



**EZKERRA EUROPAREN ATARIAN**  
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## **THE LEFT AND EUROPE**

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### **MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT**

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#### **PRESENTATION**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1) A certain way of relating to territory, interpreting it and seeing oneself as part of an ecosystem – a way of life, that is, that gradually leaves its permanent imprint on the land and in the consciousness of those who inhabit it – is in its death throes. This report is submitted as a reflection and invitation to stop and ask ourselves whether the blind forces of the economy, the rules of the market and the requirements of globalisation are taking us where we want to go. Or is this new Europe that is being constructed a carnivorous plant?
- 2) The long-held traditional image of Europe as a haven of respect for the environment and social rights is today a mere mask concealing quite a different reality. Green Europe, social Europe, the Europe of solidarity, is a mere cadaver waiting to be buried whose stink is already becoming unbearable. The direction taken with the globalisation and/or regionalisation of the economy is being further accelerated by the ongoing process of constitution of the European Union. The parameters of the European Constitutional Treaty destroy any chance of establishing democratic models of development.
- 3) Ten years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, when it has become clear that constant mention of the concept of sustainable development has not brought about the implementation of real, effective policies to alter the unsustainability of the present economic system, the sustainable development rhetoric has shown itself to be simply a smokescreen whose real purpose is to make the intolerable sustainable. Even the European Commission, in its report to the Council of Europe and the European Parliament on the occasion of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (or Earth Summit) in Johannesburg, admits that the hopes raised in Rio have not been fulfilled: *“Since [the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio] pressure on the environment and natural resources has increased while poverty has continued to grow throughout the world. The notion of rechanneling production and consumption towards sustainability is still more rhetoric than reality.”*
- 4) Over the last ten years pressure on the environment has grown and poverty has spread in spite of a long list of agreements and treaties signed within the framework of the European Union: the European Community’s Green Book, the Aalborg Charter of European Cities and Towns Towards Sustainability, the Hannover Declaration, the White Book on European Transportation Policy, the European Community’s Fifth and Sixth Action Programmes on the Environment, and in 2004, Towards a Thematic Strategy on Urban Environment.
- 5) This bad starting point will be made worse by the European Constitutional Treaty, a commitment to a capitalist Europe whose main identifying feature is the free circulation of capital and merchandise, with exclusive powers over customs union, the regulation of competition, monetary policy and a common commercial policy. On the other hand, social policy, which is left in the hands of the individual states, will get rounded down, while worker mobility is encouraged by allowing companies to relocate at will and a carte blanche to multinationals.



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- 6) In the primary sector the Constitutional Treaty gives priority to productivity and the creation of a self-contained market, which instead of responding to the interests of this sector puts its future in the hands of the market and the big food and agricultural companies, moving towards a future of farming without farmers, The farming community's multifunctionality and special relevance to environmental and cultural issues is of course ignored. The Treaty's abandonment of documents that were approved by the European community itself and by other international organs such as the UN is particularly to be deplored. And yet it devotes a whole chapter to Trans-European Networks including transportation, telecommunication and energy. Not to mention the environmental consequences of these trends!
- 7) This, then, is the Constitutional Treaty of financial globalisation, neglect of social questions, contempt for environmental issues, and imposition of the economic agents' ground rules: it is a treaty for capital, certainly not for the citizenry, and not for the peoples of Europe either.
- 8) Given such a gap between discourse and reality, it is time to take up the gauntlet by getting involved in the design of a territorial and developmental model that represents the future Europe that we want. If we do not do this, we risk being relegated to mere spectators of our own history. This is such an important challenge because we are living at a historical turning point when the decisive question is not going to be the quality of the model of development or society designed but the speed with which changes take place. This speed is so great that in some cases we are not given time to take in the actual situation, analyse it, and consciously identify our position within it so as to avoid getting swallowed up like driftwood in the whirlpool of globalising Europeanism.
- 9) Some, as if stricken by schizophrenia, speaking in the name of sustainable development, actually seek unlimited growth that can in no way be sustained. To them we should respond by defending the need for a broad social consensus based on genuine citizen participation regarding the model of the future Europe that we want and activation of the territory's own potential, rather than succumbing to the seductive calls of these new sorcerers' apprentices, whose own power is not enough to restrain the demons they are calling into being.



## 2. GLOBALISATION, EUROPE AND THE NATION-STATE

**“If individuals define situations as real,  
they are real in their consequences”**

**Thomas’ Theorem**

- 10) The proliferation of the term “globalisation” not only in the field of economics but everywhere in our daily life, and its indiscriminate use by the media, is no mere accident: the purpose is “to devise a virtual reality as a means of artificial construction of social reality”. In this framework the process of European construction proves to be a true smokescreen concealing the most outrageous aspects of the restructuring of the economic system and its commitment to models of development which are not only socially and environmentally unfriendly but also radically unfair and excluding.
- 11) Globalisation is not a simple concept. This term indiscriminately subsumes an objective reality, a transformation of the economic system and, above all, a particular ideology. To avoid turning economic policy into a mirroring operation – an all-encompassing circular tautology – and falling for a reductionist interpretation that divorces the economy from its social dimension or ignores the interaction between ecology and politics, before entering into specific issues such as the function and size of the state or the spatial repercussions of restructuring, it will be best to ask whether the scenario we are looking at is one of globalisation, regionalisation or internationalisation of the economy.
- 12) One thing that is crystal clear is that the European project is inextricably linked to the development of capitalist globalisation, which finds its maximum expression today in the text of the European Constitutional Treaty. This is essentially a treaty to establish financial globalisation, the neglect of social questions, contempt for environmental issues, and the imposition of the economic agents’ ground rules. It is a treaty for capital, certainly not for the citizenry, nor for the peoples of Europe.
- 13) So much for the Europe of the Peoples advocated by the Basque Nationalist Party in its national day speeches ever since the 1930s, now translated into a Committee of Regions that is nothing more than a smooth-talking assembly that gathers to write up reports lacking any authoritative status. So much baggage was quite unnecessary for this trip to nowhere!
- 14) Bourgeois nationalism concurs with Spanish neoliberalism’s acultural, technocratic conception in defence of a European project that places Euskal Herria in the following parameters: scrupulous respect for the established international division of labour, disintegration of Basque nationhood in a Trans-Aquitaine region as part of the Atlantic Axis, and the utilisation of local interests as a simple adaptation of local conditions to the needs of the internationalisation of capital.
- 15) Most of the elements that form part of the functioning of the economic system have their own particular globalisation history whose dominant trait is a lack of uniformity. The present phase reveals qualitative differences from earlier stages,



with new markets, new participants, new instruments, a less automatic framework of regulations in a multi-polar context and spectacular growth in gross financial flow.

- 16) From a historical point of view the seemingly most solid trends are merely contingent, making it advisable to bear in mind that all situations are potentially reversible, no matter how dominant they appear to be at a given point. This thought is particularly interesting given that “hard” operations on territory are, on the contrary, to a large extent irreversible.
- 17) As globalisation advances, and with it the mobility of capital, business and workers, it will become more and more difficult for governments to implement policies of income redistribution. In globalisation the winners are those who achieve greatest mobility.
- 18) Mobility is becoming a basic, decisive factor for the efficiency and competitiveness of both business enterprises and the richest and best qualified people, who are able, thanks to globalisation, to move their production to wherever costs are lowest, invest their money wherever its after-tax yield will be greatest, and sell their labour wherever net salaries are highest. Even though most voters are in favour of raising taxes to indemnify the losers, the “market” – i.e. businesses and financial institutions – are able to avoid taxation through their mobility.
- 19) Since a government’s capacity to dispose of money to invest, consume or transfer depends on its ability to raise taxes, the mobility of producers, who are basically the main source of public money, will make it harder and harder to maintain states’ spending capacity.
- 20) Labour is the least mobile factor of production owing to workers’ family, cultural and language ties, and this makes them the easiest to tax. This has allowed governments to continue to increase public spending, but only by transferring the major tax source from capital to productive labour. The varying mobility of productive factors determines the level of tax contribution.
- 21) Until either an adaptation or a sharp reduction of the fiscal system is achieved whereby the ability of states and governments to carry out economic and social policies will undergo severe limitation, the centre of gravity of taxation is set to shift towards the income of the least mobile and active elements: unskilled and moderately skilled labour, real estate, small and medium-sized businesses, and spending rather than income.
- 22) In parallel with this, there are increasing demands for greater protection, and as the state’s public income decreases, there is a growing trend for citizens to take on the cost through the privatisation of components of social security. The establishment of the euro as a common currency and budgetary stability pacts are leading in this direction too.
- 23) The scenario here described gives rise to a contradiction between the need for greater social protection for the “losers” in the globalisation process and the



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difficulty states face in obtaining sufficient funds to satisfy this need. A possible outcome of this contradiction, unless a solution is found not only in economical but also in social terms, might be public rejection of the ongoing globalisation process. The first glimmer of such a reaction may be read into conflicts over company pullouts, such as that of the Gasteiz plant of Caballito, which has threatened to move its production to Poland.

