

Weaving a Web of Solidarity
A feminist action against globalisation
Summit of the Americas on the FTAA
Quebec City, April 2001

On the weekend of April 20-22, leaders of thirty four countries will come to Quebec to tie a new strand in the web of corporate globalisation: the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), the regional accord that will expand NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) throughout the hemisphere. In response, thousands of us will come to Quebec City to resist them. From Canada to Argentina, women and men will take action to express our opposition to the extension of the corporate web.

Women bear the brunt of the violence of globalisation, yet despite all the oppression, repression and exploitation, women continue to rise up. This is a call to rise up as we join together in a Women's Action, to take place alongside the many actions and events of the weekend.

We are taking action because we will no longer tolerate the web of corporate control that binds us down and constricts our lives. We will not allow this system to continue. We have taken its measure: its time is done. Instead, we will become spiders, spinning a new web of connection, of solidarity out of our rage, out of our love.

We will, as women, weave together our hopes and dreams, our aspirations, our indictments, our testimony, our witnessing, our demands, our visions. We will write on ribbons, on strips of cloth, on rags. We will draw, paint, knot cords, braid yarn, whisper into pieces of string. And from these materials we will weave our web.

If they ignore our voices and continue their deliberations, the cries of women will haunt them and undo all their plans. Though they erect a fence to stop us, we will twine our web through its mesh to be the visible symbol of the power of women, of the revolution we weave. When they try to wall us out of their meetings, they will only wall themselves in. We claim all of the world beyond their wall.

We ask our brothers to support us, to honor our women's space so that we who have so often been invisible can stand forth and be seen. We ask you to support us by looking honestly at the ways that, even within our own movements, women are ignored, suppressed, or discounted. And when you support us in this action, where we stand together as women, it will spark actions where we fight side by side. For we know that you too, are weavers of this web.

We ask the ancestors to stand with us. For the web of life links the living and the dead. We ask the generations of the future to stand with us, for we fight for the world you will inherit. We ask the spirits of the earth to support us and be our ground, for we fight for the continuance of life.

We are invincible, for life itself weaves with us.

WEAVING A WEB OF SOLIDARITY
A FEMINIST ACTION AGAINST GLOBALISATION
Summit of the Americas on the FTAA
Quebec City, April 16-23RD, 2001
AN INVITATION TO THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD TO...

Form an affinity group...

An affinity group is a group of 10-20 people with whom you have "affinity"; that is, a common bond (family, friends, common issue, work colleagues, etc.), that meets regularly to discuss common issues and to act. Choose one or two members to represent your group at the Council of representatives. The Council of representatives will "meet" in virtual space until the week before the Summit of the Americas, at which point meetings will take place in Quebec. The Council of representatives meetings will be the forum to decide on strategy for the action. Keep your eye on the CMAQ (Quebec Centre for Independent Media) website (www.cmaq.net) for a Women's web of solidarity action link.

Initiate (or continue), in your affinity group, a dialogue on the impacts of globalisation on women in your home area...

Women around the world bear the brunt of globalisation... our voices together will allow us to add to the feminist analysis of globalisation, and to strengthen our cause (see article, and fact sheet).

Weave your part of the web of solidarity...

Take what comes out of your dialogue on women and globalisation, and, as a group, weave a section of the web of solidarity to represent your consensus. Use your imagination... use yarn, materials, photos, newspaper clippings. The sky is the limit.

Add your section of the web to the web of solidarity in Quebec City in April 2001...

Here are some suggestions on the many ways to join your section of the web to the larger web of solidarity:

- Come as an affinity group to Quebec City in April 2001, to participate in the collective weaving of the web of solidarity...

A fence is being erected around the buildings where the Summit is being held in order to keep protesters out – residents inside the perimeter are required to have identity cards in order to gain access to their own homes during the Summit. This fence symbolises, for us, the anti-democratic process of the FTAA – we want to reclaim that fence, that space. Those wanting to weave (literally or symbolically and non-violently) their parts of the web into the fence are invited to do so on the 19th of April (the day preceding the opening of the meeting). Affinity groups not wanting to approach the fence are invited to plan other kinds of actions using the web parts (blocking an intersection to catch Summit negotiators in the web, or decorating a park with parts of the web, etc.). Creativity and imagination are key! The sky is the limit!

- Send your section of the web to the address below and the women present in Quebec will ensure that your section is woven into the larger web.
- Send a photograph of your section of the web to the address below, and the women present in Quebec will enlarge it and add it to the larger web.
- Get together with other affinity groups in your area and weave your sections together closer to your home.

Québec contact information:

E-mail address: toile_femme@moncourrier.com

Mailing address: Toile femme Québec 2001, C.P. 70021, Québec, Québec (Canada) G1R 6B1

Local contact information:

PLEASE INSERT LOCAL COORDINATES

Weaving a web of solidarity A feminist action against the FTAA

Email : TOILE_FEMME@MONCOURRIER.COM

Mailing address: Toile femme Québec 2001, C.P. 70021, Québec, Québec (Canada), G1R 6B1.

