

**El Salvador Declaration  
of the peoples of Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean  
Before the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean  
and the European Union in their bi-regional relations**

We, the signatory organisations, the MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes Regionales de ONG de América Latina y el Caribe, and CONCORD, the European NGO confederation for relief and development, representatives of NGOs, social movements, associations, platforms and networks of the Latin American, Caribbean and European civil society:

**Whereas:**

1. Both regions are going through institutional crises which are different in nature and scope, expressed differently but which reflect the unease of citizens who feel that the political and economic elites do not represent their interests, perpetuate types of development which are not very sustainable and are inequitable while reducing the guarantees for respect for human rights.

In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), growing inequalities, insistence on growth rather than on development, the crisis in political representation, large-scale social mobilisation, institutional coups, corruption, polarisation and political violence, in particular against defenders of human rights and the environment, are signs of these processes. In Europe, increasing inequality, the promotion of adjustment policies, the questioning of the European project, including the departure of the United Kingdom from the bloc, the weakening of traditional parties and the growth of xenophobic and nationalist movements, together with policies to restrict civil society space in several countries, are features of this trend.

2. LAC continues to be the most unequal region in the world. The cycle of high prices and the demand for raw materials that made sustained economic growth possible has not resolved the weaknesses of its socio-economic structure but rather in many cases resulted in an increase in the structural gaps in terms of poverty and the distribution of wealth, ethnic inequalities, inequalities between age groups, gender and sexual orientation, gaps in employment and productivity, in terms of access to education and health, inequalities between regions, infrastructure, access to technology and innovation and the environment. In Europe, inequality and poverty have risen since the financial crisis, with the two main causes of that situation being the policies of austerity (cuts in social investment - particularly in the areas of health, education and social security) and the regressive tax policies pursued.
3. Growing inequalities are driven by financial speculation, tax systems within which the richest categories don't pay taxes, bi-regional trade that instead of promoting inclusion stimulates the flight of millions in illicit financial flows directly towards tax havens and tax shelters -seriously eroding State's financial capacity and stability-, tax evasion and tax avoidance schemes used by powerful corporations and rich individuals in order to run from their social responsibility, directly affecting our societies. Corporate power uses the State in order to enjoy privileges and fiscal exemptions that weaken the redistributive capacity of our countries. Related to this, environmental consequences stemming from predatory extractivist activities, land-grabbing, high levels of public and private corruption, excessive privileges that protect private investment conferred by supranational mechanisms violating national sovereignty, show that growing inequalities aren't just a direct consequence, but the main driver for the violation of our people's human rights.
4. Although the international agreements signed in 2015, in particular Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, may be inadequate instruments to respond to the global climate crisis, they could help to support new insights and practices if their implementation does in fact promote the integration of economic, social and environmental aspects of development. Civil society values and promotes their collective implementation based on values of solidarity and cooperation among peoples and States. In that sense, it is necessary to increase and improve bi-regional exchange in a collaborative, supportive and consistent way.
5. The context of cooperation in LAC and Europe has changed over recent decades; priorities have changed and new ways have been adopted that increasingly give precedence to trade relations over the reduction of poverty, inequality and human rights. There is an urgent need to rethink and find new ways to continue to cooperate and

contribute to global governance consistent with the principles of effective development cooperation.

6. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) have not had a positive impact on or benefited the peoples of the two regions. On the contrary, they have favoured the interests of transnational corporations at the expense of the rights of workers and have exacerbated political, economic and environmental weak points. Today, as a result of the growing number of conflicts involving private companies over control of natural resources, local communities have had their rights to a healthy environment, the land and water affected and, in most cases, they are not consulted nor do they share in their use and their benefits.
7. The current model of development, based primarily on growing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by promoting extractive industries, the production of energy from fossil fuels, the expansion of agro-based industries and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, is putting increasing pressure on land, water and biodiversity. The effects of climate change are already being felt in both regions, primarily in Central America and the Caribbean.
8. Civil society and social movements have the right to express themselves, organise, speak out and act freely and independently of political powers and to participate through mechanisms that guarantee the full exercise of human rights individually and collectively, gender equality and the recognition of diversity. It is the duty of the State to put policies in place to ensure an environment conducive to the exercise of these rights. Although there are numerous international and regional commitments that recognise participation as a key factor in advancing democratic life and governance in developing countries, there is a lack of meaningful and inclusive mechanisms that facilitate and promote it.

