



WORLD TRIBUNAL ON IRAQ
BARCELONA'S SESSION, 17th-22nd MAY 2005

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1.- What is the World Tribunal on Iraq?

The World Tribunal on Iraq – WTI (International Tribunal on Iraq, TII in Catalan) is a Turkish initiative of the anti-imperialist movement against the war, which arose because of the invasion of Iraq. It has been consolidating its aims since October 2003, when the monitoring group and the coordination of the tribunals were constituted in Istanbul.

The initiative consists in organising popular tribunals in different countries all around the world in order to establish a moral judgement against the United States and the Allies invasion of Iraq and its occupation. The Final Session will be held in Istanbul in June 2005 (look at the relation of other tribunal sessions at annexe 2 of this document).

There is an important diversity of organisations that are participating in the WTI. The Tribunal has manifested that this is an independent initiative from the World Social Forum and from the International Movement against the War, although the last one is the most popular international referent against the war and the occupation.

2.- Why are we holding a session of the World Tribunal in Barcelona?

Barcelona has been one of the places which has manifested its refusal to the occupation of Iraq in a more overwhelming way. The 15th February 2003 demonstration (we must remember, the first world mobilisation done before starting a war), it has been supported by one million and a half people that blocked the centre of Barcelona. The “NO” to the war was still very present during several weeks: banderoles and mullions at the balconies, meetings at night making noise with drums and pans at the same time every day “*caceroladas*”, fastings for the pace, keeping minutes of silence, and hundreds of initiatives that pulled the debate to the streets and mobilised the society in a period which was very special for all of those who lived the situation so closely.

Today, two years after the fall of Baghdad, we don't need to explain again which is the situation of the occupied Iraq. The lack of safety, the murders and the indiscriminate attacks, the lack of essential services and the despair of the civil population, constitute the present reality. We cannot forget all that and we must continue denouncing the occupation stronger than ever. That is why in view of the possibility to organise a session of the WTI, the PASI, (*Plataforma per l'Alliberament i la Sobirania de l'Iraq*) in the framework of the Spanish Campaign Against Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (*Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq*, CEOSI), has decided to assume this challenge and promote the celebration of this session that we are now presenting to you, and that will be the only one that will take place in Spain. Moreover, this session will be the last one before the final session planned in Istanbul next June 2005.

3.- Aims and subjects to be discussed

Barcelona's Tribunal seeks, not only to share the aims of the initiative of the World Tribunal on Iraq and to denounce once again the US colonial domination politics of the area, but also wants to put on the table and arise the public debate around the present situation of the Iraqi civil society.

The main objective of Barcelona's WTI is to evaluate some aspects of the occupation that hasn't been treated in other sessions before. If we consider the new context arisen from the elections on 30th January and the debate around the possibilities of the Iraqi people to recover its sovereignty, we suggest to entitle the session:

“Iraqi civil society in front of the US colonial domination project: facing the challenge of recovering self-government”.

The main subject to be judged would be basically, after hearing the witnesses of the politic, social, cultural and religious Iraqi representatives, whether there exist or not any ways that lead to the recovery of the sovereignty of the country in this new context after the elections on 30th January.

In this framework, we will talk about the present situation of the Iraqi civil society and also about the issues that are being developed currently for the reconstruction of their identity and sovereignty. We propose some topics in order to tackle this approach:

- **Political axis** > Politic situation of the country after the elections.
- **Religious axis** > Project of an integrated Iraq versus the civil sectarianism and the social fragmentation.
- **Economic axis** > Management of the petroleum income and the general economic frame.
- **Social, health and education axis.**
- **Human Rights axis** > Repression and Human Rights.
- **Cultural axis** > Cultural heritage.
- **Social and trade-union rights.**

4.- Global organisation

Taking into account the limited capacity of organisation of the PASI and the interest shown for some collectives and associations of Spain, we propose to develop the Barcelona's Tribunal in two big stages:

- The first stage will have different locations, where we will analyse some of the proposed axis. It would be **from 17th to 19th May**. The collectives who are interested should decide which axis they will talk about, they should afford the Iraqi witness travelling expenses and organise in their town/ field a preliminary session (with the format and guidelines that they decide in each place: a congress, a conference, a tribunal...). From this function should result some conclusions that they should bring to Barcelona for the week end.

