

# 3 OCTOBER 2012

## FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS

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**WORLD  
FEDERATION  
of  
TRADE UNIONS**

# **3 OCTOBER 2012**

**Food, clean water, medicines, books, housing for all  
Against the multinationals and the capitalist barbarity**

**«We bring to trial»:**

- the transnationals**
- the cartel and trusts**
- the plundering of the wealth-producing resources**

## **FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS**

**Stop the plundering  
of the natural resources  
by transnationals!  
Wealth belongs to those who produce it!**



Independently of the intentions or opinions of capitalists or trade unions under capitalism food, water, medicines, books, housing are commodities.

The rule of the capitalist production is to ensure sufficient percentage of profit. This is the criterion that defines what/how much/where/when everything will be produced.

**The strategic dilemma is: development for whom?**



# FOOD

## Nourishment for all people

### The right to food is a universal right.

However, world food prices increased dramatically in 2007 and up to today they have reached their highest level of the last 30 years, creating a global crisis which proves that the capitalist system cannot even solve the nutritional problem. Important struggles took place on this issue in poor and developed countries.

In January 2011, the FAO Food Price Index (see Chart) reached the highest level since FAO started measuring food prices in 1990, affecting mainly the poorest populations.

The World Bank estimated that additional 50 million people were made poor in 2008 because of high food prices.

According to the World Bank index, global sugar prices reached a 30-year high, after increasing 12 percent since January 2010. Edible oil prices have risen 73 percent since June 2010. The price of wheat, the bread of every people, has increased the most, more than doubling between June 2010 and January 2011. The price of maize has been affected by the surge in the wheat and oil markets and also jumped about 73 percent during the second half of 2010. Other food items that contribute to the food chain, such as vegetables and beans, have also experienced large price increases. Simultaneously with the rise of the food prices, the super-profits of the monopolies and the multinational groups that dominate the global market and control the production, transport and trading, have increased as well. Small producers are being exploited, giving away their production almost for free, as well as the workers of land and the workers of food industries who work for "a loaf of bread". Finally, the consumers are also being exploited by buying food supplies in high prices.

The domination of the monopolies, whether they come from the internal or external of each country, lead to the increase of the exploitation rate of the working class, to the robbery of the popular household and the poor farmers, to the formation of cartels. A small number of companies control the greatest share of the sales and profiting from the global market.

Here are some examples:

*Nestle:* 2009, 70 billion euro revenues according to its announcements. 7 billion euro profits. Active in the industry of food (26%), prepared meals (18%), beverages (27%), chocolate (11%).

*Cargill:* 2011, 85 billion euro revenues. 140,000 employees. 3.3 billion euro announced profits. Active in the trade of cereal, in the breeding and selling of livestock, as well as in energy, metal, finance (25% cereal exports in USA, 22% of the USA meat market). The sales of the company

have increased from 101 billion dollars to 119 billion dollars in 2011, an increase of about 18%. Its profiting has increased from 2.5 billion dollars to 4.3 billion dollars. The revenues and the sales of the company surpassed the pre-crisis levels.

*Kraft:* 35 billion euro revenues, 3.5 billion euro announcement profits.

*General Mills:* 12 billion euro sales in 2011, 1.4 billion euro announced profits.

*Anheuser-Busch InBev,* 28 billion euro sales in 2011, 3 billion euro profits. Active in the production of beverages.

*Pepsico:* 40 billion sales in 2010, 4.5 billion euro profits in 2010.

*Coca-Cola Company:* 25 billion euro sales in 2010. 6 billion euro profiting.

From the side of the food industries and the multinationals, from the side of the governments and the political forces responsible for the nutritional problem and the continuous nutritional scandals, there is a global effort to move the blame for the food insufficiency to specific circumstances and unfortunate incidents. The obvious reason is for them to cover up their responsibilities. To cover up that the public health comes second when it comes to servicing the profiting of the multinationals. To cover up that they must disorient the popular strata in order to defuse the anger of the workers and the hungry ones and prevent them from demanding the deprived wealth they produce and cannot enjoy.

