

- We need institutions to promote diversity, not uniformity, through the process of economic integration.
- As it is presently conceived, the FTAA would liberalize investment regulations for corporations in an atmosphere of limited democratic rights, following the model of NAFTA and the WTO. It would confer rights upon corporations without having them assume responsibilities.
- The term "should," which is written into numerous international agreements and declarations, particularly in relation to labour, social and environmental issues (the signatory should do this or that...), creates no obligation for compliance in international law. In contrast, when negotiators really care about the issue, such as the protection of investors' rights, they impose harsh penalties for infringement of the clause.

On the Canadian commitment to human rights and democracy in the Americas:

- A study commissioned by the Mexican Academy of Human Rights found that Canada's official support for human rights abroad is directed more at enhancing the technical capacity of state electoral organs than at strengthening civil society. Yet it is the latter which guarantees successful democratization.

On the role that Canada should play:

- Interaction with civil society, such as the current one, is welcome. However, a true commitment from the Canadian government will be reflected in an ongoing, meaningful consultation coupled with provision of resources to promote the participation of civil organizations in the consultation process.

On the strategy for civil society:

- Unless governments such as Canada's speak out, only social resistance and cross-border organizing in the Americas will alter the process to reflect truly social and environmental concerns.

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From the perspective of workers and communities, the process unleashed at the Miami Summit has been disastrous. While opening the negotiation process for hemispheric integration to the opinion and recommendations of the business community, the Miami Summit put in place an exclusionary process for most other sectors of society. Filled with rhetoric and empty promises for the people of the Americas, it spoke of progress in areas that are vital to civil society, such as poverty alleviation, health care, education, nutrition, and employment, yet these are areas which have all undergone deterioration since 1994. These disturbing trends are also replicated in Canada.

Mechanisms should be put in place to discourage international competitiveness based on low wages and weak labour standards. The five core labour standards of the ILO should be integrally linked to the international trading system and enshrined in trade agreements. These include: the freedom of association, the freedom to form unions, the right to collective