

SECTION 4

gLoBaLising the FORum : The FORum
in india

THE GLOBAL SOUTH JOINS HANDS

WSF 2004, MUMBAI, INDIA

WSF India : The Vision

The World Social Forum Process was initiated in India in 2002. In keeping with the spirit of the WSF Charter of Principles, WSF India is based on the understanding that the WSF process must be an inclusive and equal process. It must provide mass movements and organisations with a space to articulate and strengthen their struggle against neoliberal and imperial globalisation and also in facing the challenges of religious sectarianism that has taken on fascist overtones in India.

The WSF does not have a common political manifesto on which all those who participate have to agree. The basic idea is the creation of a space for everyone to come together with a respect for that space.

Reaching out to all the various kinds of organisations and movements — class-based organisations, peoples' movements, NGOs and others — and of convincing them to enter the arena called the 'World Social Forum' is at the core of the process that the WSF seeks to initiate and develop. Adherence to the Charter of Principles of the WSF will be a crucial condition for participation in the event and process.

Participants must understand that they should not expect a single or unitary WSF statement at the end of the event. However, organisations in India can come together and formulate a collective action program against neo-liberal globalisation and consciously use the WSF 4 occasion to expand this collective into Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and also to developed countries.

WSF India Organising Structure

WSF India is undertaking the organisational responsibility for the Forum, and the India Working Committee, based in India, will be responsible for organising the event.

India General Council (IGC)

The WSF IGC is the decision-making body of the WSF India process. The membership

to the IGC is open to all social movements and organisations that are committed to the WSF Charter of Principles. At the moment there are 135 members in the IGC.

India Working Committee (IWC)

The WSF IWC is responsible for formulating policy guidelines that form the basis for the functioning of the WSF India process. The IWC currently consists of 67 organisations nominated from the IGC. The IWC comprises of 14 national trade unions and workers' organisations, 8 national women's organisations, 6 national farmers' networks, and 4 national platforms each of dalits, adivasis, 4 student and youth bodies, as well as 27 social movements, other organisations and NGOs.

India Organising Committee (IOC)

The WSF IOC is the executive body of WSF 2004 and is responsible for organising the event. The IOC consists of 45 individuals, each being a member of one of the eight functional groups :

- ▶ Programme
- ▶ Mobilisation
- ▶ Liaison
- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Venue and Logistics
- ▶ Communication and Media
- ▶ Youth and Students
- ▶ Culture

Mumbai Organising Committee (MOC)

The MOC is a subgroup of the IOC and plays the role of the local host for the WSF undertaking local organising, logistics etc.

Mobilisation and Logistics

WSF 2004 will be held from January 16–21 in Mumbai, India. This event in India will seek to be the culmination and initiator of a much wider process of social mobilisation that involves large numbers from diverse sections. Such processes, in the spirit of the WSF, would be open, inclusive and flexible and designed to build capabilities of local groups and movements, also seeking to leverage on their individual strengths. The language of dissent and resistance towards imperialist globalisation, communalism (religious sectarianism and fundamentalism), casteism, patriarchy, and militarism will have to be informed by local idioms and forms.

WSF 2004, following on the previous World Social Forums, will include plenary sessions, conferences, seminars, round table discussions, workshops, cultural events, mass meetings, rallies and marches. A special effort will be made to make all events participatory as far as possible, ie., allowing for responses from the audience, question and answer sessions, etc. Speakers should reflect the diversity of the WSF process, with emphasis on the representation of women and underprivileged and the most oppressed sections of society.

The Venue and Logistics Group is endeavouring to host the entire WSF 2004 on a single site within Mumbai city. In keeping with the traditions in Porto Alegre, autonomous space and accommodation facilities will be organised for the Youth Camp at close proximity to the main site.

It is expected that about 100,000 delegates will participate in the WSF 2004. Of

these, about 15,000 would be from outside India. A range of accommodation facilities will be made available and necessary links will be provided on the web site. An effort will be made to provide low-priced accommodation including campsites. Cheap accommodation will also be provided to participants from the South-Asian sub-continent and accommodation reservation services will be provided to all participants for a variety of accommodation types including solidarity accommodation. Reception centres will be set-up at all major points of entry into the city and shuttle bus services will be available to the venue.