Both the governments and the multinationals claim that responsibility for the so called "nutritional crisis" lays in the reduction of the global production and the sufficiency of food stock mainly due to the climate change and the increase of the food consumption from the people of the developing countries. This theory is delusive and hypocritical.

The reduction of the global production and the stock of agricultural products, from which all the food supplies originate, are due to the conscious, anti-labour policies that the multinationals and the governments implemented according to their own interests for more profits.

Starting point for the implementation of these policies were the findings that the global food production was increasing in double rate than the demands of the global food market. This would result to having more supply than demand which would cause the reduction of the prices and the profiting for the food industries, while the increase of the stock would draw extra funds from the budgets for storage and maintenance.

What is important to notice is that the food demands of the "market" have nothing to do with the actual nutritional needs of humanity. At the



**The production of agricultural products could be sufficient enough to satisfy the nutritional needs of a population twice as big as the existing one.**

same period when the “market” is supposed to be saturated and large amounts are being destroyed or subsidies are being provided for the reduction of production (i.e. given to farmers for them to stop the production), more than 850 million people are undernourished or starving because their income prevents them from obtaining proper sustenance.

This trend intensifies with the economic crisis during which there is reduction in the food consumption. It is a safe conclusion to make that when the multinationals refer to the “market demands”, what they actually mean is their profit charts.

According to FAO’s estimation, with the so called “conventional” agriculture and the existing climate and weather conditions, the production of agricultural products could be sufficient enough to satisfy the nutritional needs of a population twice as big as the existing one. Nowadays, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the food production must increase 70% in order to correspond to the increasing demand of the global population that is estimated to climb to 9 billion by 2050.

**This estimation proves that the nutritional problem is purely a class-political problem and not a technocratic issue.** Thus, it will not be solved with the genetically modified food, the same way it was not solved with the so called “green revolution”.

We are being told that genetically modified crops will tackle hunger and poverty. That is a lie. They are only promoting their profits from the control of the food chain. Genetically Modified crops in developing countries have been grown mainly as export cash crops, sometimes at the expense of local food production.

The abovementioned assessment is also confirmed by the fact that in USA, were GM food are being used massively and the USA is

the largest producer and exporter of agricultural products, 11 million Americans are undernourished and another 22 million find it difficult at times to cover their nutritional needs. As a result 28 million people are surviving by common meals.

In general it is a contradiction of the capitalist way of production that the products rot in the fields and in storage because the big-merchants bought them from the farmers dirty cheap, while in the urban areas people do not have the ability to buy the food ordinary people need.

### **Risks for the consumers’ health – Risks for the environment**

Another reason behind the effort to covert the nutritional problem from class-political to technocratic is to pressure the public opinion to accept the use of cheap, dangerous methods of production of agricultural products and food, that undermine the public health and the environment by increasing, at the same time, the competitiveness and profiting of the monopolies and the multinational groups.

When it comes to the profits of the multinationals, the health of the consumers and the protection of the natural environment are insignificant. The monopolies utilize the scientific and technological achievements according to their profitability. The development of biotechnology is not used for the satisfaction of the urgent needs of the workers. The genetically modified crops are developing uncontrollably.

In order to maximize profits from its Genetically Modified seed business, Monsanto is at the forefront of the push for regulatory clearance for GM products in numerous countries. According to latest data, the American “Monsanto”, one of the largest companies of the agro-industry and a “pioneer” in the technology of genetically modified food, had an increase in its profit the quarter of

**More than 850 million people are undernourished or starving because their income prevents them from obtaining proper sustenance**



December 2007-February 2008 from 1.44 billion to 2.22 billion dollars! The company aims to aggressively displace conventional seeds with its patented GM varieties, particularly soy, corn, canola and cotton, in order to fully control their production and further maximize its profits.

Moreover, the abuse of antibiotics from the companies that produce meat leads to the obsolescence of the antibiotics. In the USA, 80% of the antibiotics is used from the food industry for the rapid thickening of the livestock. This leads to the development of microorganisms resistant to antibiotics and the promotion of those microorganisms through the food chain.

### **Biofuel: A new means of profiting**

The issue of “biofuels” became a frontline issue for two main reasons: The first is the reasonable search for alternative forms of Energy which will replace oil and its products and the second is the immense interest of the USA government to promote the production of ethanol, originating mainly from corn but also from sugar.