- The second stage, the Tribunal strictly speaking, will take place in Barcelona, with determinate elements of formality to lend some rigour and relevance to the event, although without formal or legal entails. **From 20th to 22nd May**. The Tribunal will be on charge to elaborate the conclusions of the event. They will be considering the future of the Iraqi civil society based on the testimony of the witnesses that have participated in the preliminary sessions and that will bring their conclusions to Barcelona.

PRELIMINARY SESSIONS (DIFFERENT LOCATIONS)

Tuesday 17th May / Wednesday 18th May / Thursday 19th May

Regardless of the conferences / sessions that could be held in other parts of Catalonia and the rest of Spain, the PASI propose that Barcelona's sessions analyse two of the topics: the politic situation of the country after the elections and the religious situation and multiconfessionality, the 18th and 19th May.

BARCELONA'S TRIBUNAL

University of Barcelona, plaça Universitat (pre-reserved)

Friday 20th May / Saturday 21st May / Sunday 22nd May

Friday 20th May, from 19h00 to 22h00.

- Formal constitution of Barcelona's WTI : presentation of its aims and reading of the supporting Manifesto.
- Opening conference : "Iraq in the new context of legitimating the second phase of the occupation" (we are trying to confirm Denis Halliday participation).

Saturday 21st May, from 10h00 to 21h00.

With the Tribunal guidelines that we have mentioned already and a maximum of 5 of the 7 topics, we have the idea to give 1 hour and a half for the speech of each witness, specially the Iraqis, concerning all of the axis. If we consider to talk about more topics we will hold parallel sessions.

Besides the presentation of the conclusions from the previous conferences and the requests of the Tribunal, we will reserve a reduced space for the questions and the speeches of the audience.

- From 10h00 to 11h30 : Politic situation after the elections.
- From 12h00 to 13h30 : Religious situation and multiconfessionality.
- From 16h00 to 17h30 : Not fixed already.
- From 17h45 to 19h15 : Not fixed already.
- From 19h30 to 21h00 : Not fixed already.

Sunday 22nd May, from 11h00 to 14h00.

- Closing Conference : " Global civilian struggle against US colonial domination project " (we will tray to confirm the participation of the Movement against the war from the US)
- Reading of Barcelona's World Tribunal on Iraq conclusions. Closing ceremony.

6.- Some of the possible participants (people and collectives)

At this stage, the PASI has finished to prepare the global organisation of the Tribunal and the structure of the sessions. We have focused the main objective to be discussed at the Tribunal : *the Iraqi civil society facing the challenge of the recovery of its own self-government* and the topics associated to this approach. Moreover we have contacted several relevant people which have manifested their initial interest in giving support to the initiative through their participation.

The different ways in order to participate in the WTI that we have proposed to them are:

Line “0” – Signing the Manifesto and giving support to Barcelona’s WTI (see Annexe 3) and coming to the Opening Session on Friday.

- We are contacting the vice-chancellors of Catalan Universities / Jurists for Democracy / Free Association of Lawyers / Barcelona’s Bar Association / Human Rights Commission / Regional Financing Organisms (Diputació, Generalitat, Town Halls, etc.)

- Groups and Associations that could be interested in giving support to the Campaign (open list) : Foundation for Peace / Justice and Peace / UNESCO Centre / Work and Documentation Centre / Debt Watch in the Globalisation / CIEMEN / Catalan Federation of NGOs for the Peace / Association of Neighbours Federation / International Relations Centre of the UAB, etc.

- Other groups that could help to organise the Tribunal (open list) : Foundation UB Solidarity (Spaces of the UB) / Catalan Federation of NGOs for Development (communication and press support) / Stop the War Platform, etc.

Just to give an approximate idea.

Members of the Tribunal

We consider the possibility to have a Tribunal composed by between 5 to 10 members, relevant figures of the public life, from different fields, that have manifested their opposition to the US colonial domination project. We cannot already specify all the names but the President of the Brussels Tribunal, François Houtart, has shown his interest.

Witnesses

The witnesses from the different axis (topics) of the Tribunal will be basically Iraqis.

There is also an Spanish Delegation that will probably visit Iraq closely and that will confirm the participation of some of them in the Barcelona’s Session Tribunal.