- 24) At the same time, globalisation of the economy and market is affecting the concept of the state in terms of its functions and policies, and it seems to be moving towards a profound restructuring and self-redefinition.
- 25) Some economic and political substrata of the bourgeois state are undergoing gradual deterioration as economic globalisation progresses. One of its traditional foundations, national self-sufficiency, is already demolished. The development of communication, transport and information technologies is paving the way for further deterioration of the idea of the nation-state and the establishment of large areas of regional integration, as in the paradigmatic case of the European Union.
- 26) Thus state sovereignty would be greatly impaired owing to governments' inability to reduce their dependency on global financial markets. Faced with this globalising revolution in international markets, the states would have no choice but to redefine their functions, role and size. This redefinition is finding many detractors, as shown by the resurgence of reactionary stances, such as we are seeing in the electoral and ideological upswing of conservative and fundamentalist nationalism in Austria, France, Spain and elsewhere.
- 27) As part of this scenario, connivance between the public and private sectors is taking on a growing role. The state is being asked to supervise the playing rules yet leave it to the private sector to do the organising in areas such as education, health care, social security and pensions.
- 28) Along such lines, some sectors in Europe favour the State's loss of economic power and overall weakening, so that the development of social-democratic policies on a multinational scale becomes completely dependent on the development of global government institutions. This would then be one of the roles to be played by new European institutions.
- 29) While pro-globalisation theories foresaw the appearance of a new, unprecedented economic order whose activity would be centred in transnational companies with more power than that of any state and hence able to control the states' public policies, the empirical evidence is pointing in a different direction: world economic activity is actually mainly performed outside the ambit of the multinational companies, which only control one-third of such activity. Such multinationals are in reality, then, simply national companies that have spread into other countries while keeping their centre of operations in a specific country or region with which a close relationship is maintained.
- 30) At the present time we are looking not so much at globalisation as at the regionalisation of economic activity centred around three dominant states: the



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United States, Germany and Japan. These states have established three major economic regions: North America, the European Union and Southeast Asia. Thus most economic activity today should not be considered global, but intra- and inter-regional. Fear of change in the power relations between the dominant powers as a result of an explosive appearance on the scene of emergent economies such as China, or of large-scale cooperative economic agreements between South American countries (the Brazil-Argentina-Venezuela axis) is provoking a period we could call a new “cold war”, including some very “hot” episodes indeed such as a series of US invasions of other countries to maintain its control over oil. In this respect the European constitutional treaty is treading the same road already travelled by the triumphant American Republican Party.

- 31) 75% of the world’s flow of productive capital in 1995 took place in North America, the European Union and East Asia. In the case of the EU, most of the capital invested in productive activities originates from national savings in the individual states.
- 32) The evolution of the EU towards a single market with complete mobility of capital, goods and services and human and staff resources is not leading to unity in social areas and a welfare state. The playing rules are globally determined for the European economic space but the conditions in which this is developed vary.



### **3. THE METROPOLISATION OF TERRITORY**

- 33) The 1983 European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Torremolinos Charter) introduced a progressive concept: “Regional/spatial planning gives geographical expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society.” It went on to say: “[Territorial planning] is at the same time a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and a policy developed as an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach directed towards a balanced regional development and the physical organisation of space according to an overall strategy.”
- 34) Two of these characteristics are that territorial planning should be “democratic”, ensuring the participation of the affected population, and “comprehensive”, ensuring coordination between the various sectorial policies.
- 35) The rational use of territory as one of its fundamental aims is taken into account in the sense that “it is concerned in particular with the location, organisation and development of large urban and industrial complexes, major infrastructures, and the protection of agricultural and forestry land.”
- 36) Thus these are the basic components of territorial planning in the community domain: a broad concept of territorial planning, its democratic and global character (understood as the coordination of sectorial policies), avoidance of economicist determinism, control of industrial and urban development while protecting agricultural areas, and the application of environmental parameters to determine land use.
- 37) Territorial planning policy should take into account both economic planning and conservation of the environment, encompassing decisions on economic planning policy for qualitative development, correcting regional and sectorial imbalances as between different economic sectors, so that territorial plans specify appropriate precautions and land reserves in order to implement economic planning criteria as expressed through the development of sectorial legislation. At the same time, it should examine all possible options and adopt those that best meet the requirements of rational land use in terms of an environmental parameter presupposing that the physical environment must determine what land uses are established, and not vice-versa.
- 38) Based on these premises, the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter sets the goal of adopting “common principles chiefly tending to reduce regional inequality and so achieve an improved general conception of the utilisation and organisation of space, the protection of the environment and the improvement of the quality of life.”
- 39) The Preamble calls for “a critical review of the principles governing the organisation of space, to avoid their being wholly determined by short-term economic objectives”. In line with the need for citizen participation in environmental issues, it states that “all European citizens should be enabled to participate, in a suitable institutional framework, in the introduction and application of regional/spatial planning measures”, and again: “Any



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regional/spatial planning policy, at whatever level, must be based on active citizen participation. It is essential that the citizen be informed clearly and in a comprehensive way at all stages of the planning process and in the framework of institutional structures and procedures.”

- 40) Twenty years on, the entire model of development put forward by the economic and political forces who are behind this type of European construction does away with such principles and has placed us entirely at the orders of finance and speculation. It is in such a scenario of deregulation and laissez-faire that each of the European territories is now left to find its place.
- 41) As much is admitted in the European Union’s own documents, such as an interim communication titled “Towards a Thematic Urban Environment Strategy” (2004): *“The failure to give sufficient consideration to the environmental implications of decisions and a failure to plan systematically for a high quality urban environment are among the principal causes of the current situation, with consequences both for the environment and for the city’s economy and its citizens.”*
- 42) The search for a specific role for Euskal Herria in the context of the great European powers, with the generation of a sufficiently large “critical mass” gathered around the cities of the South and the BAB (Bayonne-Anglet-Biarritz) in the North, transformed into metropolitan areas, is a strategy that meshes in with the new forms of territorial action that issue from the globalising process and its reflection in the continentalisation of the economy.
- 43) For Basque regionalists, the bid to support a declining Atlantic Axis in competition with the emerging Mediterranean Axis through the creation of a network of interconnected cities (metropolitan regions) from Oslo to Lisbon is sufficient justification for foisting a vast range of high-density transport networks on the area (such as the High Speed Train or the Eibar-Gasteiz motorway) without so much as a thought about the effect known as “pole suction” which will make us more dependent on the Paris-Madrid axis while making the different territories of Euskal Herria more remote in terms of economic articulation and territorial cohesion.
- 44) Just as the central role of the nation-state is threatened by globalisation, to which it responds by readjusting its functions, another force, this time coming from below, is challenging the nation-state’s monopoly in the generation of comparative advantages and ability to manage local relationships.
- 45) The creation of comparative advantage is not a result merely of abstract or universal variables such as technology, companies, the market and the economy, but a complex synthesis of these with a specific context. In order to explain differences in results we would therefore need to look at how technology enters into a synthesis with a given culture; companies with the environment; markets with non-commercial relationships; and the economy with society.



