

## Minutes of European Preparatory Assembly 6/7 March 2004

### Sat 6 March

255 organisations and individuals registered.

Delegations from outside the UK attended from Austria, the Basque country, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Hungary, Iran, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey

Facilitators: Alex Gordon (RMT); Sarah Colborne (Palestine Solidarity Campaign) Marie-Agnes Conbesque (League for the Rights of Man - LIDH)

Photography and taping **agreed**.

Additional minutes to be taken by Emma Dowling (ATTAC UK) **agreed**.

Minutes of 4 March meeting of UK Organising Committee were circulated.

Agenda:

It was **agreed** that each national delegation would be invited to respond first to the UK Organising Committee proposal.

It was **agreed** that a fourth workshop be added to the afternoon session dealing with practicalities and organisation and that reports from workshops be taken on Saturday afternoon, creating more space for Sunday's agenda items.

It was **agreed** that discussion on inclusion/democracy in the ESF process was integral to discussion on the UK proposal and would be taken as part of that item.

The proposed agenda was agreed with these provisos.

Laurie Helselden (SERTUC) welcomed participants on behalf of the TUC.

### 1. UK ESF Proposal

David Hillman (Tobin Tax Network) introduced the broad outline of the UK Organising Committee proposal. The Cost will be at the least in the region of £1 million and we have no public money as did Florence and Paris. The Organising Committee recommends rates similar to charged to Northern country participants in Mumbai - £30 waged and £20 unwaged. Great progress has been made in the UK over last few weeks - Organising Committee has grown markedly - wide range - including: Amicus, Amnesty International, Campaign to Defend Asylum Seekers, CND, Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Help the Aged, Muslim Parliament, UNISON, Indian Workers Association and the Tobin Tax Network. The Organising Committee has received the first large donation of £50,000 from London UNISON.

Chris Nineham (Stop the War) reported further on the proposal. Alexandra Palace to be venue. ESF has popular base in this borough. The building itself can hold 20.000, can expand with marquees to surrounding park. The event can have 21 plenaries, 112 seminars inside the building itself and there is the possibility for expansion to other part of central London for 100 seminars and 100 workshops. There is a more hostile environment to ESF in UK, finance has to come directly from supporters of the ESF, particularly in the form of registration fees, pre-registration essential. Fees: £30 waged/£20 unwaged, solidarity fund for those with no income, Eastern Europe, Global South, UK refugees

A discussion followed.

The session was extended to discuss inclusion and registration fees further.

It was **agreed** to add an extra workshop on inclusivity and to report back to the plenary after one hour.

**2. Workshops** were held on Programme, Culture, Enlarging the Network, Practicalities/Organisation and Inclusivity.

### **3. Report backs from Workshops to the plenary**

(i) Redmond O'Neill (Mayor's Office) reported on the approach to the budget. Suggests that each country has their own solidarity fund. Accommodation is an issue that is still being worked on. Transport – possibilities for support, nothing concrete yet

Fred Le Plat (London UNISON) reported from the Practicalities Workshop that there was a consensus to accept the proposal of the UK Organising Committee on the basis of registration fees in advance of £20 unwaged; £30 waged; £50 for organisations with an additional £30 per delegate. Registrations on the day would be £10 more in all cases.

(ii) Richard (Artists against the War) reported from the Culture Working Group that an artistic and creative workers launch was projected on 8 May, that events each month were proposed, that as many artists as possible would be drawn into the decision making, that local and regional networks would be established and that the location of meeting venues would be rotated.

(iii) Jonathon Neale (Oxford STW) reported from the Programme Workshop that the next Assembly would decide on themes for the event, topics for plenaries and proposals for a Youth Space, a Women's Day or panel/s. Seminars and workshops should be given more emphasis as against plenaries, which would number 20 or 30. There would be a limit of 4 or 5 speakers on plenary platforms; half of plenary speakers should be women and there should be a strong representation of black and Asian speakers. Seminars and workshops should be agreed before plenaries and local groups should be consulted. The length of plenaries and seminars should be reduced to two hours. One day at the next Assembly should be devoted to programme.

(iv) David Esterson reported from the Enlargement Group. Mobilising networks should be built in cities, regions and countries in an inclusive way; new groups should be invited to host workshops; the web-site should include different subject areas. Attendees from Russia and E. Europe would need assistance. Extending participation to include migrant and refugee groups would mean tackling travel restrictions. City twinning links might be exploited. Organising meetings should rotate location, with particular attention to Scotland and Wales.

The Reports from Working Groups were **agreed**.

The Report from the Inclusivity Workshop was held over until Sunday.

It was **agreed** that the ESF would proceed in London in 2004

### **Sunday 7 March**

Facilitators Alex Gordon (RMT), Sarah Colborne (PSC), Sophie Zafari (FSU) and Javier Ruiz (Indymedia UK).

#### **1. Report from Inclusivity Workshop**

Pierre Khalfa (ATTAC France), Chris Nineham (STW) and Javier Ruiz (Indymedia UK) reported from the Inclusivity Workshop

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Organising Committee Amendments to the Organising Committee Statement, which were circulated. It was also **agreed** that a secondary paper would

be prepared for the Organising Committee on rules by which Assemblies should be practically run.

Filming and recording was suspended after it was established there was no consensus for it proceed.

It was **agreed** that international guests should be invited to the ESF immediately to maximise advance notice. These included Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Noam Chomsky, Arundathi Roy, Michael Moore, Naomi Klein, Walden Bello, Vandana Shiva and Samir Amin. These would not necessarily be speakers at plenaries or seminars, decisions on which are to be taken through an agreed process.

It was **agreed** there would be a full discussion on the days on which ESF sessions and the Assembly of the Social Movements took place at the next Assembly.

## **2. Time and place of next European meeting**

It was **agreed** that the next European Preparatory Assembly should take place in Istanbul 16/17/18 April, with 16 April for the working groups to meet and prepare reports.

Berlin offered to host an Assembly in July.

The meeting of the European Preparatory Assembly was then suspended for a discussion on calls for action by the Assembly of Social Movements.

The following actions were discussed:

8 March	international actions by Global Women's Strike
20 March	actions against the war;
2-3 April	joint action against neo-liberalism, supported by ETUC;
20-30 April	Call for support by Palestinians in actions against the apartheid wall
29 April	Economic Europe Conference and demonstration in Warsaw
May 15	Kyoto demonstration in London
20/21 May	Assembly for Social Rights in Rome
June 26	US-EU Summit in Ireland
June/July 2005	G8 Summit in Scotland, possibly at Gleneagles

The meeting closed with a contribution on the occupation of Iraq and anti-imperialist solidarity by Hani Razim (Organisation of Iraqi Democrats)