Annexe 1.- The organisers: who are the PASI and the CEOSI

The Iraqi Sovereignty and Freedom Platform (in Catalan: PASI) is the redefinition of the Lifting Sanctions to Iraq Platform, which was already working in Catalonia since 1999 in order to denounce the impact of the economic sanctions over the Iraqi civil population. The presentation of this new period of the PASI has been held in a public act at the Ateneu Barcelonès, in Barcelona, on the 10th March 2003. The constituent Manifesto was signed by about thirty groups and associations approximately. The main denouncing axis are based on the illegality of the occupation, the destruction and the disband of the country and the cultural and economic plundering that has suffered and is still suffering.

The Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (in Spanish: CEOSI) gather a list of groups that are working throughout Spain, at the beginning, to denounce the sanctions, and now, to denounce the occupation. The PASI is one of them since its creation and they have organized together the visit of Hans von Sponeck and Denis Halliday (ex co-ordinators of the UUNN Humanitarian Help Programme to Iraq) and more recently, the visit of Iman Jamas, a journalist and activist woman from Iraq. The CEOSI (in its previous stage, against the sanctions) has organized a Tribunal against UNSC for Crimes Against Humanity in the framework of the Sanctions system as well as many others international conferences against the sanctions. Also CEOSI organized different annual delegations to visit Iraq (1994-2003), and co-ordinated a Health Campaign to operate Iraqi children in Spanish public Hospitals as well as a Campaign of collecting school equipment for Iraqi schools.

Annexe 2.- Other sessions about the World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI)

London, November 2003. Co-ordinated by the Jurists group Peacerights. Research on the supposed war crimes committed by the occupation forces during the military campaign and occupation.

Mumbai, January 2004. International Tribunal of Women on US war crimes.

Copenhagen, March 2004. Public audience on war legality, the Iraqi enterprises and public resources sale and the people stoppage in camps and prisons without legal procedures.

Brussels, April 2004. Session on the US New Century Project : the ideological war project against Iraq.

New York, May 2004. Session on the war legality : violation of UUNN and the international law. Violation of the will of the people around the world. War crimes and crimes under the occupation.

Japan, 2004. Several audiences during 2004 in different places.

Germany, 2004. Several audiences during 2004. Approach of subjects related to the international law violations of and the German Government complicity through covering the sanctions effects, the war and the occupation.

Istanbul, June 2004. Session on crimes committed against the cultural heritage.

New York II, August 2004. Co-ordinated by the International Action Center. Research session concerning international law and basic Human Rights violations by Bush and Blair Administrations. The witnesses of US soldiers families, militaries opposed to the occupation and Spanish members of international brigades that stayed in Baghdad during the occupation.

Hiroshima, October 2004. Session on the use of impoverished uranium and the Japanese Government complicity.

Stockholm, November 2004. Evaluation session on the occupation impact above the Iraqi civil society. Social, economic and cultural consequences.

South Korea, December 2004. Session on the South Korean Government complicity in the war and the occupation.

Rome, December 2004. Session on the war illegality and the Italian Government complicity.

London, February 2005. Co-ordinated by Peacerights. Popular Judgement about Iraq occupation by the Allies forces.

Lisbon, February 2005. Research commission to determinate the responsibility of Portugal in the invasion.

February 2005. Session about the mass media manipulation against the truth and against the Humanity: The Politics of disinformation.

Geneva, March 2005. The role of the mass media in the war and the occupation.

Cairo, February 2005. US crimes, Arabic governments complicity and repression of the Movement against the War.

Barcelona, May 2005. Organized by the Iraqi Sovereignty and Freedom Platform – the PASI and the Spanish Campaign against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq – CEOSI. Topic of the Tribunal : “Iraqi civil society in front of the US colonial domination project and facing the challenge of the recovery of its own self-government”.

Istanbul, June 2005. Final session of the WTI. Evaluation of the results of all the sessions held.

SUPPORTING MANIFESTO TO THE WORLD TRIBUNAL ON IRAQ IN BARCELONA'S SESSION, MAY 2005

The ones signing below, coming from different fields, do not want to remain impassive in front of the situation in Iraq. That is why we want to make public the current manifesto to express our support to the World Tribunal on Iraq which Spanish Session will be held in May 2005 in Barcelona.