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- 46) The call to recover the territorial dimension as a basic category of economic thought can be understood as an invitation to economy to reconsider territory as a vital link in the systematic production of value and competitive advantage, while emphasising the shift from the national to the local level.
- 47) Regarding the weakening of the nation-state, some people talk of a crisis of effectiveness and legitimacy: “Indeed the nation-state seems to be less and less capable of controlling globalisation of the economy, information flow and criminal networks... Most of the problems that affect our daily lives, namely education, health care, culture, sports, social services, urban transport, local ecology, citizen safety and the enjoyment of life in our towns and neighbourhoods, are the theoretical and practical responsibility of local government and of an autonomous community... Identity is increasingly expressed in terms of territorial domains distinct from that of the modern nation-state. So the nation-state is losing power in an upward direction while also being weakened from below by more and more sharply defined regional or national identities.”
- 48) The apparently resulting paradox, whereby in a globalising economy territorial context is a decisive element in the generation of competitiveness of economic units, while the production and management of the habitat and collective services make up the social base of productivity in the new economy, taken together with the fact that both functions are basically in the hands of local and regional governments, can only serve to strengthen the political role of local government.
- 49) One thing that is not clear in this theory is why it considers that “city networks may gradually become powerful, dynamic collective participants in the global economic scene capable of negotiating with the multinational corporations and supranational institutions”. There seem to be insufficient grounds for predicting that these emergent structures will possess negotiating capacity where the states have failed, despite their far superior arsenal of economically relevant mechanisms.
- 50) On the other side of the scale, we might consider that “the framework of the state still serves as a powerful expression of political and cultural identity and hence of social, economic and territorial cohesion”, because “the nation-states are involved in the emergent forms of (de)regulation in international markets. The central functions of nation-states are increasingly related to the tutelage and legitimisation of supranational and infranational government mechanisms. Moreover, since labour is still one of the least mobile factors, the regulation of the population through social policies presents itself as one of the central components among the state’s functions. Indeed, this area remains exempt from international harmonisation. Such a function relates to one of the inherent aspects of the nation-state: the re-creation of collective identity as an institution determining social relations.”
- 51) Faced with the new articulation of the global economy that is believed to lie on the horizon, centred on networks of cities, the nation-state is not remaining inert but is reacting by redefining its functions and forms of intervention, giving rise to



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a new paradigm of intervention by the nation-state and the state's function as a bridge connecting higher and lower levels, in conjunction with its monopolisation of the powers in the social area that are conferred on the state by a new focus of legitimacy. Here we have a key to understanding the Spanish state's refusal to allow the breaking up of the single fund of Social Security, and also the recent resurgence of Spanish nationalist extremism.

- 52) The belief that the nation-state is no longer the chief economic space and that business cannot become competitive without a favourable context either, hence viewing the urban-regional system as the most significant economic space because the city is where synergies are currently generated and productivity and innovative capacity realized, fails to address the important point that national sovereignty is being redefined in the European Union along lines of "the consolidation of exclusive powers of the state in two major spheres of action: social and territorial (as a bridge between the regional and supranational levels)".
- 53) Thus the European Constitutional Treaty contains a commitment to giving the pan-European institutions exclusive power over customs union, the regulation of competition, monetary policy and a common commercial policy, while social policy, left in the hands of the individual states, will get rounded down and worker mobility encouraged as companies are allowed to relocate at will and multinationals are given a carte blanche.
- 54) The states themselves have thus opted, from their central position on the world stage, to limit their own sovereignty, not in favour of supranational political entities but of deregulation, absolute supremacy of the market and its central agents, the transnationals. To visualise and bring to maturity the alliance between liberalism and the nation-state in order to make possible the construction of Europe along social lines is a necessary prerequisite for this, but not a sufficient condition.
- 55) Since the creation of the World Trade Organisation in Marrakesh in January, 1995, at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of GATT, international politics over the past ten years has been dominated by constant attempts to create a world market without frontiers where capital and goods (but not people) can move about freely, regulated only by the law of supply and demand. Under pressure from the global market, governments have opted to sacrifice the protection of public wealth for the commercial interests of the private sector. Forced to offer favourable conditions to attract speculative capital, governments are reluctant either to establish new regulations or enforce those in existence.
- 56) When the cost of moving production units from country to country decreases substantially, transnational companies become free to pick and choose the most favourable political and institutional conditions for their businesses around the world. Economic power then becomes political power, since companies are able to influence trends in job creation and even taxation, and can stand in the way of the enforcement of urban, social and environmental regulations.



- 57) On this playing field, new strategies of territorial development take on growing importance in the tug-of-war between the deterritorialisation of capital (which comes to view territory as a mere physical support) and territoriality per se. In the confrontation between these two ways of thinking – the global-transnational and the social-territorial points of view – regional planning, rooted in the territories, ought to adopt some sort of position of resistance.
- 58) The new economic geography moves within spaces with variable geometry, rather than on constructed territories; within imprecisely defined metropolitan spaces that are subject to powerful pressures rather than socially and urbanistically constructed cities. Thus the metropolitan space as an emergent economic frame becomes a crucible for new tensions and contradiction, under the pressure of which both their institutional structure and regulatory mechanisms are shattered.
- 59) The new “planners”, sorcerers’ apprentices whose own power is insufficient to restrain the demons they have called up into existence, have in practice replaced social agreement with private interest groups and virtual participation processes. They are turning local public treasuries into huge black holes while tending to divert the budgets for culture or social emergency funds towards investment in transport and telecommunication infrastructures, while at the same time supporting the privatisation of basic public services (London is a paradigm case) and the establishment of mixed companies run with private capital euphemistically described as commercial management for increased efficiency.
- 60) While the problems we have described are serious indeed, the Achilles’ heel inherent in great (de)structured urban agglomerations *cum* metropolitan spaces generating competitive advantage is the utter lack of democracy. Both in their origin and their development, the metropolitan governments, as organisms above the municipal level, are neither directly elected, nor perceived by citizens as something accessible that they can control. The impossibility of exerting direct public pressure and lack of control mechanisms comparable to those hitherto established for cities make the government of metropolitan areas reminiscent of the age of illustrated despotism.



#### **4. SPATIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF GLOBALISATION**

- 61) The territorial model of advanced capitalism is the metropolitan region with imprecisely defined territorial boundaries. The metropolitan region implies more diffuse growth whereby it becomes increasingly difficult to establish clearcut limits between rural and urban zones, resulting in a greater dispersion of activity in the metropolitan and regional area.
- 62) This kind of space is associated with a form of production in which productive activity is less centralised spatially, together with a greater concentration of tertiary activity, especially in the case of the advanced tertiary and financial sector, and also with new modalities of reproduction of labour resources and daily life. This territorial model is characterised by a drastic increase in transportation needs and a corresponding rise in energy consumption.
- 63) This new form of space varies greatly depending on the function performed by the metropolitan space within the New International Division of Labour, with a common characteristic of intense concentration of population in the area but differences regarding the function of the inhabitants' activity and its structure, form and functioning.
- 64) Given the absence of other regulating mechanisms, the "Global Cities" where advanced services and the heart of financial activity are located fulfil key functions of management, coordination and control of a planetary productive model. The global economy is managed and controlled from certain cities, or rather metropolitan regions, that possess a "command" function: New York, London, Tokyo, Paris, Frankfurt, Los Angeles.
- 65) The intense development of the centre's functions in management, planning and control of world production – the so-called advanced services, which together with financial activity play a key role in the functioning of advanced capitalism, require mutually connected spaces for their location that are also connected with decentralised production centres all over the planet.
- 66) The productive system of the most dynamic cities and regions comprises high-tech industrial activity such as microelectronics, biotechnology, robotics and aerospace, manufacturing characterised by differential innovations, and advanced service activities such as marketing, design or technical assistance, financial services or leisure activities.
- 67) Globalisation seems to be giving rise to a new international order and an international division of labour in which increased competition entails processes of productive restructuring of countries, regions and cities. Companies no longer compete alone, but jointly with their productive and institutional setting, so that globalisation leads to a new organisation of the system of cities and regions in accordance with the new international division of labour. The distinctive element of the present scenario results from the insertion of new spaces for production and innovation within multiple strategic networks.