But the economic and social dimension of this issue was brought to light, with a special graphic presentation by the President of Cuba, Fidel Castro, with two of his articles in the “Granma” Newspaper in 2007: “The tragedy is not us wanting to save energy” stated Fidel, “but to convert food into fuel. If this formula is applied in international level, it is equal to the internationalization of genocide”.

The suggestion for the production of “biofuels”, ethanol inter alia, was first delivered two decades ago. Its supporters underlined that the “biofuels” reduce the dependence from oil, that this would be the response to the problem of the environmental pollution and that the consumer would be benefitted economically since the cost of production of the “biofuels” can be reduced if applied in mass scale.

Already, the oil companies, the automobile companies and the transnationals’ of agro-industry and genetically modified (GM) seeds have invested in the production of ethanol with huge sums, in order to control the production of “biofuels” as well.

“All the GM companies – Monsanto, Syngenta, Dypco, Dow, Bayer, BASF- have invested in crops for the production of biofuels. They have already finalized agreements with Cargill, Archer, Daniel Midland, Bunge which control the global trade of cereals” Eric Holt-Giménez who is the executive director of FoodFirst/Institute for Food and Development Policy.

The use of corn in the USA for the production of ethanol as a biofuel, which can also be then mixed with benzene to reduce the dependence of the country from the imported oil, has already led the price of corn and sugar to climb. The more

land is used for the growing of corn before other agricultural products, the higher the price of the latter gets. And since corn is also used as a fodder for the livestock, the price of meat rises as well. The land crops and the production of food, in other words, instead of being used for the satisfaction of the nutritional needs of the population, will be used to “feed” the “hungry” cars of the Americans.

The biofuel have three main implications:

The first and most serious is the increase of the exploitation of the countries of the Third World. The rise of the price of corn, of wheat, of sugarcane and other basic food supplies which the transnational want to use for the production of “biofuel”.

The second and equally serious impact is the conflict over the purchase of large acres of land for the production of biofuels - that have become a multinational enterprise- and the obstacle which occurs from the resistance for the change of the use of the land (forests, jungles, communities and small settlements etc) as well as the small farmers with their survival crops (with the production and maintenance of seed). In a framework of wastefulness and under the dominance of the agro-alimentary transnationals, which would be the destiny of the small farmers, the forests, the jungle, the local communities and the indigenous populations?

A third issue is the negative impacts of the production of biofuel for the environment.

The supporters of biofuels present a positive energy balance and a neutral impact to the carbon dioxide emissions. But, according to scientific research, this is not true. The development of crops used in the production of biofuels demand large quantities of agro-chemicals. Ethanol from corn, the type that USA produces, is neither cheap nor “green”. It demands for its production as much energy (maybe more) as the quantity it releases during its combustion. Moreover, the subsidies, according to the International Institute of Sustainable Development cost to the taxpayers about 5.5-7.3 b dollars annually.

Thus, we must struggle not allow the destiny of our people to become the production of food which will be more and more expensive and intangible for those who already are lacking (the hungry population). It is a catastrophe for the environment, the farmers, the indigenous populations that millions of acres of land, islands, regions etc. will be purchased by the big multinationals for their profitable exploitation in the production of biofuels. The crisis of the capitalist way of production will not be reversible, no matter how many injustices it cases, unless we target its overthrow and support a new economic and political practice that will be based in the development and production that will benefit the people and not the monopoly profits.





## **Our position:**

**The WFTU believes that the food production must be planned on the basis of the satisfaction of the nutritional needs of the people and not for the profiting of the multinationals.**

**With the utilization of the productive capabilities of each country, with respect to public health and the environment, the production of qualitative, safe and cheap food is possible for all people. Only within this framework will food not be seen as commodity and means of profitability.**

**All the aspects of the nutritional problem prove that it is a class-political problem, that affects first and foremost the working class, the small and middle farmers and the popular strata.**

**Thus, to confront this issue we need coordinated struggles that reach the core of the problem, its root. Hence, they must be connected with the issue of the political and economic power.**

# WATER

## Clean water for all



**884 million people have no access to safe clean water and about three times as many, about the 39% of the global population – mainly in Africa and in Asia – have no access to basic sanitation facilities.**

The right to clean water is a basic right, a universal right.