### **We call on the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and of the European Union:**

#### **A. In the framework of multilateral processes that contribute to socio-economic equality, to ensure the enjoyment of human rights and combating climate change:**

9. To implement, with ambition and based on a human-rights approach, the various agreements and roadmaps defined at global level and constructed on a multilateral basis: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, among others. To ensure the active participation of the civil society of both continents at every stage in the definition and implementation of these policies.
10. To implement public policies that guarantee universal social protection and solidarity, based on human rights. To urge States to generate and protect sources of decent and dignified work, provide services and carry out public works aimed at the general welfare, ensuring that public-private partnership schemes are not directed toward the increase of private gain as a central criterion, but that they generate impacts improving public infrastructure and quality of services and the reduction of poverty. Promote the reduction of inequalities, access to good-quality public services and the common property of the people, particularly the most vulnerable groups - women, children, young people and casual workers, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and people of African descent - seeking to break the intra- and inter-generational cycles of poverty.
11. To apply comprehensive and coordinated migration policies among countries on the basis of unconditional respect for human rights, social inclusion and sustainable development, to generate an effective framework of access to the right to mobility, to international protection of asylum-seekers and to facilitate regular migration. To banish the criminalisation of human mobility, creating conditions to ensure the exercise by any person of the right not to migrate and the right to migrate, as well as mechanisms to ensure the full participation of migrants and their families in the development of public policies and the construction of inclusive societies from cultural diversity. To this end, we encourage the governments of both regions to ratify ILO Conventions 97 and 143 which guarantee the rights of migrants.
12. In the context of new indebtedness, to promote a public indebtedness audit process in both regions with the participation of civil society in order to reject illegal debt, guaranteeing an economy that serves the people, to renegotiate the terms and conditions thereof and suspend payments until its conclusion.
13. To establish tax and fiscal policies truly guided towards reaching Fiscal Justice between our regions in order to

combat inequalities and social exclusion. Make sure that transnational corporations, which carry out bi-regional commercial activities, actually pay taxes, abandoning the 'race to the bottom', eliminating fiscal privileges and tax exemptions for transnational and national capital. Radically transform tax systems in order to make them more progressive, mainly by taxing rent, earnings and financial assets instead of consumption. Implement legislation geared towards combating tax evasion and tax avoidance. Eliminate tax havens or shelters and illicit financial flows. Support the initiative launched at the UN by Ecuador and civil society organizations on eliminating tax havens and creating an intergovernmental body in charge of regulating tax-related aspects of global trade.

14. To promote and create additional financial and cooperation mechanisms in order to invest in renewable energy generation, the removal of carbon from the production complex and sustainable transport.
15. To devise mechanisms for funding and cooperation to increase the ability of the population to adapt to the effects of climate change, reduce losses and damage caused by extreme weather events, and the adaptation of key sectors such as agriculture, water and coastal areas susceptible to erosion and sea-level rise.
16. To support the development of legal frameworks at national and regional level to promote and finance policies encouraging family farming, recognising its contribution to food security and sovereignty.
17. To implement mechanisms and resources for the sustainable management of water and the recovery of ecosystems, ensuring food sovereignty on the basis of native and locally-adapted seeds, and regional environmental and physical planning, prioritising areas exposed to the impacts of climate change.
18. To urge the authorities at regional and national level to adopt and move toward the comprehensive management approach to disaster risk reduction as a basic strategy for strengthening the resilience of communities. Within this framework, to design policies for comprehensive risk management to reconsider regions from a watershed approach taking into account resources and soil types.

**B. To foster a relationship that strengthens democracy and promotes a better balance between human rights, welfare and trade:**

19. To base the economic relations between the two regions in a coherent and integrative framework that will strengthen democracy and promote a better balance between the economy, human rights and protection of the environment, rather than on the basis of the deregulation and the protection of investments, with the consequent reduction of labour, social, environmental and cultural rights. To halt ongoing negotiations - such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), and the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) - in the context of bi-regional integration and cooperation, respecting the integration processes in each of the continents.
20. To support the creation of a legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with regard to human rights. To participate actively in the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights for a substantive, cooperative and constructive negotiation on the specific elements to be included in such an instrument as well as to establish a roadmap for the conclusion of the negotiations within a short period. To clarify the type of activities in respect of which businesses have to accept legal liability (in civil, criminal and administrative law). To implement those legal standards at national level, including a mandatory process of due diligence for businesses.
21. To reaffirm, in both regions, the promotion, ratification and implementation of international labour standards: freedom of association and collective bargaining and standards against forced labour and child labour, among others. In addition, to support the process undertaken by the ILO on the promotion of decent work in value chains and the regulatory and implementation processes of Convention No 169 in relation to the prior, free and informed consultation of the communities in the framework of investment and development projects.