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- 68) The logic of globalisation causes cities and regions to compete with each other on an international scale to improve their competitive advantage through development of local resources, differentiation in their productive systems and specialisation vis-à-vis other cities and regions in the global system.
- 69) The territorial setting – the local domain – acquires fresh and decisive importance inasmuch as it affects the efficiency of local companies and the globalisation process. Territory is considered an economic resource performing a specific function: the flexible integration of the production and consumption of manufactured goods and knowledge.
- 70) The price of globalisation at its present level comes from the elimination of technical (rather than economic) obstacles through the abolition of distance and time. This can only be made possible through large-scale technical improvements in transport and communications. Within this logic, the European constitutional treaty devotes an entire chapter to Trans-European Networks, covering transportation, telecommunications and energy supply, without so much as a word about the environmental aspects of all this.
- 71) The great acceleration and spread of systems for transporting products have made it possible for production to be organised on a transnational scale, in a way parallel to how the development of information systems makes it possible to control the production process from the centre of the system practically in real time.
- 72) Transport, telecommunications and energy are, then, the key elements of the present productive and territorial model resulting from changes in production and transformations in the domain of reproduction and daily life.
- 73) The exponential increase in the need for motorised mobility is the outcome, in production, of the decentralisation of certain industrial sectors or phases specific to certain peripheral countries that represent markets for products manufactured in the centre. The “fuzzy factory” and new production techniques based on the *just in time* method aim to reduce stocks by keeping track of demand, thus reducing storage costs and the immobilisation of capital. Thus transportation becomes a key element in the production chain itself, which extends beyond the factory in the guise of transportation, which becomes just one more form of production.
- 74) Special importance is likewise being acquired by new forms of commercial distribution, such as large department stores on the metropolitan periphery that alter consumer patterns and encourage automobile use, and the increase and commercialisation of leisure activities linked to the use of motor vehicles in people’s (so-called) free time.
- 75) The metropolitan region adopts an increasingly nondescript structure and spatial segregation that forces transport to be centred on the private car, as the dispersal of recent growth renders collective transport increasingly impractical. This growth in motorised road mobility in metropolitan regions is reflected spatially in the



large amount of space given over to transport, which in turn shapes lifestyles and personal relations in the post-Fordian metropolis.

- 76) Roads accounted for 10% of the space in a medieval town. On these public thoroughfares various functions were fulfilled and numerous activities took place; in fact, they constituted the scenario of urban life. In parts of cities that were built in the nineteenth century, streets account for between 15% and 20% of the space. With the differentiation between sidewalks and carriageways, road transport came to have its own space. Today streets have come to take up as much as two-thirds of the space in some metropolitan cities such as Los Angeles, where total specialisation has occurred, and no other urban functions may be performed on the street. With streets transformed into monofunctional spaces, urban life loses out in richness, diversity and opportunities for human contact.
- 77) Advanced capitalism is defined by unquestioned hypermobility, while there is no acknowledgment of the fact that what is really important is not mobility but accessibility, nor of the external (social and environmental) effects of continuous expansion. Increasing speed, which allows for maximum capital flow and turnover, is the “hidden face of affluence”.
- 78) The White Paper on European Transport Policy makes the upshot of this perfectly clear: *“European transportation policy has reached a critical point where it is considered that in order to attain the community’s global objective of sustainable mobility in Europe, there is a need for well-thought-out urban transport systems that depend less on fossil fuels.”*
- 79) And it goes on: *“Increasing congestion is threatening mobility, and thereby costing the economy huge amounts (0.5% of the community’s GDP, which could rise to 1% by 2010).”*
- 80) Together with transport, the other key elements of the present productive and territorial model are telecommunications and new information technology, which make it possible to decentralise production and centralise decisions, management and control. Only because of these is it viable to take advantage of the comparative advantages of the labour conditions in the market of the Periphery, thus permitting vastly cheaper production costs while at the same time centralising processes of accumulation of capital.
- 81) Projections into the future suggest that mankind is moving towards a world in which urbanisation will have been generalised and even rural areas will form part of a system that is organised from urban centres. Two phenomena are at the basis of a possibility that cities may disappear in the future as a form of social organisation of territorial space: the information technology revolution, and the globalisation of the economy and of communication. In extensive parts of Gipuzkoa this has already started, and the project to create the Donostia-Bayonne Eurocity represents an attempt to consolidate the process.
- 82) Spatial repercussions of globalisation result in new forms of action on territory based on flexible planning to adapt to changing economic conditions, which will



permit responses to private interests regarding certain parts of a city, emphasising the relevance of the specific “project” over and above the long-term plan defining the city’s image. Thus the legal framework for planning is modified to make it less rigid and interventionist. But this does not mean that there will be greater participation in urban planning by different groups and social sectors: on the contrary! It amounts to an increase in technocracy, bureaucracy and decision-making that becomes increasingly hierarchy-dominated and further removed from democratic mechanisms, while making the process of decision-making over the use of space more amenable to the interests of capital.

- 83) In global cities there is a profound restructuring in some areas, city planning can be modified at any time to accommodate the “project”, which is normally advanced tertiary but may also be, say, trade fairgrounds or science parks that need to be located in metropolitan regions to fulfil their “command” function.
- 84) Such surgical operations on the urban tissue require large-scale investments which private capital alone cannot provide because it is unprofitable, so new instruments of management or territorial action are created in the guise of public/private companies or corporations to permit private management, in the last resort, of such spaces: company management of urban space, dressed up in a discourse about ensuring the metropolitan region’s international competitiveness in order to attract investors.
- 85) The following reflection is of special interest: “Urban development is an instrument that is used in mediation between Global and Local structures. [The Corporation’s] chief task is to facilitate decisions of international capital at the local level.” This brings about a change not only in the planning activity and metropolitan management but in the fate of public resources invested in transportation and telecommunication systems, resulting in a crisis of local finance due to the rising functioning costs of all kinds entailed by modern metropolitan regions.
- 86) In the geographical context of Euskal Herria the new ways of acting on territory are being copied down to the smallest detail. In the case of Navarre, the Pamplona region – Iruñerria – is being structured as a metropolitan space with Pamplona as its centre and extending horizontally throughout the whole valley to encompass towns and villages such as Mendillorri, Etxabakoitz, Barañain, Zizur, Villava, Burlada, Berriozar, Arre, Noain, Aizoain, Huarte, etc., devouring rural spaces of high agricultural value while generating high costs to cover the newly needed peripheral urban road network.
- 87) At a different intensity but yielding similar results, the population of northern Euskal Herria, together with practically the whole of its tertiary sector, are focused on coastal Lapurdi in the so-called BAB agglomeration, built around the towns of Bayonne, Anglet and Biarritz. Along with this, there is a drive from neighbouring Gipuzkoa to build a critical mass of 600,000 inhabitants revolving around the project of the Basque Euro-City of Bayonne-Donostia, aiming at the “multiplying effect of a eurocity as a medium-sized European city”.



88) Table: Agglomeration in Basque metropolitan areas, 2001

Metropolitan Bilbao	77 %	of the population of Bizkaia
Vitoria-Gasteiz	76 %	“ Araba
BAB (Bayonne, Anglet, Biarritz)	56 %	“ Continental Euskal Herria
Donostialdea	46 %	“ Gipuzkoa
Iruñerria	35 %	“ Navarre

Source: the author

- 89) In this scheme, Metropolitan Bilbao is called upon to occupy the central role in the “Polynuclear System of Basque Cities”, for which projects such as the “Basque Y” section of the High Speed Railway project, the Sondika-Loiu airport and the Guggenheim Museum are implemented to provide for “command” functions. Particular note may be taken here of a phenomenon resulting from the peculiar administrative system of the Basque Autonomous Community with central functions controlled by the individual provincial governments: the intense competition, practically “guerrilla warfare” in fact, with the Historical Territories racing against each other. Hence we now have five airports within short distances of each other, and several conference halls offering similar services (the Kursaal, the Europa, the Euskalduna, and now the recently inaugurated Artium in Vitoria-Gasteiz...). The dangers of such a policy are self-evident: “a badly understood particularism may generate excessive, destructive competition between different locations and regions”.
- 90) There is a danger here of mimicking the centralisation process on a local scale in the service of a questionable notion of “city power”, the promotion of megacities, great metropolitan areas, in an attempt to replace the nation-states with city-states, which favours trends towards rural depopulation, high population concentrations, and above all, concentration of power in the cities. If this polarised territorial model prospers, city-states will mimick the centralist nation-states, but unlike the diffused territorial model, they will do so in a manner favouring citizens’ homogenisation and de-ideologisation, thus supporting the goals of the de facto economic and financial powers who are behind the globalisation trend.
- 91) The Charter of European Cities and Towns Towards Sustainability, known as the Aalborg Charter, diagnoses this problem correctly, but like many other such agreements, fails to make the move from words to deeds: *“We understand that our present urban lifestyle, in particular our patterns of division of labour and functions, land-use, transport, industrial production, agriculture, consumption, and leisure activities, and hence our standard of living, make us essentially responsible for many environmental problems humankind is facing. This is particularly relevant as 80 percent of Europe’s population live in urban areas.*
- 92) *“We have learnt that present levels of resource consumption in the industrialised countries cannot be achieved by all people currently living, much less by future generations, without destroying the natural capital.”*