A website and communication system has been put in place. This system will also provide a service for participant registration, booking of space for self-organised activity, accommodation bookings, and general information. A regular newsletter will be sent out from July 2003 to aid wider reach out. The WSF India Communication and Media group will aid the mobilisation process with campaign and publicity material.

WSF India seeks support from all members of the International Council to assist in the process of raising funds. The total estimated expenditure for WSF 2004 is US \$ 3.8 million. The WSF India puts high premium on self-mobilised funds and supports a careful use of finance. The activities included in WSF 2004 will be funded by the participants, organisations of India General Council, development co-operation agencies, private foundations, and through solidarity funds from all over the world.

WSF 2004 : The Main Themes

Programme Focus

WSF India has adopted as its principal focusses :

- ▶ Imperialist Globalisation
- ▶ Patriarchy
- ▶ Militarism and Peace
- ▶ Communalism (religious sectarianism and fundamentalism)
- ▶ Casteism and Racism (oppression, exclusion and discrimination based on descent and work).

Keeping these as the framework, WSF 2004 will be organised around the themes listed below.¹ Organisations interested in hosting events as a part of the WSF 2004 in Mumbai are free to add additional sub-areas and topics under each of the thematic areas. Participant organisations are also free to consider areas of discourse that cut across boundaries of thematic areas by organising a dialogue of their choice. While proposing events, participant organisations would be advised to go beyond academic discussions on the impact of globalisation by offering strategies of resistance and concrete alternatives to the various forms of capitalist globalisation and other forms of oppression.

▶ Militarism, War and Peace

- US Militarist Agenda and Resistances
- Against Global and Permanent War
- Identities and Peoples Right to Determination
- Growing Militarisation of Society : Impact on Women
- Imperialist War and Control of Resources

The WSF : Challenging Empires

- Role of United Nations and War
- Aggression on Iraq and Consequences
- Palestine : A Continuing War
- Building Culture of Peace
- Genocides and Crimes Against Humanity
- Global Disarmament and Nuclear Weapons
- International Law and War
- Peace, Well Being and Regional Cooperation
- Self Determination and Nationalities
- State Terrorism : Civil and Political Rights.

■ **Media, Information, Knowledge and Culture**

- Against Merchandising Information, Culture and Media
- Media Concentration and Loss of Pluralism
- Media and Commodification of Women
- Sponsorship and Censorship
- Alternate Media
- War and Media — Manipulation of Images and 'Embedded' Journalism
- Art and Social Transformation
- Culture of Dissent
- Role of Culture : Youth and Marginalised
- Privatising Science and Knowledge
- Patenting and Effects on Community
- Genetic Engineering, Patenting Life Forms
- Access to Knowledge for the Third World
- Information Technology : Opportunities and Challenges
- Media as an Instrument of Exclusion and a Space for Democratic Struggle (social audit of old and new media, changing content and form, state-owned media vs. public broadcasting).

■ **Democracy, Economic and Ecological Security**

- Critical Examination of the IMF, World Bank, WTO — Institutions of Capitalist Globalisation
- Scope of Selective De-linking with Respect to National Development
- Breaking the Power of Financial Markets
- Politics of Aid
- Illegitimacy and Burden of Debt
- Bilateral and Regional Trade, Investment Processes and its Impacts
- NAFTA and Other Bilateral Treaties
- Fair Trade
- Participatory Economics
- Solidarity Economics
- Agreement in Agriculture (AOA) and Food Sovereignty.

► Sustainable and Democratic Development

- Land and Agriculture
- Privatising Basic Services : Energy, Water, Transport & Telecommunications
- Livelihoods and Natural Resources — Access, Entitlements, etc.
- Climate Change — Kyoto Protocol
- Bio-safety and GM Foods
- Governance, Accountability and Peoples Resources
- Dumping of Hazardous Wastes
- Biodiversity
- Peasantry and the Village Economy under Globalisation
- Urban Development and Displacement of the Poor
- Feminisation of Poverty and Immigration
- Innovative Models of Sustainable Livelihoods
- Forests, Land, Air, Water : Democratic Control of Common Goods
- Regulation and De-regulation : Removing Democratic Controls
- Corporate Accountability.

