



# INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

for the promotion of the public services  
**GENOVA 28-29 OCTOBER 2006**

[www.agcs-gats.org](http://www.agcs-gats.org)

## Common statement

The Convention considers that the main challenge from the owners of private capital for the last 30 years is to merchandize life, in all its aspects, practical or not.

Through the liberalisation of public services, they attack human rights and the fundamental common good essential to life in society.

The liberalisation of services results in the destruction of the human community and the privatisation of politics, from local level to global level.

Private capital is now succeeding in the government of society by the “Res privata”.

To face this threat, we call for a collective international mobilization for “Res publica”.

### We, Citizens,

- elected members, of local democracy in European countries, Africa and Canada, representatives of millions of people living in countries which fight against the politics of the GATS,
- trade unionists,
- members of militant organizations,

### Note that

- **the benefits**, praised by the promoters of a global liberalisation, are not there: endemic poverty, running exclusions and inequalities in each country all around the world, social tensions, local and international conflicts, economic and environmental instabilities, enforced territorial disparities, are the results of this liberal globalization.
- **This liberal orthodoxy** “unable to procure well-being to societies and the planet” is promoted by the UNCTAD<sup>1</sup> and by J. Stiglitz, Nobel prize winner for economics.
- **The failure of the thesis which founded the WTO**, which says that economic development and the fight against poverty could succeed only by a complete opening of markets with a total globalisation of exchanges.
- **The same political methods in the european context** cause the dismantling of public services and social security and also to social dumping. Therefore, they are sources of disintegration, rather than political and social integration.

### We affirm that

- **Pretending to organize the world** in that way is not credible anymore and more than that, it is unacceptable.
- **The suspension of Doha’s negotiations** is opening an historical way to change these negotiations and to imagine a new international political trade.

### We denounce

- **promoters of this liberalism** who still want to globalize trade services with different agreements, in spite of the obvious failures and the dead-end policies of the WTO, in the face of social, economic and environmental challenges.
- **The role of the European Commission**, which is an effective and offensive partner of WTO. European directives, like the post directive or the services directive (Bolkestein), which are a way of accelerating the liberalisation of public services.
- **The zeal of governments** to accept them uncritically and to implement them.

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<sup>1</sup> www.unctad.org

## **We refuse this globalisation of activities and human relationships.**

For 11 years of WTO 's politics, the negotiations were only for the benefit of the most powerful companies.

### **3 examples:**

- In agriculture, industrialization had been more and more important, 850 million people are suffering from hunger and 70 % of them are farmers.
- Important companies of services are more and more influenced by liberalisation of public services, but at the same time this excludes a significant number of people.
- The GATS raise the liberalisation of services, which disrupt authorities from making the political choices for which they have been elected, and at the same time restricting the concrete exercise of democracy. Now rules are for opening markets! Political power won't be able to offer an effective and independent management.

We know that it is because of the contradictions between states, that the negotiations into WTO have become locked. The claims of the poorest never have been heard.

## **Public services are a new answer to make a unified and fair world.**

### **We affirm that**

- **Promotion of public services**, of their principles of solidarity, equal rights, secularism, social justice, territorial cohesion, is a fight for the better future.
- **Public services have to enter into legal challenges** to protect fundamental rights on a local, european and international level.
- **They are the only way** to protect goods distribution in an interdependent process. They are inseparable from public policies concerned with the general social interest. They must be supported by public finances ensured by a justice tax (Tax on financial benefits). This implies the opening up of the banks' secret accounts and the ending of tax heavens.
- Today, in local collectives other solutions to fight this liberalisation of public services are possible:
  - **return to direct administration**, development of local public actions, new ways of democratic participation,
  - **resistance can be organised**, gatherings of politicians, trade-unionists, associated forces and citizens.

### **We require that**

- **The structure of international standards is re-established :**
  - It is not acceptable that WTO, FMI, the Mondial Bank, the European Union and governments still continue to ignore these rules of fundamental rights to promote trade markets.
  - They must be made responsible to the United Nations, to the Declaration of Human rights of 1948, to the civil and politic acts of 1966 on social, economical and cultural rights, to the rules of OIT, and especially to the idea of the right to decent work, to health care, and in a global way, to the rules which guarantee the rights of people.
- **Transparent and democratic methods** of international markets and trading, have to be based on co-operation, equality and solidarity because agreements of the WTO and of the European Union alienate the rights of public services.
- **Public services must be organised and financed** on the basis of the choices of local groups and of the representatives of citizens.

**We affirm** our attachment to the freedom of shared political choices, and to be able to organize goods on the basis of co-operation.

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