## **5. TERRITORY AND IDENTITY**

- 93) Just as the creation of the nation-state came as a response to the needs of one stage in the evolution of the capitalist economic system and constituted a framework for competition between states for the use and control of resources, with homogenising consequences for the pre-existing human communities, so in this new stage in the development of capitalism globalisation is turning into a threat to individual territories (countries, cities and regions) which stand to lose a great deal of their autonomy. The scenario at present is dominated by the growing importance of decisions and processes of external origin to the detriment of local society's ability to control its own environment.
- 94) This throws a new light on the lack of democracy so far displayed not just in European institutions but in the entire process of building the European Union, culminating in the present European constitutional process which is taking place behind the backs of all citizens in general, and of peoples without a state in particular. There is not a single control mechanism over the construction of this version of Europe: a Europe which, while proclaiming "promotion of the culture of the member states", consistently omits any mention of ethnic entities and ignores defence and promotion of the languages present in Europe, such as Basque.
- 95) Globalisation can be seen as deterritorialisation, a move from the concrete (territories as places lived in and possessed by unique societies) to the abstract (the global space of flows and simultaneity of the discontinuous). As capital and culture are globalised and the mobility of the population increases, the very substance of territories (their economy, identity and people) seem to become volatile, undefined, uncertain. That is precisely what the regionalist governments in control of our territory are seeking when they talk about a Trans-Aquitaine Region to be incorporated into the axes of European economic centralism.
- 96) The construction of a contemporary definition of identity can no longer be based on socio-spatial character alone, but must also be founded on the socio-communicational dimension. Identity has to adapt to a reality on two fronts, through both rootedness in the territory inhabited and participation in non-local communication networks.
- 97) This postmodern emergence of socio-communicational identities presents serious challenges for the design of regional strategies and for the very construction of a local and political sense of such strategies, since socio-territorial identity remains a key factor in mobilising collective synergies in favour of local or regional development.
- 98) Here territorially based cultures find themselves at a clear disadvantage, since even if they don't disappear they are forced to seek ways to relate, generally in a subordinate role, to powerful globalised communication media which, even when they do not determine consciousness, go a long way towards configuring the new collective state of mind.



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- 99) The flow economy in global economic space contrasts with locally experienced physical reality in concrete territories, where local institutions acquire a relevant function in the cultural integration of increasingly diverse societies. The challenges of multiculturalism in developed societies, far from being resolved, are in some countries turning into reactors of racism and xenophobia, hence the enormous contradiction in the globalisation process between worldwide borderless financial capital and the growing barriers to the migration of labour and individuals.
- 100) As a reaction to the ungraspable and inaccessible nature of this new, all-powerful creator-totem of tastes and beliefs, we are bearing witness to the affirmation of either historical or reconstructed identity and the emergence of local and regional governments. The new, “globalised” values are dominated by the logic of consumption, exclusive difference and Hobbes’ *homo homini lupus* (“Man is a wolf to man”), whereas in the territorial logic of symbols – myth as the mover of the collective unconscious – the collectivity is the life-giving and stimulating element.
- 101) There is an attempt to explain the phenomenon of nineteenth-century nationalism, imperialism and the present globalisation process from a demographistic viewpoint as successive, inevitable stages of the growth of the social division of labour, according to which globalisation is seen as the outcome of a new increment in the international division of labour and of the increase in interethnic relations overflowing the narrow bounds of nation-states.
- 102) Supposedly population size is determined by a given ecosystem’s capacity; the need for more territory arises once that capacity has been exceeded through a dynamic of populations growth, it being impossible for the population to continue to develop through its own resources or new technology, or else the population not being prepared to accept a reduction in their level of consumption. This is offered as an explanation from an environmental perspective for the phenomenon of nation-states.
- 103) The concept of load capacity is highly effective for the analysis of the development of different territorial frames. It is defined as “the number of individuals of a particular species – in this case, humans – who can be sustained in a given habitat”, or conversely as the capacity of a given ecosystem to maintain a particular population of individuals indefinitely without degradation of the basis of material resources.
- 104) The sustained growth of the human species and its level of consumption was only possible on the basis of voluntary or coercive relations of interchange between neighbouring or nearby territories, for which it was necessary to eliminate various barriers: physical (communications), fiscal (customs), commercial (civil and trading law), and so on. The process of establishing all these norms in equality for all the communities concerned was not always a peaceful one: let us recall the Carlist Wars, or pacts regarding economic arrangements between the Spanish state and the South of Euskal Herria that operate to this day. Hence there was a need for political institutions with “sovereignty” able to assert themselves over



larger territorial units. The key difference between that process and the present globalisation process is that the latter is developing through concessions of sovereignty to the market, not, as in the past, to progressively larger institutions of government.

- 105) But the territorial expansion of a human group does not only depend on demographic pressure or the load capacity of the ecosystem it occupies. It depends above all on the breadth of the flow of energy and materials needed for the functioning of the system of production devised by the group in question. The radius of the flows of energy and materials is not predetermined, but depends on the way in which each society organises production and the relationship with nature that is established on this basis. The nature of the social system is what determines the breadth of the flows of energy and materials, and territorial needs, including the relevance of territorialist behaviour patterns.
- 106) Having reached this point, in the context of the present study we must consider one of the demands repeatedly expressed by the social agents present in our territory who are known as the Basque trade-union majority, namely the demand for a Basque socio-economic space. This demand, bound up with social and identity issues, clashes with what has been expounded in this chapter; the aspiration to an ethereal socio-economic space of one's own is incompatible unless it be qualified: unless, that is, the crux of the issue is discussed, namely the qualification of that territorial space with regard to its components: the Basque productive fabric and its levels of consumption and raw materials.
- 107) On this basis, "the breadth of flows tends to establish an optimal breadth of the territories needing control: there will be more territory to control, the broader and more linear the flow of materials and energy. The more entropic a social system is, the more territory it needs to control, although this control may be achieved through economic, political and military means and not through direct or colonial subjugation."
- 108) It may be suggestive to carry out an analysis of political power in ecological terms that goes beyond studying environmental impact, redefining political power as the authority to delimit and administrate what productive resources are available and make sure that production can proceed without any social or environmental obstacles, i.e. the conditions of production. And this is one of the central functions fulfilled by regional governments: the reproduction of conditions of production to pave the way for the internationalisation of financial capital.
- 109) Returning to the subject of identity in relation to territory, time is a key aspect since it constitutes the real nexus of union of the consciousness of identity. The organisation of time forges the community's memory, symbolic identification or the beliefs that make up the collective state of mind. Time and territory form part of what we may refer to as the social pre-contract, the set of conditions and identifications that lead to the existence of a consensus on the basis of which ethnic consciousness is constructed.



