

Buga, Colombia
May 19, 2009

Declaration of Cauyacacu

Red VIDA

Inter-American Network for the Defense of the Right to Water

At the Third Hemispheric Assembly of the Inter-American Network for the Defense of the Right to Water (Red VIDA) that took place at the headquarters of the Instituto Mayor Campesino in the municipality of Guadalajara de Buga, Colombia, from the 17th to 19th of May 2009, the Network ratified its principles and approved its plan of action for the coming two years. The Red VIDA also convened the International Forum: Water, City, and Territory in the Americas, to discuss themes of regional and local interest with diverse Colombian organizations working for the defense of the right to water.

Through a wide array of struggles in the Americas for the defense of public water management, in resistance to the privatization of this common good and the social fragmentation and appropriation by the corporate model of development, and consequently, for the defense of territory, our organizations and social movements are advancing alternative models of social and public water management, with participation and social control, within the framework of defense of the common good and the fundamental human right to water.

In the year 2003, in San Salvador, El Salvador, the RedVIDA was born through the integration of local, national, and international struggles for the defense of water and life in countries of our American continent. Among these struggles were the Water War in Cochabamba, Bolivia (April, 2000); the popular referendum for the defense of water in Uruguay (October, 2004); the permanent assembly in Argentina that came out of the Provincial Assembly of Santa Fe (September, 2002); the struggle in Brazil for the repeal of Law 4047, and the recovery of many public companies, along with other struggles. All of these struggles mark an era without precedent in the Americas for the defense of water and encourage the multiplication of similar initiatives on other continents.

Currently, the Red VIDA supports the struggles of Colombians for the defense of water as a common good and fundamental human right, as well as the construction of the Water Movement and the defense of public utilities and forms of community management. The National Committee for the Defense of Water and Life in Colombia is right now promoting a constitutional referendum in the defense of water, with the backing of more than 2 million people, establishing an historic milestone in the world struggle for the defense of water.

The Red VIDA is itself a common good made up of our processes, networks, and organizations committed to an integrated vision of life. Trade unions, non- governmental organizations, networks that fight for the defense of the right to water, territory, and the commons, during these three days have evaluated our joint work and shared and have debated ideas, struggles, concerns, and proposals. We are active and proactive participants in the worldwide movement for the defense of the right to water.

The Red VIDA denounces the fraud perpetrated by the House of Representatives of the Colombian Congress, by altering the original text of the constitutional reform supported by the people. We demand that the popular will be respected by restoring the original text.

Similarly, we express our solidarity with our fellow workers in the Trade Union of Public Sanitation Services of Cali, SINTRAEMSIRVA, because of the decision of the government to liquidate the business and dismiss 420 workers without social security or provisions and the failure of the Mayor's office to fulfill its commitment to establish a new sanitation company with the dismissed workers.

Likewise, we express our solidarity with our colleagues of the Trade Union of Municipal Workers of Cali, SINTRAEMCALI, for the prolonged intervention of the government toward the end of privatization and the persecution to which they have been submitted, including the dismissal of workers and the withdrawal of union licenses. Similarly, we express solidarity with our companions in the Trade Union of the Society of Aqueducts and Sewers of the Valley, S.A., SINTRACUAVALLE for the risk generated by the creation of the new public service agency ACUAVALLE-SAEP for the management and implementation of the Departmental Plan for Water by the governor of Valle de Cauca, given the existence of a public business like ACUAVALLE.

Today the network commits to deepening the struggle for the defense of the right to water within the framework of the defense of the commons and against any and all forms of the privatization of life.

We are committed to supporting the constitutional reforms, the promotion of legal frameworks and institutions that defend water as a common good and a public trust, and to the fundamental human right to water. From this perspective we aim to promote this public policies in all of our territories.

We are committed to mobilizing the Platform of Public-Community Alliances, demanding adequate public investment and the financing necessary for integrated water management according to principals of transparency, solidarity, territorial equality, and environmental conservation, undertaken by public organizations and communities not driven by profit.

Likewise, we are committed to continue opposing all forms of privatization and commercialization of water, both covert and overt, such as the inclusion of water in any Free Trade Agreement, and to strengthening our efforts to impact the multilateral financial institutions.

Signing Member Organizations of the Red VIDA

Sindicato Obras Sanitarias de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, SOBSA, Argentina

Unión de usuarios y consumidores de Argentina, Argentina

Coordinadora del Agua y la Vida, Bolivia

Fundación Abril, Bolivia

Rede Brasileira de Integração dos Povos REBRIP, Brasil

FASE, Brasil

Blue Planet Project, Canadá

Council of Canadians, Canadá

Chile Sustentable, Chile

Centro de Derecho Ambiental y de Recursos Naturales, CEDARENA, Costa Rica

Internacional de Servicios Públicos, ISP, Ecuador

Observatorio Ciudadano de Servicios Públicos, Ecuador

Food and Water Watch, FWW, EE.UU

Centro para la defensa del Consumidor, CDC, El Salvador

Bloque Popular, Honduras

Coalición de Organizaciones Mexicanas por el Derecho al Agua, COMDA, México

Instituto Mexicano para el desarrollo Comunitario. A.C, IMDEC, México

Frente de Defensa, Huancayo, Perú

Federación Nacional de Trabajadores del Agua Potable y Alcantarillado del Perú FENTAP, Perú

Federación de Funcionarios de Obras Sanitarias del Estado, FFOSE, Uruguay

Comisión Nacional en Defensa del Agua y de la Vida CNDAV, Uruguay

Corporación Ecofondo, Colombia

Corporación Ecológica y Cultural Penca de Sábila, Colombia

Corporación La CEIBA, Colombia

CENSAT, agua viva, Amigos de la Tierra, Colombia

SINTRAACUAVALLE, Colombia

Asociación de Acueductos Comunitarios Agua Viva, Colombia

Acueducto Comunitario "la Palma" de Girardota, Colombia

Fundación Estrella Orográfica del Macizo Colombiano, FUNDECIMA, Colombia

Fundación Educativa Soleira, FUNDESOL, Colombia

Corporate Accountability International, Colombia

Signing Organizations present at the International Forum: Water, City, and Territory in the Americas sponsored under the auspices of the Third Hemispheric Assembly of the Red VIDA

Trasnational Institute, TNI, Holanda

Municipal Services Project, Canadá

Federación de Trabajadores Fabriles de Cochabamba, Bolivia

ENDA América Latina, COLOMBIA

Corporación Ambientalista Esperanza Verde (Bugá) Colombia

Movimiento por la Vida, Colombia

EMCALI - CALI. Colombia

Federación UNETE, COLOMBIA

Colectivo Cultural Andino Cali, Colombia

Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Sistema Nacional Ambiental , SINTRAMBIENTE, Colombia

Asociación Campesina de INZA-TIERRADENTRO, Colombia

Red Juvenil Territorio Sur, Colombia

Sindicato de trabajadores de la empresa de Servicios Públicos de Aseo de Cali
SINTRAEMSIRVA, Colombia

Comité en Defensa del Agua y la Vida, Palmira, Colombia

Asociación Campesina de INZA-TIERRADENTRO ACIT, Colombia

Wilson Arias Castillo, Consejal Santiago de Cali, Colombia

Federación de acueductos rurales del Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Concejo regional indígena del Cauca, CRIC, Colombia.