**C. To promote equitable and cooperative bi-regional policies:**

22. To base relations between LAC and the EU on the principle of coherent development policies which respect the autonomy of peoples. Under this principle, the EU must implement its binding commitments in order to ensure that its internal and external policies - trade, energy, etc. - are consistent with its development objectives within the framework of the ambitious implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreements. LAC must advance in these commitments.

23. To implement Chapter 7 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan recognising the importance and urgency of ensuring gender equality. To extend their strong support to the Belém do Pará Convention, the Istanbul Convention and their respective follow-up mechanisms, to exercise a referential role in the implementation of the objectives referred to in the Action Plan in relation to the eradication of violence against women in both regions and make available the necessary economic, technical and institutional resources to achieve progress.
24. To guarantee the human rights of women, including the right to sexual and reproductive health, ensuring their physical, sexual and economic autonomy, access to effective justice and to eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination against women, girls and adolescents, as well as diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. To recognise that the sexual division of labour, the invisibility of care provision and unequal access to resources are an obstacle to the exercise of the rights of women; to implement monetary policies that recognise in monetary terms the work done by women in unpaid productive and reproductive areas. In addition, to implement monitoring systems and mechanisms for effective social and political participation by and representation of women's organisations and movements.
25. To take measures to ensure the fulfilment of all the rights of girls and young people, in every circumstance. This includes those who are in particularly vulnerable situations: those without access to basic services, who are in extreme poverty, are victims of human trafficking, sexual and labour exploitation, who have lost being cared for by their families or are at risk of doing so, are in the midst of migrating (alone or with others), face forced recruitment by armed groups or are the victims of violence of any kind. This guarantee must be in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its Optional Protocols, and the Comments of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.
26. To take measures to ensure the fulfilment of all the rights of older adults established in the Madrid Summit in 2002 and ratified in Madrid + 15 in 2017.
27. To continue political and financial cooperation between the two regions, recognising the development gaps that still exist - such as the differing scales of inequality and poverty - looking for alternative and more effective ways to ensure sustainable development objectives, including civil society in their definition.

**D. To promote greater space for civil society:**

28. To promote concrete measures rejecting all forms of infringement on freedom of expression and non-violent action of CSOs and communities (intimidation, prosecution, repressive law enforcement, etc.) and to ensure effective public policies to protect defenders of human rights and the environment and trade union and community leaders.
29. To promote measures aiming at the establishment of an enabling environment for CSOs, including greater access to funding, as well as balanced and fair legal and tax frameworks.
30. To guarantee regional policies ensuring genuine participation by civil society in the implementation of Agenda 2030.
31. To promote effective mechanisms ensuring the participation of civil society in the framing, implementation and evaluation of public policies and programmes at local, national and international levels. To promote more flexible, complete and transparent dissemination of information on the relations and agreements between the EU and LAC to support the proposals of civil society.

**E. The current situation of CELAC:**

32. In view of the impact of the crisis on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in various spaces of Latin American integration, we express our concern and call for dialogue and a peaceful solution to this crisis.
33. We express our deep concern at the political and humanitarian crisis, as well as the escalation of violence generated by the confrontation between Government and opposition.
34. We call on Venezuelan society as a whole to establish an effective dialogue between all parties, with the aim of building a political agreement that will allow urgent measures to be taken to deal with the consequences of this crisis - as well as to lay the foundations to ensure full respect for democracy and human rights.
35. Likewise, we demand - within the framework of the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs - that it be the Venezuelan people who decide on their future together with any international diplomatic support that may be

required.

The undersigned undertake to continue to promote solidarity between the peoples of Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe in order to tackle common problems.

¡Berta Cáceres Vive! (Berta Cáceres Lives On!)

San Salvador, September 2017



### **Mesa de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes de ONG de América Latina y el Caribe**

- ABONG- Asociación Brasileña de Organismos No Gubernamentales.
- ACCIÓN- Asociación Chilena de Organismos No Gubernamentales.
- ALOP- Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción al Desarrollo
- ALIANZA ONG – República Dominicana
- ANC- Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo, Perú.
- ANONG- Asociación Nacional de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales Orientadas al Desarrollo, Uruguay.
- AFM - Articulación Feminista Marcosur.
- ADOC- Alianza Democrática de Organizaciones Civiles, México
- ARMAAD – Asociación Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y de la Diáspora
- ASONOG – Asociación de Organismos no Gubernamentales Honduras
- CEAAL- Consejo de Educación Popular de América Latina y el Caribe
- CCONG Confederación Colombiana de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales.
- Convergencia de Organismos Civiles, México.
- CONGCOOP- Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas Guatemala.
- Encuentro de ONG para el desarrollo, Argentina.
- FONG – Federación de Organismos no Gubernamentales de Nicaragua
- Propuesta Ciudadana, Perú.
- Latindadd- Red Latinoamericana sobre Deuda, Desarrollo y Derechos.
- MODES – Movimiento de ONGD para el Desarrollo Solidario de El Salvador
- PIDHDD- Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo.
- Pojoaju- Asociación de Organismos No Gubernamentales de Paraguay.
- Sinergia - Asociación Venezolana de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil
- UNITAS- Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social Bolivia



