



THE YOGYAKARTA STATEMENT

Call for Systemic Transformation, Rooted in People's Power

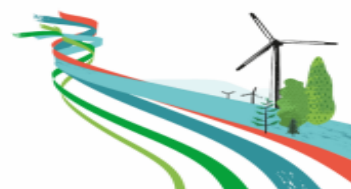
21 October 2026

We came together in Yogyakarta, Indonesia where the Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific “System Change Convergence” brought together community leaders, activists, workers, researchers, lawyers, youth leaders, artists and organisers from twenty countries to forge our path towards system change and sustainable societies in the Asia Pacific.

Over five days, participants from Palestine, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal, Australia, Sri Lanka, India, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Yemen, Cambodia and Bangladesh, joined by comrades from Africa, Latin America, North America and Europe analysed our political context to amplify and deepen previous social movement processes including the Peoples Agreement of Cochabamba, the Nyeleni Global Forum in Kandy, and the Peoples Summit of Belem. Women defending land, forests, coastal areas and islands, and livelihoods, were among those who gave this gathering its clearest political direction. We salute WALHI on forty-six years of organising and standing with Indonesians facing fires, toxic haze and the loss of homes and livelihoods.

As we gathered, forests and peatlands have been burning across Indonesia, choking millions of people in haze smoke across the region for the last four months. The current forest and peatland fires disaster is ecocide. This is a crime caused by the state-corporate nexus. We denounce the state and corporations responsible, and demand accountability and reparations for peoples affected by forest fires and all climate disasters. We stand in solidarity with youth-led movements across the world who are demanding economic justice, political freedom, peoples’ democracy and a dignified future for all. Young people's refusal to accept corruption, precarious futures and ecological ruin is a demand to transform political and economic arrangements, not merely to change leaders.

Our world is in crisis. Wars, occupation, debt, militarisation and corporate finance shape lives far from decision-making centres. Multipolarity may weaken the global north’s dominance without weakening the domination of capital. The Spirit of Bandung's anti-colonial promise cannot be reduced to a choice among rival states; we must build a true peoples led South to South cooperation. We stand for the freedom of Palestine, against the genocide in Gaza and against illegal Israeli occupation and dispossession, in solidarity with the people of Myanmar in their struggle against military dictatorship and repression, and with the people of West Papua in their ongoing struggle for justice, human rights, dignity, and self-determination. International law must serve the people it has so often failed. There can be no genuine system change without confronting the systems of domination and imperial violence that deny the Palestinian people their freedom and right to self-determination. None of us can be free until Palestine is free. Our liberation is bound together.





Our regions are witnessing climatic disasters, including in the Himalayan region, causing the destruction of life and livelihoods, driven by the impacts of destructive development pursued through imperialistic extraction and domination. Our forests, oceans, rivers, flora, fauna and people are yelling out for reclaiming the earth which for us is a call for system change.

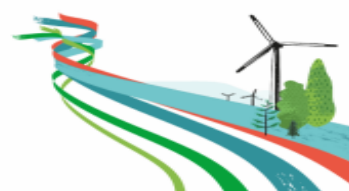
Authoritarianism and fascism are more than shrinking civic space. They are the project to protect the interests of capital and oligarchs at all costs, in the face of planetary crisis. They foresee a future where the majority of the world is sacrificed for this pursuit. Corporate projects receive police and military protection; their opponents are criminalised. Technology is increasingly weaponised to subdue and survey populations and defenders, propping up oligarchs instead of improving the lives of the masses. The AI race places the future of the world's most powerful technology in the hands of a handful of corporate overlords and is unending in its demands for resources. We defend independent institutions and free elections, but democracy cannot end at the ballot box. It must reside in people's authority over the decisions that govern their territories and lives.

From Pari Island, where local communities have taken their fight for climate justice to Swiss courts to hold major carbon emitters accountable for climate loss and damage, to the Sangihe Islands, where communities continue to defend their territories against destructive mining. Across the mountains, forests, river basins, coasts and oceans of our region, we heard the consequences of treating inhabited territories as deposits of extractable wealth. These struggles reveal the human costs of an unjust economic system and remind us that frontline communities are leading the fight for ecological justice, peoples' sovereignty, and the defence of life.

Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI)/Friends of the Earth Indonesia's *Ekonomi Nusantara* and Friends of the Earth International's *Pathways to System Change* offers us a direction for how we arrive at system change. This change is a living, dynamic and growing path.