However, about 884 million people have no access to safe clean water and about three times as many, about the 39% of the global population – mainly in Africa and in Asia – have no access to basic sanitation facilities, according to the latest report of the World Health Organization and UNICEF entitled: “Report of Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water 2010”.

According to the same data, about 1.5 million children aged less than 5 years old die each year because of lack of access to safe water and sanitation facilities.

At the same time, a few capitalists accumulate provocatively enormous profits and riches from the management of the water resources. The most vital natural resources of the planet, although insufficient, are used by the capitalist government as a commodity for the benefit of the big multinationals who make a fortune by their exploitation.

This privatization of services is only the first step towards the privatization of all aspects of water supply. To profit from the control of water.

Nowadays, more than 460 million people around the world are depending on private companies of water supply; while 1990 it was 51 million people. The lion share from the increase of privatizations is estimated to belong to 10 dominant transnational.

One of these gigantic transnational corporations is Bechtel, based in San Francisco. Today, Bechtel is expanding its water privatization elsewhere, aided by war. Within a month after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Bechtel acquired a \$680 million contract for “rebuilding” Iraq.

Other gigantic water management transnational corporations are:

Veolia: 29 billion euro revenues in 2011, 1 billion euro profits. 75% of the revenues came from the water management and waste management. 35 billion euro revenues in 2010. 2 billion euro profits. 34 billion euro revenues in 2009, 1.9 billion euro profits.

Suez: Supplies with water 91 million people and has 10.000 refineries around the world. Its revenues reached 14.8 b euro in 2011 in comparison to the 13.8 b euro in 2010. The 28% of its turnover is related to water in Europe. Profits reached in 2011, the 2.5 b euro rose by 7.6% since 2010.

As is already evident, once these private water giants take over water services, prices skyrocket. After privatization, customer fees in France increased 150 percent while the water quality declined.

But the most severe effects have been witnessed

in the developing world. The high rises in pricing along with deteriorating water quality because of water privatization has led to uprisings by affected communities around the world.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are pushing for the privatization of water services by European and U.S.-based companies.

They are pushing privatization through stipulations in trade agreements and loan conditions to developing countries. These privatization programs started in the early 1990’s and have since emerged in India, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Nigeria, Mexico, Malaysia, Australia, and the Philippines, to name a few. In Chile, the World Bank imposed a loan condition to guarantee a 33% profit margin to the French company Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux while the company insisted on a margin of 35%. Similar is the case with the IMF-European Union-European Central Bank Memorandum in Greece. A compulsory term was the privatization of water.

African governments, such as Ghana, increasingly give in to pressures for water privatization. In Ghana, the World Bank and IMF policies forced the sale of water at market rate, requiring the poor to spend up to 50 percent of their earnings on water purchases.

Probably the most well known example of the global conflict over water privatization is the case of Cochabamba, Bolivia. It is a shining example of the conflict over the privatization of water services, a victory for the people opposing privatization, and the persistence of the water giants to make money any way they can.

The WFTU’s notion on water is in a direction completely opposite to that of its commercialization. **For us water is a public good, a valuable natural resource subject to absolute protection of its quantity and quality, which has to be provided with special care for the balanced satisfaction of the modern popular needs and for the maintenance of nature.**

**Specifically we declare and struggle to put into practice, that “water for human use” is not a merchantable product, it must not fall within the same category as food and should be provided adequately, under the direct responsibility of each government, equally to all citizens of the dominion, as a public good, not being amenable to the “laws of market” and ruled by the rules of health engineering.**



# Our position:

On this basis, water for human use:

- Needs to be collected, processed and distributed at minimum cost or even free of charge to the tap of the consumer under the central responsibility of a unified public conveyor without the involvement of private enterprises, and according to all rules of health engineering, which require: Construction and function of modern water process units, regular monitoring of the processed outflow, a reliable system for the destruction of micro organisms and parasites, a complete and safe distribution net to the users and their place of residence.
- The statutory safety provisions, the existence of which is a basic prerequisite for achieving the quality standards of water are to be kept under constant observation.
- The monitoring of water quality and its complying with all the relative conditions must be performed by public authorities.
- Public authorities should directly and effectively undertake all the corrective actions required in cases of divergence of water from the quality criteria and safe limits set by the relevant law of each state.