We have been witnesses of how the permanent project of global war promoted by the United States Government has worked out. It has culminated in the plundering, wreckage, and occupation of Iraq. The ineffectiveness of international organisms was evident from the very beginning, as well as the inability of some country leaders to hear the clamorous will of a big majority of citizens, who went out to the streets, in the name of millions of people around the world, with the clear objective of stopping an invasion which was beforehand planned.

Today, two years after the fall of Baghdad, the wickedness of concepts such as *humanitarianism* or *democracy* is an everyday fact. It seems that it doesn't affect us nor shock us the flagrant violation of human rights which Iraq suffers nowadays.

We have learnt to live morally calmed when at the same time Falluja was a victim of an indescribable military chase. In Baghdad, the lack of safety in the streets has settled up in the city's everyday life at the same time that international terrorism nets set in the country being welcomed by occupant troops. Iraqi people are witnesses of how a new generation banishes in front of their eyes, another lost after the sanctions. Kidnapping, rapping, robbery and indiscriminate attacks in cities like Baquba, Ramadi, Samarra or Mosul are daily facts, as well as hunger, thirst, lack of electricity and drinkable water, unemployment, closed schools, and collapsed hospitals.

On 20th March 2003, the powerful irrationality of the most powerful beat all of us. And it will keep on beating if now we give our consent to all the process which is firmly commanded by Washington without indulgence. This is addressed with null planning but with lots of patience, to normalize an illegal occupation and legitimate a puppet regime that is under the orders of Pentagon's interests. If freedom cannot be decreed, it cannot be either imposed through weapons violence. It's clear that the elections held last 30th January under an absolute violent and tense atmosphere cannot be the culmination of any democratic process. There is not, for the majority of the population, a turning point in the elections in Iraq. There's just a country under a foreign military occupation, and a submitted people who suffer the consequences.

These are the effects that lead us to support the initiative of the PASI (Iraqi Sovereignty Freedom Platform) to organize in Barcelona a session of the World Tribunal on Iraq with the title "Iraqi Civil Society in front of the US colonial domination project: facing the challenge of the recovery of self-government". We believe that this initiative is necessary because we are convinced that Iraqi people claim for justice and truth, peace and freedom. Some of these Iraqi people are visiting Barcelona as witnesses to the Court and we, making use of our freedom, will help them to enjoy their freedom too someday. We want to express them our support in the name of our most powerful weapon: speech.

Taking into account all that has been stated, the ones signing below want to **denounce** Iraq's occupation, its destruction, the deliberated dismantling of its whole civil structure and the economic and cultural plundering which it has been victim of. We also want to **reject** the legitimacy of the occupation that any organization or government could do through collaborating in any way with the invading troops. We don't want to turn a blind eye to the untenable situation that Iraqi people suffer, worsened by instability and lack of safety prompted by the repression of the occupation forces that are direct responsible of the chaotic situation in which the country lives. We **refuse** the indiscriminate violence used against civilians. We also denounce the presence of foreign occupation troops in Iraqi territory, we **demand** its immediate withdrawal and the return of sovereignty without any conditions to the Iraqi people, the only ones legitimized to decide about their own future and that, at present, is in the hands of an Iraqi government without real and effective competence and under the dictates and interest of the Pentagon.

To end with, we **completely support** the celebration of a session of the World Tribunal on Iraq in Barcelona next May. We understand that the initiative will involve a moral judgement against Iraq invasion and occupation by USA and its allied. And what has to be even more important: we trust that it will contribute with important elements about the capacity of Iraqi society to recover its sovereignty. With the signature of this manifesto we also want to clearly show our confidence in the task of the associations that work in the civil field from inside Iraq, because we consider that their task is and will be fundamental in the whole process of liberation and sovereignty recovering.

**FOR A FREE AND SOBEREIGN IRAQ
OCCUPATION FORCES OUT OF IRAQ**

THIS MANIFESTO IS SIGNED BY

The session of WTI in Barcelona is organized by the Plataforma Catalana per l'Alliberament i la Sobirania de l'Iraq – PASI (pasi@moviments.net).

Further information about WTI in the
Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq –CEOSI
Web: www.nodo50.org/iraq