### **CONCORD - European NGO confederation for relief and development**

#### National NGO platforms:

- Austria (GlobaleVerantwortung)
- Belgium (CONCORD Belgium - CNCD-11 11 11, ACODEV, 11 11 11, NGO-FEDERATIE)
- Bulgaria (BPID)
- Czech Republic (FoRS)
- Cyprus (CYINDEP)
- Croatia (CROSOL)
- Denmark (CONCORD Denmark)
- Estonia (AKÜ)
- Finland (Kehysry)
- France (Coordination SUD)
- Germany (VENRO)
- Greece (Hellenic Platform for Development)
- Hungary (HAND)
- Ireland (Dóchas)
- Italy (CONCORD Italia)
- Latvia (Lapas)
- Lithuania (LU)
- Luxembourg (Cercle)
- Malta (SKOP)
- Netherlands (Partos)
- Poland (Grupa Zagranica)
- Romania (FOND)
- Portugal (Plataforma ONGD)
- Slovakia (MVRO)
- Slovenia (SLOGA)
- Spain (Coordinadora)
- Sweden (CONCORD Sverige)
- United Kingdom (BOND)

#### Networks:

- ActionAid International
- ADRA
- ALDA (associate member)
- ACT Alliance EU
- CARE
- Caritas Europa
- CBM International
- EU-CORD
- Handicap International
- IPPF European Network
- Islamic Relief Worldwide
- Oxfam International
- Plan Europe
- Save the Children
- Solidar
- SOS Children's Villages International
- Terre des Hommes IF
- WorldVision
- World Wide Fund for Nature (associate member)

**This statement also has the support of the following organisations:**

- Commission Justice et Paix de Belgique francophone
- FOS – Socialistische solidariteit vzw
- CGIL – Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro
- WSM – World Solidarity
- CIFCA – Copenhagen Initiative for Central America and Mexico
- Grupo Sur
- OGBL Solidarité Syndicale
- Centre Tricontinental – CETRI
- Paz y Desarrollo
- Movimiento Africa '70
- Alianza por la Solidaridad
- Movimiento por la paz – MPDL
- AWO International (Germany)
- ETIS (Equipo de Trabajo e Investigación Social) - Argentina
- Cotidiano Mujer - Uruguay
- REDLAMYC Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña de lucha por los derechos de niñas niños y adolescentes
- PDRR (Programa de Diálogo Regional Rural) - Centroamérica
- Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos “Segundo Montes Mozo S.J.” (CSMM) - Ecuador
- Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos - CDH - Ecuador
- Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Laboral y Agrario, CEDLA - Bolivia

## **CONCLUSIONS OF THE EU-LAC CSO FORUM**

The EU-LAC Civil Society Forum met in San Salvador on 7 and 8 September 2017 to discuss over two days in plenary sessions and working groups their main concerns and proposals on relations between the States of Latin America and the Caribbean and of the European Union.

Approximately 140 representatives of civil society organisations from both regions took part in talks to discuss and exchange ideas in six working groups on three main topics. Those topics were: 1) Trade relations and human rights; 2) New models of development in the context of Agenda 2030; 3) Democracy and civil society space.

The representatives discussed the state of play in relation to each of these issues and then made proposals for each one of them, from the point of view of civil society. These conclusions and discussions were presented in a plenary session.

The six summary documents which contain the discussions and proposals of the working groups **are included in the Declaration addressed to the Heads of State of the two regions as products and conclusions of the CSO Forum**. These summaries supplement and enrich the Declaration and, in turn, reflect the diversity of the voice of civil society.

Below are set out the conclusions of the Forum.