# BOOKS

## Free, Public and Qualitative Education for all



**The number of illiterate in the developing countries is higher than 75 million. One out of eight children does not attend even the preliminary education. 55% of those 75 million are girls.**

Our position about Education derives from the fact that knowledge has a social character and is being accumulated during the evolution of the society. The graduates from schools, technical institutions and universities -from skilled workers to scientists and inventors- have been educated by the society to obtain part of the socially accumulated knowledge and must use or expand this knowledge for the benefit of the society and not for the interests of a few individuals who own the means of production.

Problems that derive from the capitalist productive relations are related to:

- The access to education and the class barriers throughout the different levels of the educational systems causing high rates of illiteracy in many occasions or the formation of skilled workers according to the needs of the capitalist profitability.
- The context and the cost of the education.
- The poor or dangerous infrastructure.
- The working conditions of the teachers

The problems in education especially in the African Continent are very intense. The number of illiterate in the developing countries is higher than 75 million. One out of eight children does not attend even the preliminary education. 55% of those 75 million are girls. In Asia, Africa, in the poor countries of Latin America the percentages are horrifying. In the sub-Saharan Africa (Tanzania, Ethiopia) the one third of the children does not attend school. Millions of children never learn their countries alphabet. Millions of children are undernourished and suffer from preventable diseases, but nevertheless they walk miles to reach a place where they receive elementary classes. Under a tree, in a shack or in ruins.

The percentage of illiteracy in the age of 15-24 in Africa reaches to 23% for boys and 32% for girls, excluding the Northern Africa countries. In Sierra Leone this percentage climbs to 36% for boys and 56% for girls. In Burkina Faso 53% of boys and 67% of girls remain illiterate. In Mali its 64% of the boys and 77% of the girls who remain illiterate. In Southern Asia the percentages are 16% for the boys and 26% for the girls. There is also a high percentage of children around the world who role into school but abandon it down the road. About 25% of the children do not complete elementary education, while 45% does not complete secondary education.

However, even in the developed world the educational process has class criteria. This affects mainly the context of education but also the class barriers throughout the educational

system for the children of the poor and popular families. Though the educational procedure either in the public education system which functions with private-economic criteria or in the private schools, the provided knowledge is the one that can be used for and not against the ruling class.

More and more children are being driven to the technical education, in order to become skilled workers that will only have the required knowledge to undertake the task they need to fulfill and not to understand the whole process of production and the productive relations behind this economic system. They are not taught the laws of nature and evolution of society; How to become complete personalities using all their capabilities and talents in order to affect their future and improve it for the benefit of the whole society.

The educational process produces people who will be confused, ignorant of their history and the history of the popular movements around the world, easily manipulated to the choices of the monopolies to invest on the one or the other field of the economy.

Only a small elite is being educated under the best conditions in order to be used for the development of technology in favor of the capital.



# Our position:

There have been a series of important struggles from the student movements around the world against the tuition fees and the privatization of the education. The trade union movement must be on the frontline of this struggle not only in solidarity with the students struggles. The issue of education is first and foremost and a social issue.

We call the teachers and the professors and the trade unions of all sectors to struggle for a public, free and qualitative education throughout its levels from kindergarten to Ph.D. We need educators that will try to build people with free consciousness, with ideals and principles. We need educators that will try to build militant young people who will fight for their rights and the interest of the working class and the society.

We struggle for free qualitative books for all pupils and students, to be delivered on time under the responsibility of the state.

We struggle for school infrastructure that meets the needs of the educational process and all the safety precautions.

We struggle for teachers who are backed by their studies and by the state in providing qualitative, creative education that will create free people.





