

THE G20 PLATFORM OF COMMON DEMANDS



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The G20 is an unelected and select group of countries whose membership was originally drawn in response to the financial crises of the 1990s.¹ The group came to its current position of prominence as a result of the latest wave of crises starting in 2007, as it had become clear that the G8 were incapable of responding without the collaboration of those from outside their number. The G20 held its first Heads of State summit in Washington DC in November 2008, with subsequent summits in London, Pittsburgh and Toronto. Future meetings are planned for Korea (November 2010), France (2011) and Mexico (2012).

The G20 has illegitimately proclaimed itself to be the premier forum of global economic governance for the future. In particular, the G20 seeks to dictate which bodies should be entrusted with responsibility for policing the global economy on its behalf. To this end, the G20 has been instrumental in reviving the very international institutions that were responsible for the current crisis, most notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the Basel Committee. The World Trade Organisation (WTO), for its part, waits anxiously for its cue from the G20 to be able to pull itself out its current state of paralysis. By contrast, G20 leaders have ignored the parallel process of economic analysis and governance ongoing within the framework of the United Nations.

The G20's policy agenda is driven primarily by the interests of global capital, as business leaders meet regularly in closed session with G20 ministers in the run-up to the G20 summits. The G20 summit to be held in Korea in November 2010 will include the G20 Seoul Business Summit, which aims to bring together around 120 "top global CEOs" with G20 heads of state to discuss corporate priorities for world trade, investment, financial services and economic growth.² Contrary to events at the UN, where more open and formal civil society consultation processes are held, civil society organizations and social movements are forcibly excluded from G20 summits which, in turn, have become increasingly militarized projections of state power.

The G20 has chosen until now to endorse the policy choices that benefit global capital at the expense of working people, local communities and ecosystems the world over. Despite the profound crisis of capitalism, which continues to reverberate throughout the global economy, the

G20 is trying to promote further liberalisation of trade, investment, finance and public services as a solution to the crisis. In so doing, the G20 continues to broaden the agenda under its control, which now ranges from climate issues to development aid, and even global hunger. The G20 also seeks to create new markets in economic and social sectors, which have previously been protected from corporate penetration in order to serve the common good rather than private profit. Meanwhile, none of the policies being debated in the G20 will address the need for fundamental change to the dominant model.

Recognizing that profound and fundamental change to the system is the ONLY solution to the crisis, member organisations and social movements of Our World Is Not For Sale make the following demands:

Global Governance: In response to the crisis of global economic governance, we insist:

- that the G20 not be considered as having any legitimacy as the premier forum of global economic governance since only a forum which includes all countries, regardless of their economic power, can legitimately make decisions on major issues pertaining to the world economy;
- that, the United Nations – or G192 – should be identified as the premier forum for global economic governance, and therefore steps must be taken to strengthen and increase the UN's capacity to democratically perform this role, not only by recognizing the equal rights of all member countries, but also by being in constant dialogue with and accountable to the peoples of the world;
- that the WTO, IMF and World Bank be completely overhauled and reformed, brought under control of the United Nations and reoriented so that new policies and programs are designed to serve the development of a new, alternative economic model.

Economic Model: The neoliberal economic model must be replaced by a new economic model that:

- is designed for the benefit, well-being and rights of all peoples throughout the world and of nature itself and the sustainability of the planet, rather than for the maximization of corporate power and profit, which is achieved primarily through the overexploitation of nature and labour in the current global economic model;

1 <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/g8-g20/news/how-canada-made-the-g20-happen/article1609690/>