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### ***1. Conclusions on trade relations, investment, market and human rights between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union***

#### **Group 1:**

##### **Diagnosis**

1. The economic strategy developed in the last three decades in Latin America and the Caribbean has depended on extraction of both oil and minerals and on agricultural commodities.
2. This economic strategy has been maintained in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) - causing the primary nature or a return to it of the Latin American economy (monoculture of food, textile manufacturing under maquila conditions, with low added value, extraction of minerals, oil, gas, etc); productive extraction of bio-fuels (African oil palm, sugar cane).
3. The consequences have been: concentration of wealth; productive activities that generate employment for low-skilled workers and low wages - impacting on and worsening conditions of employment of mainly women and young people; strong environmental impacts by the intensive and indiscriminate use of natural resources in many of the extractive activities; impacts in terms of pollution of water sources as a result of contamination from productive activities.
4. In Europe, we find that the austerity policies of the past two decades promoted by the Troika and neo-conservative governments are seriously affecting the living conditions of millions of European citizens.
5. These austerity policies have focused on: deregulation, job insecurity and flexibility of conditions of employment; restrictive wage policies; deterioration of pension systems; encouraging redundancies; reduction or elimination of unemployment benefits, etc. which has led to accelerated growth in unemployment and inequality.



6. In both regions, we find the coincidence that the economic and political elites have promoted economic models and strategies for their own benefit. Public institutions have increasingly been placed exclusively at the service of the private interests of those elites. In the end, it is the expression of the primacy of capital above the common good.
7. In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, and particularly in Central America, we find that there is an increasingly close link between business sectors and illegal economic activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling, etc. which take advantage of the significant extent of institutionalised impunity in these countries.
8. We find that an essential element which has contributed to the growth of inequality in both regions is a Fiscal Policy which favours the economic and political elites. That fiscal policy has been based on privileges and tax exemptions given to powerful economic sectors, establishing a dangerous 'race to the bottom' in the levying of taxes by countries particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance by European transnational corporations in their business relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean, and tax evasion and avoidance by domestic capital in Latin America, huge illicit financial flows taking advantage of international trade and more regressive tax systems in both regions that have focused on taxing consumption rather than income, profits and assets.
9. The direct impact of this growing inequality has been the deepening of gender inequality, not only in the economic and labour spheres, but also in the field of gender-based violence.
10. The direct impact of Free Trade Agreements, also known as Association Agreements between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, has been to remove national industrialisation policies, encourage environmentally predatory practices by restricting the environmental policies of countries, job insecurity, the strengthening of transnational capital at the expense of small and medium-sized businesses and, finally, loss of sovereignty of nation states.

### Proposals

1. Stop negotiating and signing trade agreements which are informed by the overarching logic of the concept of free trade, given the impacts of exclusion, job insecurity and increasing poverty they cause in our societies.
2. Trade relations between the European Union and Latin America should be based on a logic other than the overarching logic of free trade. In a different type of trade relationship, the following should take precedence:
  - complementarity,
  - cooperation,
  - economic and productive inclusion,
  - social redistribution of the profits
3. There must be consistency between economic and financial policies that both regions may develop and Human Rights should be defended and promoted, guaranteeing a genuine economic democracy that includes significant variables of the new economic concept that Latin America and the Caribbean have been developing, referred to as the 'buen vivir' ('good living').
4. Encourage, at global governance level, the adoption of a binding provision for transnational corporate relations, in order to ensure the defence of Human Rights.
5. We actively support the initiative behind the international legally binding instrument to regulate, in international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations, being put before the United Nations Human Rights Council as an initiative of the Government of Ecuador. We demand that the Governments of the European Union and Latin America support the initiative and do not obstruct the adoption of such an instrument.
6. In the framework of the next summit of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in December of 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Governments of the European Union and Latin America should take steps to ensure that the clause on 'Recognition of the Special and Differential Treatment' of the Doha Round is effectively enforced; that clause creates an opportunity for developing countries to enhance sovereign policies in environmental, labour and economic matters.

7. The Governments of the European Union and Latin America must radically change their fiscal and tax policies and develop policies aimed at achieving fiscal justice. Fiscal policy is the main instrument to combat inequality and social exclusion. To that end, it is essential that international trade between the two regions pay taxes and halt the 'race to the bottom', and eliminate fiscal privileges and tax exemptions for transnational and domestic capital, which serves to highlight the disparities between economic sectors and erodes the financial capacity of nation states. It is essential to change radically tax systems into more progressive systems and cease taxing only consumption and redirect them to tax mainly income, earnings and assets. It is also essential to combat seriously tax evasion and tax avoidance by promoting anti-evasion and anti-avoidance legislation. Therefore, the efforts of Governments of both regions to get rid of tax havens and control and eliminate illicit financial flows is a priority task and a requirement of the civil societies of both regions. In that regard, we demand that the Governments of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean support the initiative launched in the framework of the United Nations by the Government of Ecuador and civil society organisations at global level for the elimination of tax havens and the creation of an intergovernmental body responsible for regulating at world level the tax and fiscal aspects of international trade.

