



On the repressive moves against peoples' initiatives for the IMF-WB annual meetings

IBON International Statement

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IBON International joins movements in denouncing Bali authorities' moves to prevent a people's conference to be held parallel to the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund-World Bank (IMF-WB) next week.

Venue organiser Radio Republik Indonesia has been compelled by police to prevent the Peoples' Global Conference Against the IMF-WB (PGC) from pushing through at their venue—on the pretext of a Bali-wide ban on public assembly and as part of the Indonesian government's militarised security measures for the Annual Meetings.

The IMF-WB is aware of peoples' grievances due to their promotion of corporate plunder, the sinking of developing economies and the violations of people's economic rights. The iron hand of Bali authorities indicates intolerance for any and all forms of dissent especially by those most negatively affected by IMF-WB programs and policies on the ground.

Central to the IMF-WB Annual Meetings is the WB approach of "Maximizing Finance for Development" (MFD), which makes the development agenda an even bigger playground for corporate interests while leaving people's rights behind. Through the elites even in Southern economies, this WB approach prioritises private sector funding and different layers of "reforms" and "guarantees" to promote profit-driven investments for public needs, such as infrastructure. Is the MFD approach that despicable that the official response is to shield it from being exposed to the international community?

This patently undemocratic move is another stain in the IMF-WB's decades-long tarnished record when it comes to respecting people's rights and promoting people's development. Repression will only strengthen peoples' resolve to raise their voices and grievances. People's calls will never stop until the IMF-WB's continuing promotion of *maldevelopment*— through foreign debt and foreign direct investment dependence — is fully brought into light, and the affected communities hold these institutions and elite-led governments accountable for this problematic economic model.

The recent dialogue initiated through Indonesian movements' assertions has compelled state actors to verbally commit on lifting the ban. But we join people's organisations in remaining vigilant while an official approval remains unissued, lest authorities backtrack from their informal commitment.

We call on the IMF-World Bank and the hosting government of Indonesia to end and refrain from all sorts of iron-handed moves during the Annual Meetings, and to respect the rights of civil society organisations (CSOs) and movements to free assembly and participation.

With US dominance in the IMF-WB since its origins, these institutions have historically served anything but the people's right to development, and current indications point to how it is likely that they never will. It is therefore not surprising that Indonesian and international movements are calling to shut down the IMF-WB and to reclaim their rights and future away from corporate-led "development."

We call on the international community to stand in solidarity with Indonesian people's organisations, social movements and international CSOs in condemning the repression of people's voices against the latest forms of IMF-WB offensives on people's rights. #

IBON International (www.iboninternational.org) engages in capacity development for people's rights and democracy around the world. It strengthens links between local campaigns and advocacies to international initiatives and brings development issues from the international arena in a way that peoples' organizations and social movements can engage with at country level.