Proposals : actions and logistics (prepared by les SalamiELLES)

During the Summit of the Americas, women from all over the planet will weave together their webs of solidarity... webs representing our hopes for a world without patriarchy, for a just world, that which we want to celebrate... webs representing the consequences of globalisation on our lives, that which we want to get rid of. (see the invitation on the CMAQ web site at www.cmaq.net searching using the key words « weaving a web »).

Les salamiELLES, a Montreal-based affinity group, submits to you this document in order to jump-start the preparations for the activities to be held in the context of the « weaving a web of solidarity » action.

COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

You are invited to participate in a first meeting of the Council of representatives (decision-making assembly composed of representatives of each participating affinity group) for this action, Sunday March 25 at 7pm in Montreal (exact location to be determined depending on number of participants signed-up). To sign up, please send the following information to toile_femme@moncourrier.com before March 22nd, 5pm : name(s) of representative(s) (we suggest 2 max.), name of affinity group (if possible), contact information, if you need a place to stay and/or daycare services, a list of proposals your affinity group may have to add to the agenda.

For those who will not be able to make it, please forward your proposals, as well as any tasks your affinity group can take on (see list below), to the toile femme e-mail. A virtual discussion forum will eventually (if someone takes on the task of organising it!) be the « location » of future Council of representatives meetings.

ACTIONS

We are proposing two actions in the context of the « weaving a web of solidarity » action :

Women's mural against the FTAA

When? April 19th, early evening

Where? On the security perimeter

What? Weave together our webs – webs woven prior to the 19th by participating affinity groups, webs representing the negative consequences of globalisation for women – on the security perimeter... that which we want to get rid of, followed by a vigil.

How? Because this is a non-violent direct action, each affinity group must have participated in a civil disobedience training workshop, preferably before arriving in Quebec City. Contact toile femme by e-mail for names of trainers in your area. A last minute training session will be held on the 19th in Quebec City for those who will have been unable to find training before hand (first come, first served – all depending on space and number of trainers).

« Women's clothes line » on the « Alternatives Avenue »

When? April 20th, as of 10am

Where? Near the bassin Louise in the basse ville of Québec City (quite far from the perimeter)

What? Weave together our webs – webs woven prior to the 20th by participating affinity groups, webs representing our hopes for a world without patriarchy, a just world –and hang that which we want to celebrate on the « women's clothes line » on the « Alternatives Avenue » (see French attachment, no english available as of yet).

TIMETABLE, QUEBEC CITY, APRIL 2001

17th: Council of representatives, all day (10am to 5pm)

18th: General assembly of all participants as of 7pm

19th: Civil disobedience training workshops from 10am to 2pm

19th : « women's mural » action in early evening (exact time to be determined)

20th : « women's clothes line » action on the « Alternatives Avenue » as of 10am

To see the list of all other activities, see the Quebec 2001 independent media center's web site at under the heading « action » (www.cmaq.net)

WOMEN'S SPACE

The Quebec Women's Federation is providing a women's space for the duration of the Summit activities. This space will be a resting, chatting, meeting place for women participating in anti-Summit actions... we have access to this space to have our meetings and to do our trainings.

HOUSING

Each affinity group is responsible for their own housing arrangements – if need be, you can contact a local group that is working on arranging housing www.oqp2001.org/fr/hebergement. Les salamiELLES will try to find group housing facilities, but the chances of success are slim since there is very little large group space available (e.g., gyms, classrooms).

TRANSPORTION

We know that many organisations are providing transportation, but the list of available transportation is yet to be drafted. Please try to arrange transportation locally.

LIST OF TASKS TO SHARE

The organisation of this feminist action is meant to be non-hierarchical... since there is no central organising committee, each affinity group is responsible for the success of our action and its organisation. Les salamiELLES took the initiative to prepare this document and we have taken responsibility for certain tasks, but the other tasks need to be shared among participating affinity groups for our action to be a success. Here is a list of tasks we have identified :

- call and prepare the first meeting of the Council of representatives (les SalamiELLES)
- created a virtual discussion forum for the future meetings of the Council of representatives
- fill out a form for space on « Alternatives Avenue" (les salamiELLES)
- prepare a second meeting of the Council of representatives to be held April 17th, in Quebec City
- prepare the general assembly of all members to be held on the 18th in the evening in Quebec City.
- prepare the civil disobedience training workshop to be held on the 19th in Quebec City (les SalamiELLES)
- prepare a media strategy
- distribute a kit « what to bring with you and what to leave at home », along with other suggestions (les SalamiELLES)
- make a list of civil disobedience trainers (les SalamiELLES)
- organise a daycare service for April 18-19-20 avril
- prepare food for April 18-19-20
- make a list of housing options
- make a list of transportation options
- manage the e-mail account of toile femme (les SalamiELLES)
- manage the postal box (Monique Follée)
- finish and distribute the fact sheet on impacts of globalisation on women (les salamiELLES)

Please note

AFFINITY GROUPS WANTING TO ORGANISE ACTIONS OUTSIDE OF THOSE PROPOSED ABOVE ARE WELCOME TO THE ATTEND THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES MEETING.

In solidarity,
Les salamiELLES

An affinity group of the women's committee of salAMI, a Quebec-based citizens committee fighting against the globalisation of misery and for the globalisation of resistance.

Femmes_salami@moncourrier.com