



Communiqué from the Fourth International Conference of Critical Geographers

Ciudad de México, México, 8-12 January 2005

International Critical Geography Group¹

Approximately 300 critical geographers from 32 countries around the world met at the Fourth International Conference of Critical Geography in the historic centre of México City to identify, discuss, and propose critical solutions to geographical aspects of many of the world's problems. Issues examined fell into seven main themes:

- Globalization, migration, and polarization;
- Peoples' geographies;
- Geographies of nature;

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- Geopolitics and geopolitical economy;
- Gender, difference, and space;
- Geographical concepts in action; and
- Urban and rural problems.

Critical Geographers are committed to socio-spatial and geo-political change aimed at challenging, dismantling, and transforming prevalent relations, systems, and structures of capitalist exploitation, racism, sexism, heterosexism, oppression, colonialism, imperialism, neoliberalism, national aggression, and environmental destruction.

A key concern arising from the research results presented at the conference is the dangerous nature of our world and, in particular, the growing unevenness of the distribution of this danger around the globe.

The spread and intensification of neoliberal economic and social policies (economic liberalization along with restrictions on social life) continue to threaten the health and welfare of millions of people globally. Neoliberal policies have led to excessive economic gains for the rich and owning classes over the past two decades, and they have led to massive economic and social deprivation of the poor and marginal in societies across the globe. The assault on the poor, ethnic minorities, women, and children — especially through the neoliberal attack on social life — continues unabated, all in the name of ‘economic growth’ for the wealthy. Exploitation of marginalized groups continues at ever-increasing rates, especially in the Global South, but also in an increasing number of marginalized spaces of the Global North. The so-called ‘War on Terror’ threatens democratic freedoms around the globe and has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians in war zones like Afghanistan, Iraq, and other parts of the world. Environmental destruction and environmental racism, sexism and classism continue to disproportionately affect ethnic minorities, women and the poor and marginalized across the globe, as witnessed in the uneven destruction arising from recent ‘natural’ disasters.

Critical geographers have united at this conference and elsewhere to contest all forms of oppression and exploitation, while also elaborating alternative geographies designed to counter the binary visions of both neoliberalism and the ‘War on Terror’ and their increasingly militarized mechanisms of surveillance and control used to divide peoples of the world.

Geographers attending the Fourth International Conference of Critical Geographers acknowledge and celebrate the diverse social movements and networks of transnational resistance that have emerged to challenge these various

processes of exploitation and domination and make a call for geographers and others worldwide to contribute their skills and energies towards the transformative projects that these movements and networks embody and represent.

Accordingly, the members of the International Critical Geography Group demand that world leaders renounce neoliberalism, militarism and all forms of exploitation, and we commit ourselves to support people and organizations around the world fighting for more democratic and environmentally sustainable cultural and political economies.