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- 110) The link between environment and territory that develops a linear representation of time, as in industrial cultures, is radically different from the cyclic, analogical representations of rural cultures, where circular time predominates according to Mircea Eliade. The social-democratic neo-urbanists distinguish between three kinds of time: clock time, timeless time and glacial time. Clock time is that which is characteristic of industrialism, characterised by the discipline of human conduct relative to a predetermined schedule. Timeless time, which, according to the author, characterises the processes dominant in present-day society, occurs within the information paradigm and network society, causing a systematic disturbance in the sequential order of phenomena in order to achieve instantaneity (e.g. financial transactions in fractions of a second) in a process of annihilation of time. Glacial time, on the contrary, which implies the relationship between culture and nature, between the human species and territory, is very long-term and evolutionary in character, leading to the proposal of sustainable development as a formula for inter-generational solidarity.
- 111) The culture of a human community, its specific identity, is a product of interaction between territory and its members, and of relations that have been built up over time. This theory ends up becoming blurred to the extent that the flow of energy and materials increases and requires more territory for its implementation, and the distance grows between “cultural area” and “natural area”. The nation-state needs to establish homogeneous cultural coordinates as a basis for its own possibility, and these eventually encompass diversity and plurality, even eliminating cultures that are environmentally adapted to smaller territorial units.
- 112) For the “culture” (or lack thereof) of those who limit themselves to planning for economic development at all costs, territory and nature are passive concepts that represent reserves available for the productive exploitation of primary resources and for the physical expansion of the urbanising process. This is only explicable because the liberal theory of land revenue and the associated concepts of cumulative growth and speculative surplus value are only conceivable in an abstract universe where territorial diversity has been purged of its heterogeneity and complexity. This line of action has been followed to the letter by modern town planning, the declared enemy of a differentiated, complex, living and diverse territorial universe.
- 113) In this sense, to reduce the concept of biodiversity to merely biological diversity, as several earlier international treaties considered it, is to ignore the way social ecosystems work, since only through the defence and recovery of cultural biodiversity can biological and natural survival be ensured. Through the acknowledgment of a variety of ways to consider culture as a relevant factor for the development of a territory or a city, it trusts in the revaluation of cultural dimensions of territory in spite of the homogenising processes of cultural globalisation.
- 114) Thus the EU’s Green Paper on the Urban Environment makes it a basic tenet “to protect and value the identity of cities, establishing relations of meaning between places and their history”. The importance of the historical and cultural heritage is also recognised in the “Sustainable European Cities” report when it deems that



“cultural, aesthetic and image values” are of the utmost importance for the quality of life and should be given priority as environmental factors helping to prevent the loss of identity.

- 115) The report also emphasises, like many analysts, that “cultural homogenisation entails an impoverishment to which social groups are reacting by seeking cultural products to reflect local and regional identities. The number of people who feel a need to stress their social and cultural roots is growing proportionately to the progression in commercial relations.” (European Commission, March 1996)
- 116) A key element in the fight against uniformity is defence of the landscape. The landscape, as a group’s subjective perception of territory, constitutes one of the most important elements in the definition of identity and one of the symbolic objects with great capacity to generate feelings of belonging. The fact that in Euskal Herria mountain hiking is one of the signs of collective identity merely confirms the cultural statement consisting of identifying with landscapes felt as one’s own, as against the cultural uniformity entailed by the ubiquitous planting of Monterey pine, which comes to symbolise unambiguously the values of current free-market liberal-democratic consensus.
- 117) The process of uninterrupted territorial expansion via the formation of the nation-states and culminating in globalisation can be seen as parallel to the progressive transformation of the landscape understood as an instrumental or religious perception of territory into landscape as an aesthetic perception thereof (such as in the regeneration of the ditches of motorways), as the group’s continued existence ceases to depend chiefly on the territory itself and the resources it contains. The flows of materials and energy cease to be visible because of their breadth, and technology feeds the illusion of man’s independence of his environment. This is the myth that natural capital can be replaced by technical capital. Territorial expansion of the human group, and the transfer of the ecological footprint to increasingly remote parts of the planet, make it more and more difficult to apprehend space in terms of identity and convert it into territory that has been lived in and socially constructed.
- 118) At the same time, territorial expansion and our predatory lifestyle entail an unsustainable expansion of our ecological footprint and a serious lack of democracy, as is aptly described in the Hannover Declaration of European Municipal Leaders on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century (2000): *“We want to achieve local policies that reduce our community’s ‘ecological footprint’. We do not wish for our lifestyle to depend on the exploitation of human beings and the nature of other regions. We shall evaluate any action by our local governments contrary to our aim of refraining from doing damage or passing on a bill to coming generations.*
- 119) *“Labour and environmental ‘dumping’ should be stopped, and social and environmental standards maintained in international and multilateral trade agreements, in order to help provide relief from poverty.*  
*“The financial markets, which govern the flow of capital and investments, are not under democratic control.”*



## 6.- CONCLUSIONS

- 120) Euskal Herria, like a boat drifting into the unknown, without its own political power, lacking a social consensus regarding its model of development or a debate in society over the possibility of establishing models of its own making, peers out through its window at the process of European construction while the economic pressure groups behind the political decisions pursue their policy of *fait accompli*. The future impact and importance of what is being decided today as we silently look on will show up as growing social and territorial destructuring. As the days go by we are going to find ourselves looking more, and participating less.
- 121) The totem of Europe – progressive, compassionate and green Europe – is nothing but a distraction to divert the *gauche divine* attention, a decoy to lure us out into the open sea of globalisation, with no landmarks or lighthouses to guide us, a ragdoll lacking a heart but dressed up in luxurious clothes and painted lips. The debate over the future of Europe is nothing but a publicity campaign, a by-product of green marketing behind which lurks tough reality, flogged off by the death-apostles of the future as the best (or only) possible world.
- 122) The drawing of a map of globalisation in which European economic space figures as a key playing field for the establishment of a policy of blocs, where the development of the capitalist economic system assumes undisputed predominance and we are forced to play between the four corners drawn out for us, comes into direct conflict with the needs and hopes of broad sections of the population everywhere who continue to insist on the need for a minimum of welfare all over the planet founded on principles of fair trade.
- 123) Along their road towards the end of history, the champions of free market neoliberalism are sweeping natural and cultural biodiversity away and turning the land into a Daedalus' labyrinth while lulling us with a dream of fraternal union between all the peoples of Europe. While they play to the United States in the role of counterweight and braking mechanism for its Cainite policy, the European leaders have plunged into a mad race for markets, accepting the game rules of capital and the transnational companies.
- 124) The European Constitutional Treaty has shown up the uselessness of countless European Union guidelines, treaties and documents that talk about rationality and the integration of economic activity with nature and with its citizens. The “trend towards sustainability” has been written off at a stroke in order to enter into a mad race towards globalisation with its consequent metropolisation of territory, denial of the awareness of identity, cultural uniformity, social dualisation and the bastardised as well as suicidal utilisation of the natural environment, turned into a mere support for the great European networks.
- 125) Ventures such as the High Speed Train to connect the European metropolises go against everything that was written for a decade in the European community; round words conceal square reasons such as territorial competitiveness, full of potential in the new economic scenario on the horizon, while they threaten us with vast social and environmental consequences. The unstoppable growth of motor



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transport, unsustainable energy consumption, increasing urbanisation of territory leading to blurring the separation between city and countryside, cultural uniformity and the squashing of local identities are some of the consequences that ought to be measured in all their enormity.

- 126) The sweet words, the European vaseline, have been swept aside to set going the hourglass of globalisation. Any possible scenario other than the planetary gallows is being denied us. We are being told that this is a boxing match and that if you don't hit your neighbours hard enough you will get flushed down the toilet of history. What happened to the European dream? Entangled in the insatiable multinationals' fishing nets, no doubt. The dream of reason does engender monsters!
- 127)



## **7. RESOLUTIONS**

### **1. On sustainable development**

- 128) Fourteen years after the '92 Rio Conference, the ubiquitous use of the concept of sustainable development has not resulted in the implementation of real, effective policies to alleviate the unsustainability of the present economic system. The rhetoric about sustainable development has shown itself to be in reality a smokescreen for attempts to make the intolerable sustainable.

### **2. On globalisation, Europe and the nation-state**

- 129) The process of European construction has shown itself to be in reality a smokescreen for the most atrocious aspects of the restructuring of the economic system and the adoption of socially and environmentally destructive models of development that are furthermore radically lacking in solidarity and excluding. The European project is intrinsically linked to the development of the process of capitalist globalisation.

