

Closing of Zapatista Exchange with Indigenous Peoples

REBEL AND ANTI-CAPITALIST INDIGENOUS SAY TO PENA NIETO:

“We will not surrender, we will not sell out and we don’t give in.”

By: Isaín Mandujano



SubComandante Moisés

With a call to close ranks and walk together in resistance against the privatizations, dispossessions and assassinations, some 1300 Zapatista delegates and more than 300 indigenous representatives of 28 other indigenous peoples of Mexico, the Exchange of the Zapatista Peoples with the Original Peoples of Mexico “David Ruiz García” concluded Saturday. It took place from August 4 to 9 in this community located in a canyon of the Lacandón Jungle.

Before members of the “National and International Sixth,” the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and different groups from the National Indigenous Congress (CNI) announced the **“Declaration On Dispossession and Our Peoples”** in which they portray the problem that the attending groups confront in diverse regions of the country.

Subcomandante Moisés, Comandante Tacho and Comandante David, headed the closing of the Exchange between the Zapatista Peoples and the Original Peoples of Mexico, from last Monday to Saturday, in which they held several plenaries where they listened to denunciations of threats that hang over the country’s different indigenous peoples.

It was Venustiano Vázquez Navarrete, Indigenous Wírrárica of Tepoztlán, who read the “Declaration on Dispossession of Our Peoples,” signed by the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and the 28 collectives, groups, tribes of the National Indigenous Congress (CNI) that participated in the gathering.

“The dispossession of what we are as original peoples is the pain that unites us in the spirit of struggle that we commemorate today in our Compañero David Ruíz García, who died sharing the pain of the brothers of the Zapatista National Liberation Army because of the murder of Compañero Galeano and to become one in our history and in our hope,” Vázquez Navarrete said from the stage to the Indigenous peoples present.

He pointed out that the death of David Ruíz García, which gave birth again to the collective of 28 peoples, colors and languages that met in the Zapatista Caracol of La Realidad, inspires in them a joy of meeting as original peoples in the exchange, of knowing that we are alive as are the peoples, languages and collective history that become memory, resistance and congruence towards the mother that is the earth that also is alive and she ought to be.

“The struggle that we are is diverse and we name the enemy dispossession because it is what we see, we die and we live every day, in a collective way as is the corn, as is Compañero Galeano, as is Compañero David and like our brothers and sisters are, whose lives have been snatched away in this war of extermination,” indicated the person responsible for introducing the document, who added that the dispossession is so diverse that it has only one name and it is called capitalism.

“From the beginning, capitalism has increased dispossession and exploitation. Dispossession and invasion, they are the words that best describe what they called the Conquest of America, dispossession and robbery of our lands, of our territories, of our knowledge, of our culture. Dispossession, accompanied by wars, massacres, prison, of deaths and more deaths, which become collective life because we are here the peoples that we are, who continue being,” he said.

He remembered that after the War of Independencia, the emergence of a new nation, the liberal reform and the Díaz dictatorship, Mexico was born denying these peoples, by means of Constitutions and laws that privatized their lands and sought to legitimize the looting of their territories. Thousands of your indigenous brothers, dozens of your peoples were exterminated through military campaigns and their massive exile.

“Despite a million Indigenous and campesino deaths during the Revolution, the agrarian laws that emerged later were inspired by Venustiano Carranza and Álvaro Obregón, the assassination of Emiliano Zapata, for the purpose of protecting the large estates (*latifundios*), impeding the restitution of lands, waters, air and communal mountains of the peoples and converting communal property into ejidal. In other words, they wanted to kill us again over and over again, to kill us as peoples and as individuals. And after so much death, we continue being the peoples alive and collective,” he pointed out.

He also remembered that the responses to dispossession and extermination were rebellion and resistance; that hundreds of rebellions in Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Nayarit, Jalisco,

Guanajuato, Michoacán, Querétaro, Veracruz, Estado de México, San Luis Potosí, Hidalgo, Morelos, Puebla, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Yucatán, Campeche, Quintana Roo, and prominently the Zapatista Revolution; that challenged colonialist society, all occurred after the liberal reform, exploding the 1910 armed movement defending with weapons the possession communal land until the times of the Cardenas agrarian reform and oil expropriation.

That currently the neoliberal capitalists, with the support of all the political parties and the bad governments headed by the criminal and paramilitary chief Enrique Peña Nieto, they are applying the same dispossession policies on a large scale that the liberals of the nineteenth century applied, the Carranzas or the Obregons, showing itself in the militarization and paramilitarization, advised by the United States intelligence bodies, in those regions where the resistances confront dispossession.

And just like the governments of those times, the current governments are delivering their territories and wealth that are the nation's to the big national and foreign corporations, seeking the death of all the peoples of Mexico and of Mother Earth, but the dead among these peoples is born again today collectively.

One by one they read all of the 29 red lights or problems that the indigenous peoples of Mexico that attended this gathering confront and that it is because of that that they know they are in "an emergency" that attempts against the life of the indigenous peoples of Mexico.

"So today we say to the powerful, to the corporations and the bad governments, headed by the supreme criminal chief of the los paramilitaries, Enrique Peña Nieto, that we will not surrender, that we will not sell out and we will not give in," he indicated.

"Our memory is alive because we are it and to it we owe us and we point out that that there is no better memory than that of our peoples, who like today meet to see one another and that our struggle will not end, because if they have not killed us in 520 years of resistance and rebellion they will not do it now or ever," Vázquez Navarrete said.

In the final declaration they declared themselves "peoples of corn" because they know that the milpa is collective and of different colors: "so diverse that we also want to name in only one word, rebellious and anticapitalist, with those that are brothers of the National and International Sixth. **Today, like the corn, we are renewed in our decision to construct from below and to the left a world where all worlds fit.**"

At the closing, it was Comandante David, Indigenous Tsotsil of Oventic, who was the one responsible for giving the event's final words.

"We ought to give continuity to his historic gathering, because no one should forget it and ought to be continued in coming celebrations, because during these days, we have been able to share our reality of pain, of suffering, but also our experiences of struggle, our resistance as peoples, our faith and our culture," Comandante David said.

The Zapatista commander pointed out that this situation must not continue or stay like this forever, because some day it must change "because it is not just that as original peoples we live in oblivion, in misery, under the domination and exploitation of those that have dispossessed us of our natural riches, of our life, of our history, and of our autonomy."

"This encuentro, ought to be the start of our walking together as brothers. This encuentro ought to frame the direction and the horizon as our destiny as peoples. And the construction of the new society that we need and that we deserve," Comandante David said.

In this event where Subcomandante Galeano, aka Marcos, was absent, they said that a worldwide exchange of the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico with the Indigenous Peoples of the World would be

held. It will take place in the communities of San Francisco Xochicuautila and Amilcingo, Morelos, **next December 22 and 23.**

The Great Cultural Festival will be held on **December 24, 25 and 26** in the Federal District. The exchange with Indigenous Peoples will follow on **December 28 and 29** in Juchitán, Oaxaca and in the Yucatán. And, the Fiesta of Anti-capitalist Rebellion and Resistance will take place in the Caracol of Oventic on **December 31 and January 1, 2015.**

The conclusions from the Exchange of the Zapatistas Peoples with the Original Peoples of Mexico will be the days of **January 2 and 3, 2015.**

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