► World of Labour and Work in Production and Social Reproduction

- Creating and Distributing Wealth Differently : Monetary, Budgetary and Fiscal Policies in Favour of Employment
- Work and the Logic of Profit
- Trade Union (TU) Movement and the Informal and Small Scale Sector
- Closing of Industries, Relocation of Production and the TU Movement
- Migrant Labour and Protectionism
- New Technologies of Product Automation : Impact on Women and Men Workers
- End of Work and Other Theories
- Abolishing the Wage System : Liberating Workers or Liberation from Work
- Valuation of Social Reproduction and Housework
- The TU Movement within the Global Social Movement.

► Social Sectors — Food, Health, Education and Social Security

- Impact of Service Sector Liberalisation / GATS
- Entitlements, Social Security and the 'safety net' : Ensuring Universal Access
- Social Security, Pensions and Medical Welfare
- The Marginalised and Their Access to Social Security and the Safety Net
- Privatisation of and Merchandising Health and Education
- Child Rights
- Politics and Agenda of Population Control and Use of Reproductive Technologies
- Food Security of Communities and Households and Public Distribution
- Employment, Job Security, Pension Schemes, VRS
- Reproduction, Health and Sexual Rights.

► **Exclusions, Discrimination, Dignity, Rights and Equality**

- Changing Institutional and Legal Frameworks for Labour and Peasant Rights in the Context of Globalisation
- Loss of Economic Sovereignty under Globalisation
- Privatisation, Liberalisation and Impact on the Disadvantaged
- Rise of the Right, Legitimation of Majoritarianism and Intolerance of Minorities
- Race, Migration and Citizenship
- Effect of Globalisation on Legal and Institutional Frameworks of Decision Making
- Militarising the State and Erosion of Civil Liberties / Human Rights
- Disability and Discrimination
- Trafficking in Women and Children
- Refugees, Displaced Persons, IDP, Cross-border Migration, Racism and Human Rights
- Alternative Visions, Practical Experiments and Struggles for Inclusive, Plural and Radical Democracy
- Autonomy, Separation, Reconciliation.

► **Caste, Race and Other Forms of Descent and Work-based Exclusions**

- Caste, Race and Other Work / Descent Based Discrimination : Exclusions in the Market and in Governance
- Community / Group specific (Dalits, Indigenous Peoples, Tribals and Ethnic Religious, 'National and other minorities): Analyses of the New and Emerging Forms of Exclusions
- Gender Related Exclusions and 'Double' Exclusion of Women from Marginalised communities
- Ending Affirmative Action in Education and Work
- New Voices in Social Movements.

► **Religion, Culture and Identities**

- Communalism — Religious Sectarianism and Exclusions and Religiosity
- Globalisation, Homogeneity & Pluralism
- Cultural Imperialism and Shaping Subordinate Identities
- Globalisation and Cultural Resistance
- Fundamentalism and Sexual Identities
- Re-enforcement of Stereotypes.

► **Patriarchy, Gender and Sexuality**

- Patriarchy and Capitalism
- Law and Women : the Global Scenario
- Personal, Constitutional Law and Human Rights
- Women and Men : from Equality within the Law to Equality in Reality
- Against the Sexual Division of Labour
- Liberty of Women within Society
- Forms of Resurgent Patriarchy

- Right to Sexual Orientation : From Claims for Rights to the Assertion of Identities.

Programme Format

Based on the available space, the type of events that have been envisaged *each* day (with these events taking place for *four days*) is as follow :

- ▶ One conference of 15,000–20,000 people
- ▶ One round table and table of dialogue and debate of 4,000 people
- ▶ Three panel discussions of 4,000 people
- ▶ Two hundred spaces for seminars and workshops with capacity ranging from 50 to 1000 people
- ▶ Cultural spaces in and around the venue for continuous and spontaneous activities
- ▶ Organised cultural spaces for events such as theatre (proscenium and street), music, folk form in dance and music, poetry recitations, etc.
- ▶ Eight concurrent spaces for films ranging from capacity of 50–200
- ▶ Spaces for living display of crafts
- ▶ Spaces for dialogue and alliance building
- ▶ Testimonials and voices of resistance : 6–8 per day.

The organisers will confine themselves each day to the conference (of 15–20,000 people) and one round table and debate and dialogue event (of 4,000 people), ie. organise eight events apart from the opening and closing plenary and the testimonials every day.