2 <http://www.seoulg20businesssummit.org/en/>

- develops new and bold economic strategies designed to foster inclusive development and create and stimulate decent jobs for all, with the priority being put on the creation of green jobs and green industries for the future;
 - adopts a new financial architecture that provides capital for just and sustainable forms of development; ensures greater autonomy for the different regions of the world and eliminates all forms of speculation;
 - promotes greater integration of the people and countries at the regional level, which includes recognizing new regional financial institutions that contribute to sustainable and equitable development, and are independent from existing IFIs;
 - supports small farmers, fisherfolk and food sovereignty rather than serving the interests of agribusiness corporations and a global food system that is environmentally unsustainable;
 - tackles the challenges of climate change by systemically altering the industrial models of production and consumption rather than relying on false market-based “solutions”;
 - replaces free trade and investment regimes [bilateral, bi-regional, and global] with new trade and investment rules that serve development priorities that are just, sustainable, and democratic;
 - recognizes that nature and peoples of the South are the true creditors of the historical, social, cultural, ecological and financial debt and ensures that concrete measures are implemented to repay this debt;
 - guarantees fundamental rights — like the right to water, health, education and food — as priorities of the commons and therefore removing or excluding them from the directives of the market and the quest for profits.
 - rejects unlimited economic growth and financial speculation as operating goals of the economic system;
- major global priorities like eradicating poverty and mitigating the impacts of climate change;
 - the suspension of the Doha Round of negotiations at the WTO and of other bilateral and bi-regional free trade and investment agreements, which are to be replaced by consultations on the part of national governments with civil society and social movement organizations on alternative trade rules and mechanisms;
 - the imposition of a moratorium on bilateral trade and investment agreements that create rights for transnational corporations at the expense of collective rights and the establishment of an international binding tribunal with the power to judge corporations economic and ecological crimes;
 - the rejection of the Copenhagen Accord and, in the framework of the climate negotiations at the UNFCCC, adopt the proposals from the People’s Agreement of Cochabamba and between the countries in Annex 1, and the resumption of the necessary and legally binding commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to change unsustainable production and consumption models;
 - the promotion of alternative initiatives of economic integration, with the development of regional and local chains of production and consumption, incentives for regional trade and new attempts to build alternative regional financial architecture models;
 - the termination of all government subsidies for fossil fuel industries, which would serve the dual purpose of addressing both the climate and financial crisis while freeing up funds for transition to a truly sustainable, low carbon economy through the development of renewable energy sources;
 - the holding of integrated and participatory debt audits in order to proceed with the unconditional cancellation of the illegitimate debt imposed on countries from the Global South and the elimination of mechanisms that generate them;
 - the adoption of regulatory measures over the financial industry, including the break-up of large financial institutions; separation of investment and commercial functions; abolition of tax havens; end to speculation on currencies and commodities; controls on hedge and private equity funds, and the rolling back of current commitments at the WTO to liberalize financial services that impede governments from implementing such regulatory measures.

Transition Policies: In order to facilitate the transition to a new economic model and global economic governance, we immediately call for transition strategies, including:

- the reversal of mandatory austerity measures and the development of new stimulus packages designed to protect and promote the rights of the people, protect common goods and the rights of nature, and create socially just and environmentally sustainable jobs;
- the adoption of a Financial Transaction Tax [known as the Robin Hood Tax] on a broad range of financial instruments including stocks, bonds, currencies and derivatives to be used to finance

AS MEMBER GROUPS OF OUR WORLD IS NOT FOR SALE, WE ARE DETERMINED TO TAKE ACTION TO MAKE THESE DEMANDS HEARD BY THE G20 SUMMIT LEADERS.



“Our World is Not for Sale” (OWINFS) is a worldwide network of organizations, activists and social movements which opposes corporate globalization embodied in the current global trading system and its underlying rules. OWINFS grew out of the successful international campaign against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and the 1999 popular uprising against the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Seattle. OWINFS is committed to a sustainable, socially just, democratic and accountable multilateral trading system.

Our vision is of a global economy that asserts the interests of people over corporations and provides decent jobs and vital goods and services for all people. This new vision must be built on the principles of economic and climate justice, ecological sustainability, social well-being, gender equity and democratic accountability.