Indigenous peoples, pastoralists, peasants, workers, fisher people and indigenous coastal communities, especially women of these communities, show us the way. We affirm them as rightsholders. Their customary and collective rights, knowledge, and right to free, prior and informed consent must be binding. We demand peoples' governance of forests and territories that centres community rights through recognition of customary tenure, ownership and decision making over the commons. We demand government policies and funding to support a thriving nature and healthy peoples.

We demand a just feminist transition grounded in peoples' sovereignty, gender justice, ecological restoration and meaningful participation at every level. We demand transformation of the energy system to ensure a just renewable transition, that centres life and the right to energy as a common good. We demand an end to corporate control, privatization and the boom in mining, greenwashed by the claims of energy transition. We demand an end to fossil fuels, in line with historical responsibility and immediate payment of climate finance obligations. We reject false climate solutions, nuclear energy, green colonialism, and extractive development carried out in the name of decarbonisation. We oppose carbon markets and offsets that commodify nature and enable polluters to delay emissions cuts.





We affirm that the climate crisis is rooted in a profoundly unequal global economic order built on colonial extraction, unequal exchange and the disproportionate consumption and emissions of global north countries. Climate debt must be recognised and addressed through accountability, reparations and the provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional public climate finance, in grants rather than loans.

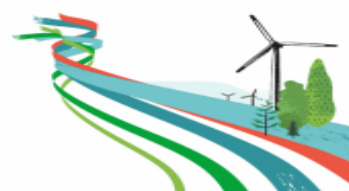
We uphold food sovereignty and agroecology as peasant-led systems that feed the world, and in which peoples enjoy their collective right to define their own policies, strategies and systems for food production, distribution and consumption. We resist industrial agriculture, corporate food chains and the dispossession of small-scale producers and workers.

We demand Blue Justice that places small-scale fishers, fish farmers, Indigenous Peoples, coastal communities, and island peoples at the centre of ocean governance. We reject the use of the Blue and Green Economy, marine spatial planning, and the 30×30 conservation target to justify land and ocean grabbing, displacement, fisheries industrialisation, industrial aquaculture, corporate control, and conservation without people. Sustainable oceans can only be achieved through peoples' rights, community stewardship, and democratic control over marine territories.

We commit to building a new economy that ensures the right to live a dignified life for all peoples through sustainable public services, the scaling up of cooperatives, fair trade and binding rules on corporations. This means achieving new UN binding rules on Human Rights and Transnational corporations, an end to investor–state dispute settlement and democratic multilateral institutions accountable to peoples. In light of an economic system increasingly at odds with the needs of the majority, we must find our own recalibration of economic well-being, moving beyond the worship of GDP toward an economic manifestation that provides opportunities for decent, dignified, just and equitable lives for all.

The so-called Asian Century couples overproduction for the wealthy with deprivation for millions. Sufficiency cannot mean asking the poor to consume less. Zero waste economies must reduce extraction and waste colonialism, and support repair and reuse with fair labour conditions. Cities must secure housing, public transport, health, education and the right to the city. AI and data centres escalate grabbing of water and energy while increasing surveillance undermining labour and ownership; digital infrastructure cannot remain beyond democratic control. The experiences of women community leaders carried a lesson beyond any workshop. Feminist participatory action research must allow communities, including women and gender minorities, to investigate their conditions, define priorities and direct the struggle. Visits to Merapi, Menoreh, and Jepitu brought the discussion back to people defending their homes and livelihoods and creating alternatives which are owned and managed by the people. Art, songs, and shared histories kept resistance alive beyond conference papers.

The discussions drawing on Maputo, Nyéléni, World Social Forum and the Jornada Continental for Democracy against Neoliberalism asked how movements can reclaim the political arena and agency, not merely assemble in it. The debate on multi-stakeholderism exposed the transfer of public authority towards corporations.





We affirm internationalist solidarity as a strategy for building people's power by connecting struggles across borders to collectively challenge the dominant, exploitative capitalist system. It is both a strategy and a collective capacity that goes beyond networking and expressions of support to strengthen people's movements to educate, mobilize, resist, organise, reclaim and transform the systems that shape their lives. We must build lasting links among peasant organisations, trade unions, feminist movements, Indigenous peoples, youth movements, fisher peoples, coastal and small island communities; organise internationalist defence of those attacked; and connect campaigns to the institutions financing dispossession.

We direct questions towards ourselves. Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific and allied movements must confront inequalities of voice, gendered leadership and keep bolstering internal democracy. We leave Yogyakarta with much work to do. Systemic transformation begins when the people who sustain life exercise the power to determine its future. Like a tree whose roots spread across territories and draw nourishment from shared sources, our struggles are interconnected, sustaining one another and enabling us to grow stronger together.

System Change Now, not climate change. People Power NOW!