# MEDICINES

## Free medicines for all the people



**Multinational companies are allowed to prevent (actually to block) the production of the sufficient quantities of medicine in order to keep up the prices and to profit from the panicking and the flu, when it is manifested.**

At least one third of the World's population has no regular access to medicines. Inequity in access to essential medicines is part of inequity in health care.

The medicines, in capitalism are not a public good, but a commodity for capitalist profitability.

For example, two companies – Glaxo and Roche – which produce the medicine used for the H5N1 (“bird flu”) and the H1N1 (“swine flu”), have a special “right” that is offered to them by the political and economic system. A system whose core is built upon the Latin medieval phrase: “your death my life”. These companies are allowed to prevent (actually to block) the production of the sufficient quantities of medicine in order to keep up the prices and to profit from the panicking and the flu, when it is manifested.

The capitalist governments have chosen, over decades, to allow a strange system for developing medicines to build up. Most of the work carried out by scientists to bring a drug to your local pharmacist is done in government-funded university labs, paid for by our taxes.

Drug companies usually come in late in the process of development, and pay for part of the expensive, but largely uncreative final stages, like buying some of the chemicals and trials that are needed. In return, then they own the exclusive rights to manufacture and profit from the resulting medicine for years. Nobody else can make it.

The drug companies who owned the patent for Aids drugs went to court to stop the post-Apartheid government of South Africa producing generic copies of it – which are just as effective – for \$100 a year to save their dying citizens. They wanted them to pay the full \$10,000 a year to buy the branded version – or nothing. In the poor world, the patenting system every day puts medicines beyond the reach of sick people.

In the beginning of the '90s, India and Brazil decided to break the patent of the medicine owned by the pharmaceuticals and began the production of generics –equally effective- drugs for the treatment of HIV/AIDS. The difference with the so called “prototypes” is that the generics are much cheaper. The result was impressive: the amount of 10.000 – 15.000 dollars that was required for the annual pharmaceutical treatment of an HIV patient had dropped 95%!

The pharmaceuticals went crazy. It was then, when the system started doing its job: In 1994 the pharmaceuticals had forced within the framework of the World Health Organization (WHO) the TRIPS agreement. What was that deal about? That for at least 20 years and in any case until 2005, the company that had

invented a new medicine would hold the ultimate “intellectual property”. However, because of their “philanthropist” feelings they promised to accept their demand to break the patent, if it was a matter of public health. Under one condition: That the one who would undertake the production of generics would be the national pharmaceutical of each company. A detail that we must not miss: Most of the poor countries have no national pharmaceutical company.

The result: HIV/Aids in Africa are spreading. The average life expectancy has dropped to 47 in comparison to the 62 years it was two decades ago.

Today, India is known as the ‘pharmacy to the developing world’ and is something of a hero in the fight for affordable drugs for the poor. The reason for this is it's able to produce cheap generic medicines because it was not issuing drug patents until 2005. This means generic companies are able to mass produce and sell non-patented medicines at a fraction of the price of their multinational corporation counterparts.

India was legally forced, under pain of prosecution, to adhere to World Trade Organisation (WTO) intellectual property regulations in 2005. But it still has a section of its Patent Act, section 3(d), that is designed to prevent the patenting of new uses and forms of known medicines.

Now, lest you are misled into thinking that Indian companies are providing a charitable service, they most certainly are not. Of the top 50 billionaires in India, according to Forbes Rich list, seven are individuals involved with the pharmaceutical industry.

But apparently, multinational corporations want more. So while Indian companies presumably sell at a high enough profit to satisfy their billionaires, for the multinationals this is not enough.

The 12 biggest pharmaceutical companies had revenues up to 430 b dollars and profits up to 78 b dollars, while occupying 890 million workers. Amongst them, Johnson&Johnson had 63 billion dollars revenues and 8 billion dollars profits and GlaxoSmithkline had 44,7 b dollars revenues and 8.4 b dollars profits.

The Swiss company Novartis is currently in the Supreme Court of India fighting to overturn section 3(d) of the Patent Act and keep its patent on a new crystalline salt form of the anti-cancer drug imatinib mesylate which it sells in the market, under the brand name Gleevec, at 120,000 rupees (\$2,600) per month.