All other events, including 200 seminars and workshops every day and three panel discussions every day (ie. about 800 seminars of varying sizes and 12 panel discussions for 3–4,000 people each throughout WSF 2004) will be self-organised, with the WSF organisers providing space and facilities. Many have observed that the seminars and workshops quite often have a similarity of themes. Should participant organisations collaborate with each other it could enhance the quality of programmes and facilitate alliance building as well. Registration for self-organised events will be closed by November 1, 2003 so that the participating organisations can identify, through the website, other organisations that have proposed similar events and work out alliances and partnerships. If there are conflicts over spaces, ie., the spaces are less in number than the number of events proposed, then the selection would be based on the following criteria :

- ▶ Diversity of the groups proposing the topics
- ▶ Balance of various topics
- ▶ Global perspective.

Panels that are being organised by other organisations will also be based on the same criteria for selection amongst various proposals. Subgroups may be formed in the IC along with the India Program Committee and International Secretariat for negotiating and finalising proposals.

The broad proposal, in terms of a daily time-table, is for panels to be organised

in the mornings, seminars and workshops in the afternoon, conferences in the evening and cultural programmes for most of the day. Film festivals, cultural programmes, exercises in alliance building, the Youth Forum and other activities will run concurrently with the rest of the events.

Summary of Events

Events	Number per day	Number of attendees per event	Duration	Time
Panels / Round Tables (Morning)	4	4,000	3 hours	9–12 am
Testimonials	2–4	4,000	1 hour	12–1 pm
Seminars (Afternoon)	200	50–200	3 hours	2–5 pm
Conference (Evening)	1	15,000–20,000	1 ^{1/2} –2 hours	6.30–8.30 pm
Cultural events throughout the day				

Events to be Organised Directly by WSF 2004

◆ Plenaries

- Opening plenary on January 16
- Closing Plenary on January 21

◆ Conferences (one each from January 17–20)

The conferences to be organised by the organisers (each with a capacity of 15–20,000) would focus on each of the basic themes elaborated above, ie. :

- Militarism, War and Peace
- Media, Information and Knowledge
- Democracy, Ecological and Economic Security
- Exclusions, Dignity and Rights

◆ Round Tables and Tables of Debate and Dialogue (one each from January 17–20)

The round tables and tables of debate and dialogue to be organised by the organisers would revolve around the following areas :

- The Culture of Violence and the Global Peace Movement
- Media and the Construction of Consumerism and Militarism
- Challenges and New Forms of Struggle
- Political Parties and Social Movements : Engagement and Tensions.

NOTES

¹ Each theme also has 10–15 sub themes, as listed in the original document. See WSF India, nd(a).

WSF INDIA POLICY STATEMENT

CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES – WORLD SOCIAL FORUM INDIA

1. The World Social Forum is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a world order centred on the human person.
2. The first WSF at Porto Alegre, held from January 25–30, 2001, was an event localised in time and place. With the Porto Alegre Proclamation that ‘Another World is Possible’, the WSF becomes a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives, which cannot be reduced to the events supporting it.
3. The World Social Forum is a world process. All meetings that are held as part of this process have an international dimension.
4. The alternatives proposed at the WSF stand in opposition to a process of capitalist globalisation commanded by large multinational corporations and by governments and international institutions at the service of those corporations’ interests. They are designed to ensure that globalisation in solidarity will prevail as a new stage in world history. This will respect universal human rights, and those of all citizens — men and women — of all nations and will rest on democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality, and sovereignty of peoples.
5. The WSF brings together and interlinks only organisations and movements of civil society from all the countries in the world, but intends neither to be a body representing world civil society nor to exclude from the debates it promotes, those in positions of political responsibility mandated by their peoples, who decide to enter into the commitments resulting from those debates.
6. The meetings of the WSF do not deliberate on behalf of the WSF as a body. No one, therefore, will be authorised, on behalf of any of the editions of the Forum, to express

positions claiming to be those of all its participants. The participants in the Forum shall not be called on to take decisions as a body, whether by vote or acclamation, on declarations or proposals for action that would commit all, or the majority of them and on those that propose to be taken as establishing positions of the Forum as a body.