- 130) It is precisely the states, from their central position on the world stage, that have moved to limit their own sovereignty, not in deference to supranational political entities but rather to deregulation, the absolute predominance of the market and its central agents, the transnational companies. To make visible and bring to the surface the alliance between liberalism and the nation-state in order to make the construction of Europe possible along social lines is a necessary but not a sufficient condition.

- 131) The winners in globalisation are those who achieve greatest mobility. Labour is the least mobile factor of production because of family, cultural and language ties, hence the easiest to tax. This is how governments have managed to continue increasing public spending, by moving the weight of taxation from capital earnings to labour earnings. Differences in mobility of the factors of production determine the amount of taxation.

- 132) Within this framework, opposition to the Trans-European Networks in transport (the High Speed Network), telecommunications or energy means confronting the restructuring of the conditions of production of capital and the sacrifice of certain territories for the good of the metropolises, where decision centres are centralised and incorporated into the axis of European economic centrality.

### **3. On the metropolisation of territory**

- 133) Territorial restructuring is the spatial manifestation of a whole society's economic, social, cultural and ecological policy. It is necessary to recover the territorial dimension as one of the basic categories of economic thinking to resist deregulation and laissez-faire as instruments for generating comparative advantage.

- 134) Production and management of the habitat and of collective services form part of the social basis of production in the new economy, and the fact that both are basically the responsibility of local and regional governments reinforces the political role of local governments, while the nation-states are busy with emerging forms of (de)-regulation of the international markets.

- 135) This playing field is where new strategies of territorial development acquire growing importance, in the tension between the deterritorialisation of capital, viewing territory as a mere support, and concrete territoriality. It is in the confrontation between these two kinds of



logic, the global-transnational and the social-territorial, where regional planning should fulfil a function of resistance from the territories.

- 136) Metropolitan space as an emerging economic frame thus becomes the crucible for new tensions and contradictions, as a result of which both institutional structures and regulation mechanisms break down. There is an utter lack of democracy in both its origin and its development: metropolitan governments are neither directly elected nor under citizen control.

#### **4. On the spatial repercussions of globalisation**

- 137) The territorial model corresponding to advanced capitalism is the metropolitan region with a vaguely defined territory. The metropolitan region entails greater diffusion in growth in space and creates increasing difficulty in establishing clear limits between rural and urban areas, resulting in greater dispersal of activities in the metropolitan and regional area.
- 138) The unstoppable growth of motorised mobility, unsustainable energy consumption, growing urbanisation of territory with the consequent blurring of borders between rural and urban space, cultural uniformity and threats to local identities are consequences that ought to be measured in all their enormity.
- 139) The spatial repercussions of globalisation lead to new forms of operation on territory based on flexible planning to adapt to changing economic conditions permitting a response to private interests over specific areas. This amounts to an increase in technocracy, bureaucracy and decision-making that is progressively more hierarchical and further removed from democratic mechanisms, while making the process of decision-taking more amenable to the interests of capital over the use of space.
- 140) Such surgical operations on the urban tissue require large-scale investments which private capital cannot provide on its own because it is unprofitable, so new instruments of management or territorial action are created in the guise of public/private companies or corporations to permit private management, in the last resort, of such spaces: company management of urban space justified through a discourse about ensuring the metropolitan region's international competitiveness in order to attract investors. And this is one of the central functions fulfilled by regional governments: the reproduction of conditions of production to pave the way for the internationalisation of financial capital.

#### **5. Sobre territorio e identidad**

- 141) Globalisation can be seen as deterritorialisation, a move from the concrete (territories as places lived in and possessed by unique societies) to the abstract (the global space of flows and simultaneity of the discontinuous). As capital and culture are globalised and the mobility of the population increases, the very substance of territories (their economy, identity and people) seem to become volatile, undefined, uncertain.
- 142) In this sense, to reduce the concept of biodiversity to merely biological diversity, as several earlier international treaties considered it, is to ignore the way social ecosystems work, since only through the defence and recovery of cultural biodiversity can biological and natural survival be ensured. The right to self-determination makes the democratic development of ecosystems possible.
- 143) The drawing of a map of globalisation in which European economic space figures as a key playing field for the establishment of a policy of blocs, where the development of the



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capitalist economic system assumes undisputed predominance and we are forced to play between the four corners drawn out for us, comes into direct conflict with the needs and hopes of broad sections of the population everywhere who continue to insist on the need for a minimum of welfare all over the planet founded on principles of fair trade.

**6. On the democratic development of the ecosystem**

- 144) We support a democratic model of development of habitats that, on the basis of the Right to Self-Determination of peoples and sovereignty over natural resources, is founded on the following principles: starting the future from the earth and an urgent change of the model of production and consumption, favouring biodiversity, international solidarity and a recognition of our historical debt, creating social conditions that permit a recovery of the ecosystem with grassroots participation as its cornerstone.



## **PRINCIPLES FOR AN** **ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT** **DIALOGUE FOR THE EARTH**

### WHY A DIFFERENT MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT IS POSSIBLE AND NECESSARY

- 145) On the occasion of the Johannesburg Earth Summit, the LURRA Appeal promoted an open debate among social organisations working in the areas of ecology, the primary sector, health, consumers, trade unions and solidarity aiming to ensure the presence of Euskal Herria, a country with its own collective identity, in important international debates and fora, and to spark off a debate in society about the model of development that we want for the future of our land and our planet, along the lines of the chatchphrase “think globally, act locally”.
- 146) Ten years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, when it has become clear that constant mention of the concept of sustainable development has not brought about the implementation of real, effective policies to alter the unsustainability of the present economic system, the sustainable development rhetoric has shown itself to be simply a smokescreen whose real purpose is to make the intolerable sustainable. Even the European Commission, in its report to the Council of Europe and the European Parliament on the occasion of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (or Earth Summit) in Johannesburg, admits that the hopes raised in Rio have not been fulfilled: *“Since [the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio] pressure on the environment and natural resources has increased while poverty has continued to grow throughout the world. The notion of rechanneling production and consumption towards sustainability is still more rhetoric than reality.”*
- 147) The different government administrations in Euskal Herria have walked the road of trying to make the intolerable sustainable. Projects such as the Itoiz Reservoir, the High Speed Train, the Eibar-Gasteiz or Trans-Pyrenees motorways, the metropolisation of space at the expense of rural areas, the unrestrained spread of large shopping centres, and energy policy provide a number of examples.
- 148) Faced with this situation, the social entities signing this manifesto have endeavoured to achieve a joint consensus document that can serve as a tool in the necessary social debate that this Johannesburg Earth Summit will help to provoke, both in Basque society and internationally. The document consists of two distinct parts:
- principles for democratic development of the ecosystem
- 149) diagnosis, proposals and measures relating to thirteen thematic areas: **energy, transport, water, consumerism, the primary sector, social and labour production, refuse and pollution, health, landscape heritage, globalisation-ecological footprint, biodiversity, territorial structure and participation.**



- 150) The central aim of the initiative is to open up a debate in society about the model of development that we want for the future of Euskal Heria, through the development of response mechanisms for present and future challenges, promoting the creation of new scenarios.

#### PRINCIPLES FOR AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT

##### Starting the future from the earth

- 151) The earth – the basic support for all human activity – is being subjected to pressure from increased use controlled by the free market. The laissez-faire policy with respect to territorial use has led to undesirable consequences such as colonising hitherto natural countryside, using up good farmland, abandoning agriculture as a strategic sector, the spread of junk food, scattered urban developments and the loss of social structure (owing to the disappearance of public meeting places), the vanishing of country life, and loss of cultural biodiversity.
- 152) Intensive use of private transport, the growth of infrastructure and increasing metropolisation of territory are not only unsustainable, but entail a jump into the void and a medium-to-long-term social and environmental cost we can scarcely afford.
- 153) Fundamental aspects of territorial structuring are systematically ignored, such as coordinated sectorial policy, the avoidance of economicist determinism, control of industrial and urban development to protect agricultural and forest areas, recovery of derelict industrial areas, and the application of environmental criteria when deciding on land use.
- 154) It is necessary to develop effective legal mechanisms to put a stop to this constant assault and limit speculation in order to keep country life viable, acknowledge the multifunctional character of the primary sector, favour its development by promoting endogenous factors, defend farming by farmers producing quality food, and create land pools for the incorporation of youth.

