

## Thematic Assembly on Economic Inequality and Justice

16 February 2024 | Kathmandu, Nepal

### Civil Society Statement

We need to lose our fear, for them to lose their power – is a challenge posed by us as we conclude the World Social Forum 2024. The power imbalance that fosters systematic and structural inequalities and the compounding crises that comes along with it, drives us to lose our fear to stand up and speak up against all forms of injustices. It must be understood as a systemic design that leads to gross violations of human rights for a vast majority of the global population.

The wealth of billionaires built on the material exploitation of workers who struggle to access basic services, appears to have grown twice as much wealth as the rest of the world even during the time of a global health crisis, where most of the people struggled to make ends meet. This highlights that we need to redistribute power, put the people at the heart of just, equal and sustainable world we want.

At a time when survival and recovery become a privilege for most of us, the richest 1% have continued to remodel economic systems to shift as an inequality-generating machine and veer away from the democratic fabric of the world towards plutocracy. This must raise urgent and unequivocal global attention across the civic space that this is the mouth-to-mouth resuscitation we need to redesign another world that is possible.

We stand together across the world, as we share our immense rage, agitation and resistance against this unprecedented economic inequality further exacerbated by the pandemic, war, cost-of-living crisis, and impact of climate change. In doing so, we condemn various facets of inequality— the caste, gender, and disability which intersect deeply with economic deprivation. This comes in line with our deepest solidarity to movements across the world that resist the everyday dehumanisation and loss of dignity in the people's lives brought by oppression and an insatiable greed for power. *From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.*

We sound the alarm and call for action to build a fair, rights-based, equitable, and ecologically just world. We must mobilise ourselves towards increased wages and social protection; combat climate change; execute a just energy transition; and boost investment in care infrastructure to alleviate women's disproportionate care responsibilities. This Assembly, therefore, calls upon the governments to increase taxes on corporations, the financial sector and the ultra-rich, introducing progressive taxes on corporate and personal income, net wealth, excess and windfall profits, digital services, and financial transactions, instead of regressive indirect taxes. We demand universal access to free health, education, and other public services, including care infrastructure, paid for by fair taxation, to reduce the cost of living and free up women's time spent in care work.

The world belongs to those who care for it, and we shall resist all forms of power that perplex us against the freedom we own.