Since the original drug is not patented in India, generic drug companies produce and sell

Gleevec to chronic myeloid leukemia patients at less than one-tenth of Novartis's price i.e. for about 8,000 rupees (\$175) per month. A new patent could give Novartis a 20-year monopoly on the drug, a terrifying prospect for the world's poor: especially as it could have consequences for so many other drugs.

About 80 per cent of anti-AIDS drugs and 92 per cent of drugs for children with AIDS across the developing world come from Indian generic manufacturers. India is shown as the lifeline of poor patients, especially in the poorest parts of Africa. If section 3(d) is overturned, any meaningful effort to make these vital medicines available to the world's poorest will be put in jeopardy.'

The argument in defense of this system offered by Big Pharma is simple, and sounds reasonable at first: we need to charge large sums for "our" drugs so we can develop more life-saving medicines. But a detailed study by Dr Marcia Angell, the former editor of the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine, says that only 14 per cent of their budgets go on developing drugs. The rest is just profits.

They spend virtually nothing on the diseases that kill the most human beings, like malaria, because the victims are poor, so there's hardly any profit to be sucked out.

Furthermore, the transnational pharmaceuticals use poor countries of the Third World for their trials. They find "poor" patients and use them as "Guinea Pigs". Such facts have been witnessed in many cities of India (i.e Sevagram)

The drug companies have spent more than \$3bn on lobbyists and political "contributions" over the past decade in the US alone. They have paid politicians to make the system work in their interests.



## Our Position:

**The WFTU believes that health is not a business; the life of workers cannot be used to get profits and speculate.**

**Social security was maybe the most important achievement of the Working Class in many countries during the 20th century. Today, the capital makes its own huge counterattack to get revenge. So in almost all countries of the world the retirement age is increasing, pensions are being reduced, health is becoming a commodity, medicines are getting more and more expensive and health systems are being privatized. Private insurance and speculation are expanding continuously.**

**The WFTU and the class trade union movement have supported the struggles of workers in all countries that were claiming their rights to Social Security. In the current conditions, with the rapid progress of technology and science, with the rapid increase in productivity of work, we are demanding the existence in every country of a public, universal, obligatory system of Social Security, with full cover, free Medicare, with reduction of the retirement age and increase in pensions. Only in this way workers will be able to live with dignity.**

**We must struggle in each country for a state organization of medicine which will be active in the medical research, the control of medicines, in studies and will open new paths for the production of medicine not by the private pharmaceuticals but by the states. The progress of technology and bio-technology can be utilized for the needs of the ordinary people.**



# HOUSING

## Decent housing for all



**About 1.6 billion people live in substandard housing (slums) and 100 million are homeless.**

The world is experiencing a global housing crisis. About 1.6 billion people live in substandard housing (slums) and 100 million are homeless. In Brazil alone, 19 million people live without safe homes without running water, sewage or other basic public services, according to the 2012 report of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

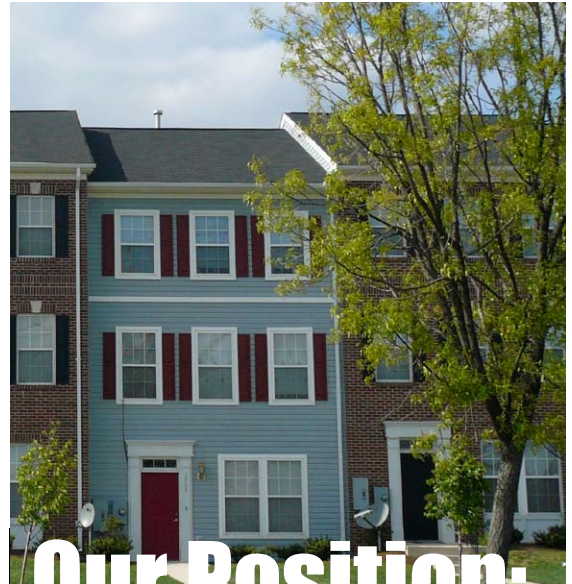
Under the current conditions of capitalist crisis evictions from buildings are more and more frequent, suffered by working families who had paid rent faithfully for years but who can no longer pay after their wages have been reduced or they have lost their jobs.

