

**The International Gathering of "The Workers' Economy"
(Encuentro Internacional de "La Economía de los Trabajadores")
invites you to attend:**

**The 1st Regional Gathering of North America, Central America
and the Caribbean
November 7th and 8th 2014, Mexico, City (DF), Mexico**

Following the first four *encuentros internacionales* (international gatherings) of the "Workers' Economy," held in Argentina, Mexico and Brazil from 2007 to 2013, and after the first Regional Gathering of Europe and the Mediterranean, held in Marseille, France in January 2014, it is now proposed to conduct Regional Gatherings in every even-numbered year and International Gatherings in odd-numbered years. Following this plan, the 1st Regional Gathering of the North America, Central America and Caribbean Region of "The Workers' Economy" will be held in Mexico City, Mexico on November 7th and 8th, 2014; the 1st South American Regional Gathering of the "The Workers' Economy" will take place in Argentina on October 3th and 4th, 2014; and the 5th International Gathering of "The Workers' Economy" will be held in Venezuela in July, 2015.

We invite you to attend the 1st Regional Gathering of the North America, Central America and Caribbean Region of "The Workers' Economy" in November 2014.

Conducting an *encuentro* in the North America, Central America and Caribbean Region on themes pertaining to "the workers' economy" entails enormous challenges for the emerging struggles of workers building an alternative economy. First, there is a huge gulf between the developed countries of North America (Canada and the USA) and those further south (Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean) — in technological development, economic organization, and standards of work and life. Second, the imperialist role and agenda pursued by American capitalism has meant economic and political dependence among most capitalist governments and countries in the region. Third, the region's workforce continues to experience enormous disparity and dispersion.

Nevertheless, as demonstrated by the struggles of workers in South America and, more recently, in the struggles of the Arab Spring, in the social movements of "*indignados*," in "Occupy Wall Street," in "# YoSoy132," and other global labour and workers' self-management movements in many countries of the world, there remains an intense global struggle between labour and capitalism.

That is why, in this present situation, we invite you to gather with us — workers, activists, academics, and all people struggling for other economic realities — **to discuss and debate the following themes:**

1. *Workers' struggles in North America, Central America and the Caribbean in light of the imperialist agenda of so-called "free trade agreements" (including the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Pacific Alliance, the Trans-Pacific Partnership).*

- a) Challenges to labour rights won by workers for an international union of workers and for the environment.
- b) Strategies, experiences and alternatives in the struggles to build a workers' economy.

2. *The general struggle of workers against predatory extractive capitalism (i.e., mining, energy, wind farms, forests, oceans, agriculture, GMOs).*
3. *Strategies adopted and organizations created by workers of the region to address extreme forms of exploitation, and economic policies of low wages and low labour standards; unemployment, child labour, migration and trafficking; informalization, maquilization and the precariousness of work.*
4. *Challenges presented to the emerging forms of a workers' economy, including:*
 - a) The workers' economy: An alternative to the capitalist organization of work?
 - b) Organizational and technological challenges of the workers' economy.
 - c) Workers' living conditions, health, the conditions of work, and self-managed communities of workers.
 - d) Diverse manifestations of the workers' economy: Communitarian and territorial self-management, workers' self-managed firms, workers' control of production, the solidarity economy.
5. *The struggle for an international union of the working class.*

Call-for-participation

In the spirit of Latin American *encuentros*, this is not a conference based necessarily on formal academic papers – although those are welcomed as well – but, rather a gathering for debating ideas around the possibilities for and issues pertaining to the workers' economy (or even "economies").

We thus invite you to send us your articles; proposals for panels, workshops, or themes for discussion and debate; ideas; thoughts; or practical experiences that you'd like to share concerning some form of the workers' economy; or simply why you would like to attend the gathering in a few sentences.

Please send your interest in participating in the encuentro in Mexico City in an email or in an attached PDF document together with your email address, affiliation, and contact information to: marcelo.vieta@utoronto.ca (English language co-organizer) by Sept. 22, 2014. Please include in the heading of your email: The 1st North American Regional Gathering of "The Workers' Economy".

The format of the encuentro

The *encuentro* is organized around roundtables and working committees.

- Roundtables will consist of brief presentations, interventions, debates, and discussions (panelists to be determined).
- Working committees will be organized to discuss more deeply key issues, possible networks to be created or extended, how to carry out international solidarity work, and generally to debate key actions to be engaged with.

The *encuentro* will be conducted in Spanish and English with in situ and simultaneous translation, as the need arises.

Location of the encuentro

The *encuentro* will be held at the Autonomous University of Mexico at Xochimilco and/or, most likely, at the headquarters of one of the unions co-organizing

the encuentro. Since this is still to be determined by the organizing committee, we will advise all of the *encuentro*'s participants of the final location, as well as accommodation options, in the next few weeks.

We look forward to having you present in November!

Organizers of the International Gatherings of "The Workers' Economy"

- Facultad Abierta (Open Faculty Program), University of Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Labour Study Department, UAM-Xochimilco
- Incubes, Federal University of Paraíba, Brasil
- SOLTEC, UFRJ, Brazil
- NESOL, USP, Brazil.
- Self-management, France
- Center for Global Justice

Conveners of the 1st Regional Gathering of "The Workers' Economy" of North America, Central America and the Caribbean

- Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México (Autonomous University of Mexico City), Area Estudios del Trabajo (<https://sites.google.com/site/estudiosdeltrabajouamx/home/inicio>)
- Frente Auténtico del Trabajo (Authentic Labour Front) and Sindicato de Mineros (Miners' Union)
- SME
- CNTE
- Red Coop Mexico (Red Coop Mexico)
- Sociedad Cooperativa Trabajadores de Pascual (Society Worker Cooperative of Pascual)
- Sociedad Cooperativa de Trabajadores de Productos del Mar Tepepan (Society Workers Cooperative of Tepepan Sea Products)
- Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana -Azcapotzalco (Autonomous Metropolitan University- Azcapotzalco)
- Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana- Iztapalapa (Autonomous Metropolitan University- Iztapalapa)
- Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco (Autonomous Metropolitan University- Xochimilco)
- Universidad Obrera de México (Workers' University of Mexico)
- Escuela de Trabajo Social-UNAM (School of Social Work- UNAM)
- Medios Regeneración Radio (Feedback Media Radio)
- Radio Zapote (Radio Zapote)
- Radio la Cooperacha (Radio the Cooperacha)
- Medios Comunes (Common Media) and Semanario 24 (Weekly 24)
- Centro para la Justicia Global (Center for Global Justice, San Miguel de Allende, Mexico)
- The Centre for Learning, Social Economy, and Work (OISE/University of Toronto)