##### The urgency of changing our model of production and consumption

The present economic system works on the basis of turning huge amounts of raw materials into massive amounts of waste very fast, on a planet with finite resources. The call for sustainable development together with growth – sustained linear growth – is self-contradictory; it is also deceitful, for what it really amounts to is going beyond the limits of growth and exceeding the territory's load capacity.

- 155) In our consumer society “quality of life” has been replaced by “standard of living”, understood as the ability to spend more and more. Instead of “as much as



we need” and a limit called “enough”, we now have a mad race to consume convulsively. The results of this, of course, are environmental disaster, social dualism and the plundering of the “impoverished” South by the “developed” North, generating societies and lifestyles that are sick and dehumanised.

- 156) Meanwhile, the continual advance of capital- and energy-intensive production, turning nature into capital, turning leisure into money, and the creation of outside enemies to justify the arms race, all go in the opposite direction to where we ought to be going with prophylactic measures such as progressively discouraging whole branches of the economy because they are socially, economically and environmentally unsustainable.
- 157) We urgently need to limit energy spending, waste production and pollution. We need to internalise the environmental and social cost of production, so that economy does not come to mean simply pillaging and piracy. We need to call a truce with nature over our model of production and consumption, admit our faults and beg it to forgive us, like the Germans did for bombing Gernika, or thousands of Australians for annihilating the Aborigine peoples.

#### Defending biodiversity

- 158) We should replace limited interpretations of biodiversity with the defence and operationalisation of a concept of regional biodiversity encompassing not only purely environmental but cultural and linguistic issues, customs and traditions of collective labour, forms of communal property and sovereignty over resources, reactivating collective ways of thinking, above all in polycentric spaces such as Euskal Herria.
- 159) As far as biological diversity is concerned, we must stop the pillaging in the way we use natural resources, and allow for natural renewal rates. We must stop driving species to extinction, maintaining and recovering habitats all around, including the coastal region. We should change the present policy of protected nature reserves, which turns them into mutually isolated islands acting merely as “tourist reserves”. Future generations have the same rights as present-day Basques to enjoy a rich variety of ecosystems, landscapes and species in their surroundings, such as are familiar to us today, and not just have them in a museum showcase. This is a basic tenet of any policy, not just of alternative development but even of so-called sustainability.
- 160) Within the domain of cultural biodiversity, special attention should be paid to the situation of Euskera, the Basque language, a heritage of the Basques and of humanity, brought to the edge of extinction by centuries of persecution; that should be compensated for now by adopting urgent measures to alter the present state of diglossia in a context of cultural homogenisation, making it impossible to achieve a truly multilingual society and respect for the unalienable rights of Basque speakers and those who wish to become Basque speakers.



- 161) In the present historical phase of globalisation of the economy and market, effective sovereignty over resources is only possible granted there is recognition of people's rights to self-determination and independent decision. Therefore, in the twenty-first century more than ever, peoples' right to self-determination ought to be a non-negotiable principle in any state that claims to be democratic.

**International solidarity and recognition of our historical debt**

- 162) The standard of living in the countries of the North derives from exclusion and is not exportable to the rest of mankind. The basis of the present economic system rests on plundering the resources of a growing proportion of the people of our planet to benefit a minority of other people. Only by recognising this historical debt can the present state of affairs be changed.
- 163) The mechanisms employed until now, such as aid for development or the investment of a percentage of the GDP in cooperation, far from alleviating this situation, have made it worse. The time has come to put away the patronising speeches and face up to the reality of a planet on which most of the population don't have enough to eat. The statistics of infant mortality are not due to natural causes, they are a planned extermination, the other side of the coin of affluence, caused by our own ecological footprint.
- 164) In the era of globalisation of financial capital and the opening up of markets, transnationals are on their own ground thanks to the consent given by international institutions and the support they receive from their countries of origin. Are we in Euskal Herria supposed to be proud, like people in other countries, because Basque companies improve their economic indices at the price of devastating other parts of our planet?
- 165) International solidarity today means reducing our ecological footprint by penalising the social and ecological impact of our investments abroad and establishing a universal standard of minimum welfare.

**By improving our environment we can avoid many illnesses**

- 166) We belong to nature and are nourished by it. We are inseparable from it. Air, land, river and ocean pollution will end up in our bloodstream, which feeds our bodily organs.
- 167) Children's health is under the gravest threat because their defence and detoxification mechanisms are still immature, and their rapidly growing tissues are the most vulnerable. From the start they are affected by pollution through the uterus and mother's milk. WHO research shows that 40% of individuals harmed by environmental change are under five years old, and that three million children die every year because of exposure to pollution.
- 168) Lung cancer, asthma and allergies are constantly on the increase owing to air pollution, which will get worse with the new thermal power stations now



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projected. As the ozone layer is depleted, skin cancer will become more widespread.

- 169) Damage to the environment also affects mental health. To turn our backs on nature is to deny our origin. For one thing, toxic chemicals end up in our nervous system, modifying its functioning. It is hardly surprising that depression, anxiety and dementia are on the rise. It still remains to see what harm is done by noise and electromagnetic pollution, especially caused by mobile phone aerials.
- 170) Industrial, agricultural and cattle exploitation that produces low-quality food is a source of pollution and soil erosion, not to mention farmers' economic and socio-cultural ruin. Production of genetically modified food will further worsen the situation and threatens biodiversity.
- 171) Even health care is a significant source of dioxin and mercury pollution when hospital refuse is incinerated.
- 172) To counteract these tendencies, we support a proposal by the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE) to "protect the environment regionally and globally and thus prevent many diseases, conserve health and ensure quality of life", asking each government to prioritise education and prevention rather than overmedication.

**Participation is the cornerstone**

- 173) The fancy discourses calling for participation that form part of all international documents on the environment, from Rio '92 to the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter or the European Union's Sixth Environmental Programme, are in stark contrast to the sad reality of a society that lacks a single instrument for participation of anything but purely token value.
- 174) The only channel for direct social participation on environmental matters is the Declaration of Environmental Impact, a totally discredited and invalidated mechanism in practice since it became a mere administrative formality.
- 175) Because of the habit administrations have of hijacking the right to speak on behalf of the public and the unavailability of normal mechanisms for challenging them, not only is public debate and constructive criticism impossible, but the eventual outcome is serious confrontation owing to the lack of official recognition for the legitimate role of social movements.
- 176) The first step would be to revise the present model of participation, removing obstacles that make it totally inoperative. In this sense measures such as the following should be taken: the right to access information on environmental questions should be honoured; there should be progress in participatively based experiences – commissions open to the public in all levels of administration but particularly at local levels, systematic establishment of direct polls and referenda on issues of special importance or which give rise to social controversy, opening the way to popular legislative initiatives without Draconian requirements,



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incorporation into the laws of regulated mechanisms for active participation of civil society whose effect should be binding; positive acknowledgment of dialogue with social groups with funding for their certified functioning costs, to replace the present subsidy policy.

- 177) When the power of a proposal rests on its degree of public acceptance, avoiding a severe loss of credibility for governments can only result in failure. The only political leadership capable of incorporating structural changes is shared leadership, in which social groups have mechanisms available to incorporate basic issues into environmental policy.
- 178) Only based on principles of mutual acceptance can the present relationship of tension and exclusion, imposition and confrontation be surmounted and replaced by one of collaboration, implementation, social credibility and environmental improvement, based on the creation of social conditions through information and participation to make possible the recovery of our habitat.

**Create social conditions that make the recovery of the ecosystem possible**

- 179) The lack of credibility faced by governments when they implement environmental programmes results from their reform-less reformism, their adoption of an environmentalist discourse lacking in content. In this sense we say yes to reform, but not to the reformism touted by those who have merely changed their discourse as a tactic for keeping everything else the same.
- 180) In spite of a democratic statement of minimums, unless and until there is a broad consensus born of social debate on the model of development that we want for the future, governments should urgently apply a moratorium on plans and projects with strong environmental impact given their irreversible effects on the land, culture and society as a whole.
- 181) Only by once more valuing collective interests as against individualism, supporting emerging values and developing public awareness will it be possible to liberate the creative energy needed to make possible that which is necessary: a new social contract based on an alternative model of development.