Housing cannot be merchandized, but must be a right for every worker.

The lack of decent and affordable housing is a profound crisis of human rights. Cities and towns across the World have grown rapidly and re-developed without ensuring that the process of development safeguards fundamental human rights. Public housing has been demolished and previously affordable housing has become prohibitively expensive. In this context, whole communities, mostly poor and working class, are continually being displaced from neighborhoods, in many cases where families have lived for generations. Increasing homelessness, overcrowding, and declining quality of life for families and the people all painfully reflect the human costs of this barbaric capitalist system.

Earthquakes and natural phenomena causing flooding cannot be prevented or controlled. However, the scientific and technological achievements provide the humanity with all the necessary means in order to minimize their implications to the lives and the households of the humanity.

The capitalist anarchy mode of building and the lack of central planning from the governments leave the people in the mercy of these phenomena. Over-populated cities and densely build up capitals. Lack of open spaces for the population to access in times of emergency. Inappropriate roads which block the access to the ambulances and the fire tracks. Dangerous buildings that coexist with densely build up areas (gas stations etc.). Unsafe working places in bad conditions. Gas pipes that spread across the residential areas without proper and constant control according to the safety regulations. Houses damaged by previous earthquakes that are not being repaired. Whole cities that are being built in the way of rivers.



## Our Position:

**Everyone has a human right to housing, which means all persons, regardless of income, have the right to occupy a safe, secure, habitable, and affordable home in peace and dignity, free from forced eviction.**

**It is every government's obligation to respect, protect and fulfill this right. The human right to housing is articulated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:**

**Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.**

**We call upon the members and the friends of the WFTU to promote and add in their list of demands the need for housing for all the workers and the people.**



# CONCLUSIONS:

The basic conclusions that we must keep are:

**1.** The food, the water, the medicine etc. are commodities and profit-providers for the capitalists. On the contrary, for WFTU and the militant trade unions those are “social goods” and everyone must have the right to obtain them free of charge or in cheap prices, from public organizations, in sufficiency, with qualitative characteristics and according to the safety of the public health.

**2.** The strategic of the transnationals’ and the monopolies increases the prices of the “social goods” and destroys the living standards of the workers. It attacks the poor farmers and affects negatively the environment.

**3.** The capitalists, the cartel of capital plunder the wealth-producing resources of the countries and the people, especially those of the Third World.

**4.** They manage in many ways to control the quantity and quality of food, water and medicine. They have the ability with biotechnology to affect the habits, the psychology and the life expectancy of the ordinary people.

**5.** The international Organizations such as FAO, the WHO etc. are controlled by the multinationals and their decisions are, overtly or covertly, against the working people, the poor peasants, against the population. Usually, they limit themselves to the description of the situation and the publication of statistics.

# The Action of WFTU

The Presidential Council of the WFTU decided to organize for these issues an International Action Day on the 3rd of October 2012. All members, all friends of WFTU must organize a specific action. Specific initiatives. To work, to establish a program of action with boldness, creativity, with context and forms that will be in the same orientation with our positions.

- We must unite the workers, the poor farmers, the peasants, the indigenous populations with our militant platform.
- We must publish announcements, posters, articles, memorandums, letters of protest that will inform the working people.
- We must organize activities in the working places, in the factories.
- We must underline that the concrete solution of the problems can only come through the overthrow of the capitalist exploitation.
- We must present our demands to the governments, the International Organisations and demand immediate solutions.



# **SYMBOLIC “TRIALS” EVERYWHERE**

## **against**

# **TRANSNATIONALS**

All members and friends of WFTU must organize from today until the 3rd of October a “trial” denouncing the multinationals and the capitalist barbarity.

Facts and documents must be presented for the plundering of the wealth-producing resources in their countries and their sectors by the multinationals and the monopolies.

To prove that if there were no exploitation and no profiting from the capital the workers would be able to satisfy the contemporary needs for food, water, medicine, housing and clothing.

Especially on the October 3rd we all must organize specific action and inform in time the WFTU Central Offices about the action we chose.



**WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS**

Athens, Greece June 2012

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