you arrive later, on the afternoon of September 16. Inauguration will be on September 16 starting at 8 PM. Afterwards there will be a large artistic-cultural fiesta where everyone who wants to can participate with songs, music, poetry, theatrical pieces, performances or whatever. On the next day, September 17, after having something for breakfast, the work will begin, and it will continue throughout the day, with the necessary recesses for eating, satisfying primary biological needs, counseling, gossiping, promoting schisms, swearing, sabotaging the vanity of the slim ones by eating some fat-filled meat pies, criticizing what you see or don't see, etcetera. If we don't finish on the 17th, we'll give you as much as we can of Sunday, the 18th.

Third - Thanks to the *compas* of Chiapas Indymedia, one may (I think) follow what's going on in the plenary, almost simultaneously, by Internet. I don't understand very well, but these *compas* are going to "upload" what's going on to "Chiapas.indymedia.org", and there the alternative media act like "mirrors", and if you go to their pages you can find out what's happening. In addition to Indymedia, they'll be on the *Revista Rebeldía* and FZLN webpages.

Fourth - As they then say, the program of activities will be as follows:

Thursday, the 15th and Friday, the 16th of September
- Registration of delegates, observers, press, informers, spies, detractors, those jealous and envious of the meeting's success, etcetera.

Friday, September 16

- 8 PM. Welcome, inauguration and opening words from the EZLN. Definition of the discussion points of the agenda, of their order, of the rules of participation, and such. Afterwards, artistic-cultural-dance celebration.

Saturday, September 17

- 9:30 AM - Beginning of the work of the Plenary according to the agenda and procedures agreed to.

- 12:00 - Recess for *pozol*.

- 12:30 - Resumption of work.

- 3:00 PM - Recess for eating.

- 5:00 PM - Resumption of work.

- 7:00 PM - Recess for complaining.

- 7:30 PM - Resumption of work

The rest of the 17th and whatever necessary of the 18th

- Indefinite timetable - Plenary work

Fifth - In its role as organizer, the EZLN proposes the following procedures:

1. - In its presentation on September 16, the Sixth Commission of the EZLN will present its rough plan for the departure of the Zapatista delegation, and it will formally hand over the "Other Campaign" to all the supporters of the Sexta, including to the EZLN (not like at the CND in 1994, when we turned it over, but with the "Other Campaign" we are also going to be included, at no cost and tax free). Then, the full assembly will decide whether the Zapatista delegation will continue presiding throughout the session or name another table (or whatever they call those who will be speaking, taking notes, aren't able to sleep while others are speaking, nor go to the bathroom, nor daydream, nor make faces when they don't agree with what someone is saying). After this, we'll all be happy, because then we'll know that next comes the music, dance, theatre, painting, poetry and the etceteras (which always go far beyond the most detailed list).

2. - The EZLN proposes that, unlike the way in which the preparation meetings were held (anyone could participate, presentations without time or subject limits), in this plenary session, during the debate on the various points, only those who have subscribed to the Sexta can participate (because there are some who are still deciding whether yes or no, who haven't yet committed themselves to entering), the presentations can't exceed 5 minutes per speaker, and they should refer strictly to the point of discussion. The EZLN proposes that those who go overtime and begin to digress be booed with a unanimity even greater than the boredom provoked by the PAN candidates or be urged in some way to not go too far.

3. - The EZLN proposes that the agenda points which are agreed be discussed one by one, that each discussion does not end in a vote (because all the supporters will not be attending, and we have to take everyone's thoughts into consideration, even if they're not at this meeting), but in a proposal reached by the assembly through consensus, and that this proposal be sent to all those who have entered in, and then it can be decided by everyone. Of course, here in the assembly those who so decided will have already been announced, but it will not be resolved until everyone has been consulted. We won't go on to the next point, then, until there's consensus on a proposal or the options are clearly defined for asking everyone their opinions on those options. Hmm...it's a bit confusing and messy, but I believe more or less understandable, and, in any event, we'll explain it more at the meeting.