## **Group 2:**

### Diagnosis

Economic and trade links between the EU and LAC are based on an extractivist model: this implies the presence and promotion of megaprojects (logistics, communications and energy infrastructure) and unequal trade relations according to the interests of capital and not of the majority. Despite the illusion of macroeconomic growth, it gives rise to:

- An increase in the inequality gap between rich and poor;
- Environmental degradation;
- Alienation and fragmentation of the population;
- Marginalisation and violence against vulnerable groups (indigenous peoples, people of African descent, rural areas and urban fringe areas, among others).

There are local and regional discussions (LAC) with the EU in relation to: approaches to human rights and human development, democracy, approaches to wealth redistribution. But this line of discussion only serves to provide a positive image of those spaces vis-a-vis the population and CSOs of the region.

### Analysis of the roles of various actors

- International cooperation: tendency to involve the private sector (under the umbrella of 'civil society'); there is a leaning towards multilateral cooperation involving the State in association with private enterprise (multiple modalities already doing well). This implies privatisation of public services and natural assets.
- United Nations: represents, first and foremost, the interests of the States which operate on the basis of big capital / transnational corporations.
- LAC and EU States: establish free trade agreements and cooperation arrangements that encourage the placement and penetration of transnational corporations (usually European corporations) which do not represent the interests of the great majority and eventually infringe human rights.
- LAC and EU CSOs: insufficiently connected between them and with limited ability to defend the interests of the great majority. Others are co-opted / criminalised / threatened by Governments.

The relationships of capital are extremely complex; they are closely linked to political parties and governments in both LAC and EU. Behind bilateral relations between 'countries' are the interests of large corporations.

### Proposals for actions addressed to civil society (what are we to do)

1. Strengthen the organisation of CSOs to improve their ability to denounce, investigate, provide information, communicate and make an impact.
2. Strengthen alliances between the CSOs in LAC and those in the EU (dialogue platforms).
3. Media campaigns aimed at sectors that to date have not shown any interest / awareness / involvement in supporting the struggles of CSOs and the great majority. / Use of social networks.

4. Better use of the EU Road Maps with the LAC CSOs.
5. Identify the weak spots of large enterprises to organise reports and strategies in Europe (large markets and with greater capacity of influence).
6. Ask the EU to provide greater support for CSOs for their work along the lines set out above.

#### Proposals for the Heads of State of LAC and EU

1. Demand strict compliance with the existing legal framework and agreements at international level relating to human rights: for example, ILO conventions (169), democratic agreements and so forth.
2. Greater recognition of the contributions of CSOs and the opening up of spaces for them to actively participate in the framing of treaties and trade agreements as well as in monitoring compliance with them.

## ***2. Conclusions on new models of development in the context of Agenda 2030***

### **Group 3:**

#### Diagnosis

1. We live within development models maintained by the capitalist system based on the implementation of neo-liberal agendas which exacerbate the conditions of poverty and inequality of people. This affects the most vulnerable sectors, marginalising certain groups by relegating them to areas where they are more at risk.
2. The present model of consumption has had an impact on the culture of people, with effects on the environment in terms of levels of pollution, taking control among the very young and generating a new culture of coexistence. At the same time, there are initiatives that are making progress in seeking to create new social practices.
3. There is clearly a contradiction between the driving forward of policies that, on the one hand, in theory generate development and, on the other, affect the way of life of people, exacerbate the level of criminalisation and persecution of social leaders, make life more commercialised and deplete common resources. Thus, the dialogues of Europe and Latin America represent a challenge.
4. Among the incentives to sustain these forms of production and consumption there is the personal satisfaction arising from consumption which encourages these forms of production without taking account of their impact.

#### Role and opportunities for the agendas to facilitate a more comprehensive approach and how to bring together the various aspects of sustainable development

Although these are agendas which do not provide an answer to the discussion over the development model and the system of life which we want to build, they are nonetheless instruments which allow the social and political actors to address emerging substantive issues arising at this point in history by requiring actors to make their position clear. Taking the view that we must redouble the effort, we consider that:

1. They are instruments of particular significance which may be regarded as frameworks for action.
2. They constitute political references for dialogue and negotiation with political actors.
3. One of the challenges is how to move forward on social mobilisation in a way which brings together favourable streams to push ahead the implementation of these agendas.
4. Recognition must be given to sectoral and regional struggles that are in line with what is being proposed and which by being given a voice could join forces with social actors. The challenge is to encourage the bringing-together of the various agendas - which can exchange and find synergies - assuming that there are struggles at regional level that are being given impetus by popular movements which, although not all are aware of the existence of agendas as political instruments, may find an echo in some of those being put forward. This could increase their strength and support, if we manage to include them within the frame of our struggle.
5. There must be progress in the field of ideas to oppose the hegemony of the media in order to bring these debates and their possibilities within the social frame.

