



HAMBURG, PLANET EARTH, MAY 2017

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FROM ACROSS THE WORLD TOGETHER AGAINST THE G20!

Open letter to the people of Hamburg

Dear people of Hamburg, you might wonder who is writing to you.

We are women and men from all over Europe and the world, citizens or activists in many different networks, and from all walks of life. We have very different ages and political persuasions.

We're the people who aim to join you in Hamburg, your city, to support the protests this July when the leaders of the world's 20 most powerful countries will meet in the very heart of the city.

You have mostly heard about us from politicians and media who want to make you afraid of us, describing us as "troublemakers" or "vandals"... However, with this letter to you we want to join hands with you since we are all subjected to the same global policies created at these summits, where the few think they can decide for all of our lives.

You are subjected to red, yellow and blue zones. You've seen control stations, police forces and machinery in your city before, as at the OSCE summit, and you will see even more soon. We can imagine how you feel, when your freedom of living, movement and assembly and those of your friends, neighbours and colleagues are suspended – even if only temporarily.

We also know this from our own worlds. In recent months, we've been hitting the roads of the US, raising up a million voices and marching in the growing resistance to Trump, asserting racial, social and gender justice against the racist, sexist, Islamophobic, homophobic, xenophobic, climate-denialist, corporate-controlled United States he is building. We know that many of you are also fighting the Right, against the AfD or autocratic rulers such as Erdogan, and that many of you share our opposition to the constant warfare exported around the world.

Often our rights to assemble – like yours – are violated in these struggles. We have fought for years to defend our planet from the threats posed by climate change and ecological crisis, from the expropriation and devastation, from the multinationals' resource extraction and exploitation of the lands where we live. Some of us were in North Dakota to put our bodies in front of the Access Pipeline. Some of us have opposed the long-lasting violence against the Amazon rainforest – as you have fought Moorborg or against useless, expensive mega-projects like the Olympics or fought to re-communalize water and energy.

Others of us have protested against undemocratic, corrupt regimes in Brazil (35 million on general strike against Temer's austerity this April), Russia (100 cities staged anti-corruption protests against Prime Minister Medvedev's corruption), India (180 million workers fought

Modi's neoliberalism one day last September), China (with more than 100,000 protests each year), and South Africa (regular mass and micro protests against Zuma's neoliberal plutocracy) – showing from below that BRICS elites are no better than the other G20 rulers.

Last year many of us met on the streets in Paris, against the elites who threaten our very lives by continuously reinforcing precarious labour and living conditions. The *Loi Travail* was a dramatic turning point for this process in Europe, but we also know how it feels to work at so-called *mini-jobs*, as millions of young people do in Germany – and we experienced how these struggles feel – for young and old – in times of a “state of emergency”. But we know this is a struggle for survival and solidarity. And you – like people everywhere – showed this by welcoming fellow citizens of the earth fleeing war, hunger and devastation, when you opened your homes and city for those in need. It is obvious; Merkel's dirty EU-Turkey deal against refugees represents neither you nor us.

However, we often meet bitter opposition to our rights to struggle, to assemble, to protest – from the police or the State. The governments of Hamburg, Germany and other powerful G20 states would like to silence and remove us from the public scene, so that they don't have to hear that we are many and that we are loud, and that they don't represent us – neither in Africa, Europe, the Americas or elsewhere in the world.

The choices that the “powerful Twenty” will discuss and propose in Hamburg in July are the same policies turning our cities into playgrounds for high-profit real estate and financial speculation; making rents unaffordable and raising the cost of living; pushing ordinary people out of urban centres; making our neighbourhoods uninhabitable; privatizing public services and common goods; and other policies making life increasingly difficult for the great majority.

They are the real invaders and destroyers of our cities. We must defend and protect ourselves from them together!

So we ask you to open your city to us, not to be scared but to welcome us when we come to raise our collective voice for social equality, freedom and democracy. They want capitalism without democracy: we want democracy without capitalism. This is what we already demanded in Frankfurt, at the European Central Bank opening. We learned there that where the “powerful Twenty” are, and where capitalism and violence are, there can be no democracy.

When Trump, Erdogan, Putin, Temer, Modi, Zuma, Macri, Xi, May, Peña Nieto, King Salman, Merkel and the other crooks and tyrants meet, planning their next moves to exploit our lives and our territories, we must stand up to block them.

If they want a democracy-free zone in Hamburg, we want a G20-free Hamburg instead.

In solidarity with you, people of Hamburg, we will come together in July to show that there is another world, an alternative one to theirs. **We will carefully respect the city and its activities, because we are really happy to come to Hamburg and visit your neighbourhoods with such lively, diverse cultures, with such a strong sense of freedom and solidarity, with such an important history of struggles for social, environmental, economic and civil rights for everyone.** And we hope that we will join and come to know each other in the streets!

We are many, we are loud and we will be in Hamburg with all of you – to show the entire world and become the alternatives to today's misery.

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