7. Nonetheless, organisations or groups of organisations that participate in the Forum's meetings must be assured the right, during such meetings, to deliberate on declarations or actions they may decide on, whether singly or in co-ordination with other participants. The WSF undertakes to circulate such decisions widely by the means at its disposal, without directing, creating hierarchies, censoring or restricting them, but as deliberations of the organisations or groups of organisations that made the decisions.

8. The WSF is a plural, diversified, non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party context that, in a de-centralised fashion, interrelates organisations and movements engaged in concrete action at levels — from the local to the international — to build another world. It thus does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by the participants in its meetings, nor does it intend to constitute the only option for interrelation and action by the organisations and movements that participate in it.

9. The WSF asserts democracy as the avenue to resolving society's problems politically. As a meeting place, it is open to pluralism and to the diversity of activities and ways of engaging of organisations and movements that decide to participate in it, as well as the diversity of genders, races, ethnicities and cultures.

10. The WSF is opposed to all authoritarian and reductionist views of history and to the use of violence as a means of social control by the State. It upholds respect for human rights, for peaceful relations, in equality and solidarity, among people, races, genders and peoples, and condemns all forms of domination and all subjection of one person by another.

11. The meetings of the WSF are always open to all those who wish to take part in them, except organisations that seek to take people's lives as a method of political action and those organisations that exclude groups / communities from the democratic world on the basis of ethnic, racial, religious, or caste considerations.

12. The WSF process in India must necessarily make space for all struggling sections of society to come together and articulate their struggles and visions, individually and collectively, against the neoliberal economic agenda of the world and national elite, which is breaking down the very fabric of the lives of ordinary people all over the world and marginalising the majority of the world people, keeping profits as the main criteria of development rather than society, and destroying the freedoms and rights of all women, men and children to live in peace, security, and dignity. It must make space for workers, peasants, indigenous peoples, Dalits, hawkers, minorities, immigrants, students, academicians, artisans, artists and other members of the creative world, professionals, the media, for local business and industrialists, as well as for parliamentarians, sympathetic bureaucrats and other concerned sections from within and outside the state. Most importantly, it must make space for all 'sections' of society that remain less visible, marginalised, unrecognised, and oppressed.

13. In India today, all civil and political organisations / groups that are organising around people's issues — economic, political, social, and cultural — are being profoundly challenged by religious and political intolerance that is raging in the country, and increasingly across the world. There is the threat of growing communal fascism and fundamentalism. WSF India will strive to encourage a process that allows all of those who are combating communal fascism and fundamentalism to come together, to hear and understand each other, to explore areas of common interest, and also our differences, and to learn from the experiences and struggles of people here and in other countries.

14. The WSF process in India involves not only events but also different activities across the country. These processes, in the spirit of the WSF, will be open, inclusive and flexible and designed to build capabilities of local groups and movements. The process will also be designed to seek and draw out peoples' perceptions regarding the impact of neoliberal economic policies and imperialism on their daily lives. Local idioms and forms will inform the language of dissent and resistance.

15. As a forum for debate, the WSF is a movement of ideas that prompts reflection, and the maximum possible transparent circulation of the results of that reflection, on the mechanisms and instruments of domination by capital, on means and actions to resist and overcome that domination, and on the alternatives that can be proposed to solve the problems of exclusion and inequality that the process of capitalist globalisation currently prevalent is creating or aggravating, internationally and within countries.

16. As a framework for the exchange of experiences, the WSF encourages understanding and mutual recognition among its participant organisations and movements, and places special value on all that society is building to centre economic activity and political action on meeting the needs of people and respecting nature.

17. As a context for interrelations, the WSF seeks to strengthen and create new national and international links among organisations and movements of civil society, that — in both public and private life — will increase the capacity for social resistance to the process of dehumanisation the world is undergoing and reinforce the humanising measures being taken by the action of these movements and organisations.

18. The WSF is a process that encourages its participant organisations and movements to situate their actions as issues of world citizenship, and to introduce onto the global agenda the change-inducing practices that they are experimenting in building a new world.

Proposed and accepted in principle at the WSF India National Consultation in Bhopal, India, on April 19–20, 2002.

Finalised and approved by the WSF India Working Committee, New Delhi, India, May 25, 2002.