6. We must create frameworks at the national level to make it possible to express and generate synergies for the implementation of agendas in policies and programmes, to include best practices, which are more consistent with a new development model based on a system which makes life a priority.
7. The challenge is also to find common axes to optimise resources and joint efforts.
8. We challenge ourselves to create comprehensive and wide-ranging associations, with more finely-tuned monitoring mechanisms. We must strengthen our work as a network.
9. It is necessary to maintain a comprehensive political perspective, with an undivided understanding of the approach to human rights. This assumes that progress involves disputes over the various interests that this type of proposal evinces. We are also aware that it will not be possible to implement the agenda if the development model is not revised, and this involves coming into contact with the hegemony of power.
10. It is important to position the agendas as commitments made by States which cannot be ignored by the Governments of the day.
11. Support the allocation of decision-making in the appropriate spaces and in a formulation such as to have an impact on public spaces of power.
12. Open dialogues for training and information on development agendas with organised communities with a pathway and a clear intent to search for alternatives. Review how we train and how we inform the population, especially the youth.
13. Strengthen partnerships with local and national governments of the various actors at local level in the regions using existing mechanisms.
14. Put forward plans and community work projects which provide answers to the specific demands and needs of the population. Demand the decentralisation of the use of the resources in the municipal budgets, recovering political confidence vis-a-vis other social and political actors.
15. It is necessary to retake the role of civil society, strengthening its ability as an actor on the basis of the generation of critical thinking by and for society.

### Proposals

Support new ways of living, with nature and its common resources, breaking with the concept of domination in work production relations. Include strategies for human development, such as access to health, freedom of association, trade policies, social services, and an energy policy and include comprehensive risk management, among others.

Learn from the accumulated historical and holistic way of understanding life, which is the legacy of the native peoples maintained throughout history, which must be used as a point of reference in the construction of a new society. There should be respect for the self-determination of peoples and the right to territories of peace to counter permanent threats that can trigger a war.

We therefore demand:

1. That the Summit of EU-CELAC Presidents should take place, as laid down, as a means of strengthening institutions.
2. That an approach to human rights and gender equality be implemented pursuant to and consistent with the various agendas for development and international frameworks which can be transformed into public policies and development plans.
3. That specific spaces for the participation of civil society be installed to generate formal mechanisms of genuine advisory and binding participation in decision-making to ensure that the voices are heard of those who have most been marginalised - women, the young and indigenous peoples - in the implementation of the agendas of development and access to resources.
4. That mechanisms be established to monitor, regulate and require private companies to fulfil their social responsibilities - and for the advancement of the agreements set out in the agendas.
5. That mechanisms should be set up to fund the implementation of the agendas that include fiscal policies and the fight against tax avoidance and evasion.

#### **Group 4:**

##### Proposals

1. Review the fulfilment of the 2015-2017 EU-CELAC Action Plan.
2. Develop a strategy of empowerment of the citizen over Agenda 2030 - at regional and community level, over duty bearers and over dissemination of and access to information on the agenda.
3. Implement national systems with substantial involvement of the civil society to decide, plan and monitor Agenda 2030.
4. Public policies should be the framework, consistent with Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement, within which to advance policies that are sustainable, with sufficient resources and generating synergies between trade, climate change and multilateralism.
5. Demand a form of financing which prioritises adaptation on climate mitigation and which does not support projects that generate social conflict or which are high emitters of CO2. Comply with the commitment to devote at least 0.7% of GDP to development aid and the application of fair fiscal policies which prevent tax evasion and tax avoidance.
6. Ensure that businesses and corporations respect the autonomy of States and comply with human rights and national and international law.
7. Contextualise and define implementation indicators in sectors and topics either not included or not sufficiently highlighted in Agenda 2030, such as those relating to the elderly and children, various forms of violence, migration and mobility, native peoples, multiculturalism and corruption.

### ***3. Conclusions on the crisis of democracy and authoritarian tendencies: the closure of spaces for civil society***

#### **Group 5:**

##### Diagnosis

1. We note that there is persecution and criminalisation of activists and defenders of human rights and environmental issues as well as suppression of CSOs. Often this is by authoritarian governments which put at risk participatory and representative democracy (sometimes through parallel groups). We also note that civil and social rights are restricted in many countries.

In the EU, there are also authoritarian tendencies, criminalisation of social protest, xenophobia and a decline in the quality of the dialogue between the State and civil society.