Sixth - After listening to everyone who participated in the preparation meetings and to those who expressed their opinions in a letter or to *Revista Rebelión* (and selecting only what refers to the "Other Campaign", because many presentations were about the National Program of Struggle and about the New Constitution), the Sixth Committee of the EZLN proposes the following points (in the order in which we shall specify below), in order to discuss and decide:

- Concerning the ratification, expansion or modification of the characteristics of the "Other Campaign" proposed in the Sixth Declaration: civil and pacific; national; anti-capitalist; of the left; with another way of doing politics; favoring listening; recognizing the limits of one's own actions and the need to join with

other struggles; towards a National Program of Struggle and a new constitution; learning about the struggles and resistances which are taking place throughout the country, being in solidarity with them, helping them and learning from them and with them; respecting the organizations, groups, collectives and individuals in their methods of work, decision-making, demands, strategies and tactics; seeking, always based on mutual respect, to link struggles and organizations; learning about and helping the struggles for humanity and against neoliberalism which are taking place throughout the world.

- Concerning who is being convened and who is not. Or who can enter in and who cannot.

- Concerning the organizational structure of the "Other Campaign." How we are going to organize ourselves for the "Other Campaign," each and everyone's place and how we are all going to relate to each other.

- Concerning the special place of differences in the "Other Campaign: - Indigenas, Women, Other Loves and Affections (homosexuals, lesbians, transsexuals, and everyone in their own way, and what is called "free preference or sexual orientation," but, as we understand from what they have explained to us during the preparation meetings, the question isn't just sexual), Young People, Boys and Girls and Others.

- Concerning the "Other Campaign's" position vis-à-vis other organizational efforts (*Promotora, Frentote, National Dialogues*).

- Concerning the immediate tasks - information, propaganda and dissemination; artistic and cultural; against repression; solidarity and support; study; theoretical analysis and discussion; discussion and debate about the national situation, the struggles and resistances in our country, institutional politics, the election, struggles in the world.

- Concerning what has been sent us to make note of, group together or mark as points to be discussed and/or defined.

Compañeros and compañeras:

These are the proposals we are making. However, we want to make it clear that we are not forcing you to do it like this, but other things and changes can be proposed, and then we'll all decide together.

Lastly, let me give you a few practical recommendations:

- We want to remind you that the consumption of alcohol and drugs is prohibited in the Zapatista communities.
- Bring rubber boots - it's raining a lot, and when we dance, it turns into a lot of mud.
- Also bring your plastic sheeting, rain cape, raincoat or something to protect you from the rain.
- If you naively think that some product is going to protect you from the mosquitoes and *chaquiste*, you're completely wrong, but go ahead, try it.
- Those who so desire, feel free to embrace your difference.
- Don't forget to bring something to eat. There will be small kiosks, but who knows whether there will be enough for everyone who comes. If not, they can throw more water into the beans (in case it's just raining a bit too much).
- Bring a notebook and pen so you can take notes and then fully inform your organizations and collectives.

Vale. Salud and, hmmm...now it does look like everything is getting complicated.

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast
By the Sixth Committee of the EZLN
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos
Mexico, September of 2005

Discriminatory PS - Everyone who's chubby will be received with a big smile and various expressions of sympathy. Those who are slim will be treated with distant coolness and looked upon with disapproval and gestures of clear displeasure.

PS Which Honors the Tradition of the Left of Becoming Divided As Soon As Possible - It is rumored that the creation of a faction inside the "Other Campaign" is brewing. It calls itself the "Panzer [*panza*: belly] Division of the Sexta," its slogan is "Cellulitis, yes, anorexia, no," and it meets at a locale where there's a sign at the entrance that warns: "Warning: Curves Ahead." According to sources which cannot be revealed, the Sup is one of the promoters, and he's planning on showing up at the plenary in one of those shirts called "belly-button", thus confidently flaunting the belly which so scandalizes the right...and the (impossible) center.