2. There is a contradiction between statements and policy on human rights and practice. Where treaties include clauses on democracy, the latter are not implemented.
3. The EU gives credence to the fact that there is formal democracy in many countries (for example, in middle-income countries). Thus, political democracy, the economy and social rights (social protection) is infringed; there is a decrease in funds for cooperation on social and political actions and more for the private sector.

##### Proposals

1. Eradicate corruption and promote transparency and accountability.
2. Apply the democracy clause and establish mechanisms for denouncing non-compliance.
3. Democratise the media. Support alternative media as opposed to media monopolies.
4. Implement mechanisms for citizen participation in the development of public policies, promoting the means of assessing citizen participation. Citizen participation, compliance with international human rights treaties and the rights of indigenous peoples and gender equality need to be analysed.  
Support reforms in the political and electoral systems.
5. Establish a dialogue and a relationship between the State and civil society to lay down mechanisms for development and ensure resources for their implementation and follow-up.
6. Set parameters to measure the quality of democracy.

7. Implement spaces for the follow-up of these actions which include the presence of civil society.

### **Group 6:**

#### **Diagnosis**

1. The political system is in crisis. The people do not feel they are represented by the political power. This also has to do with the interaction between the political and corporate power: both promote the neo-liberal system and do not take into account the needs of people, especially of vulnerable people.
2. It is difficult to influence public policy. States invite us to discuss and accept their proposals but do not take into account our views. Yet when there are those spaces, it is not easy to assess the impact of our demands.
3. The criminalisation and prosecution of organised civil society organisations which criticise public policy prevents full and complete participation of the people.
4. Civil society does not sufficiently recognise its own diversity in order to be able to coordinate effectively, so that the most vulnerable suffer from the lack of legitimate representation.
5. Citizen participation mechanisms are not sufficiently known by the general population, which prevents them from exercising their rights.

#### **Proposals**

We ask the EU and CELAC:

1. In the face of the crisis of democracy, that they promote and facilitate a more participatory democracy, with mechanisms that allow spaces of participation of citizens beyond the electoral process. That could be through the organisation of referendums but above all that there should be enduring spaces for citizen participation
2. The crisis of democracy is also reflected in the high levels of corruption. The two regions should focus on the fight against corruption by establishing transparent mechanisms to combat it.
3. To ensure that civil society can carry out its work freely and without fear of reprisal or other forms of intimidation such as criminalisation and prosecution. The protection of defenders of human, social, environmental and labour rights should be a priority for both regions.
4. To establish genuinely effective mechanisms within the free trade agreements they enter into together and in the follow-up mechanisms of such treaties in order to guarantee the freedom of expression and human rights of civil society.
5. To take measures to ensure an inclusive effective and efficient social dialogue so that the voices of workers can be heard and to take measures to ensure decent work.
6. The involvement of organised civil society in a dialogue with the State should be free, autonomous, independent and regulated (i.e., subject to precise written rules) and embrace the diversity of the organisations of the civil society in the two regions. The States must respect the freedom of expression of the actors of civil society and must take into account the proposals made.
7. To develop mechanisms to make it possible to measure the impact of those dialogues between civil society and the States, that is to say, to make it possible to see specifically which proposals put forward by civil society have been taken into account and carried out.
8. To include civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of development projects in order to take advantage of their experience and expertise. The experience of joint development of social protection systems around the world offers a successful example of inclusive dialogue between the State, civil society and the private sector. These three actors are responsible for the development, management, control and evaluation of these systems. Thus, giving a voice to different sectors of the population ensures the development of effective policies according to the needs of urban and rural citizens by recognising their significant contribution to these systems.
9. To establish a fund to ensure the organisation of regional and bi-regional civil society forums/meetings with the aim of taking advantage of the expertise of the civil society and thus feed into the reflections of States when drawing up public policies.

10. To provide for and promote spaces of visibility for the actions and activities of civil society to show the added value of these actors to democracy and development.
11. To ensure the existence of alternative channels of dissemination of information, given that the large media groups lack political independence. Such broad dissemination should encourage a knowledge of the civil, political and social rights of citizens so that they can exercise their rights fully and organise themselves in order to demand collectively the fulfilment of these rights.
12. To support local governments so that they can promote participation of local civil society in all its diversity in order to ensure that the most vulnerable groups (such as women, youth and indigenous peoples) are heard.
13. The EU should continue, strengthen and avoid weakening its development cooperation policies directed towards Latin America and the Caribbean. By the same token, the CELAC States must provide mechanisms that make it possible to finance civil society.