

Process of participative elaboration of the

# Barcelona Consensus

for intercultural alternatives to neoliberal globalization

The global crisis demands **global answers**; answers that cannot come from those who provoked, accepted or took advantage of its causes.

The world architecture built upon the ashes of the World War II is collapsing. The great foundations that granted America its hegemony, shared in part with all the other winners, 64 years later can no longer answer the necessities of a world undergoing deep transformations of various kinds. Neither Bretton Woods (America's pillar in the economic-financial network in the IMF and the WB) nor the UN (political pillar in the Security Council) or the atom bomb (military pillar), which sealed the financial and political hegemony are acceptable any longer, and deep modifications must be considered.

The process started by the G20 looks into answering the financial crisis in a short term, but, unavoidably, and the very expansion of the G8 indicates that, it will also bring modifications in the correlation of power, which will affect all the institutions up until now considered untouchable.

The **global crisis is also a global opportunity** to reconsider the questions and **give voice to new answers**. If one of the determining elements of the crisis has been the carelessness of politicians towards their responsibilities based on the belief that markets would regulate the necessities of common good, it cannot be that these same politicians will now manage the deep modifications that must be undertaken.

If the rulers have been influenced by the dominant "thinkers," and now this "exclusive thought" has collapsed, **it is necessary to give a voice to "thinkers" who had been diminished**, to define the **new rules** of the game, rules that have to guarantee the common good, that is to say, the sustainable coverage of the basic needs for the entire world population.

In the face of the confusion of governments and their advisors, it is necessary to facilitate a process that rethinks and reformulates some new rules of the game, taking into consideration the proposals of experts and academics, of opinion and social movements leaders, in order to build a consensus of visions and measures that can influence governments, orientate the public opinion and facilitate the articulation of social movements around concrete transforming goals.

It is not a matter of making a list of the sum of claims of the social movements or a battlefield of confronted ideological positions, it is a matter of constructing a process that allows collecting proposals, arguing their suitability and expressing the degree of consensus that they deserve amongst the participants in the process.

The credibility and feasibility of this process depend on some key factors:

**1. The selection of the participants in the process**, which has to guarantee the plurality of geocultural origins besides the plurality of gender, age; sectors (experts and academics, opinions, NGOs and social movement's leaders, former members of governments, companies, or international institutions who either have been expelled or have resigned). (See Annex I, Criteria and procedures regarding the Participants).

**2. The calendar and rhythm.** Given the necessary ambition of the process, it cannot be too short - an encounter or a few weeks; given the necessary influence that it aims to obtain, it cannot be too long, so that it could not have the chance to affect the processes of reorientation out of the crisis, or the G20, the governments and the social movements.

**3. The commitment of participants in the process:** minimum active participation (at a distance) is of 3 hours per month over 12 months, and assistance to a final encounter in Barcelona, particularly for those who have been more active during the process.

**4. The deliberative process:** participants are expected to submit proposals about all topics in brief format, as well as appraise the proposals of all other participants, arguing in their appraisals, always attempting to widen one's views as well as those of the others. It is important to accept that the different proposals might reach a different degree of consensus, and bear in mind that the objective of the process is to obtain a minimum common denominator.

**5. The topics.** The process will necessarily focus on the values, goals, rules of game and institutions of the economic, financial, political, security and cultural systems, taken into consideration within the framework of the planet's ecological and demographic limits, always in a global perspective.

**6. The focus of the proposals.** They do not have to stick to what the governments and the international institutions should do, but also target what the citizens and organizations can do, always in the international framework and, if necessary, distinguish among the different types of countries (North, South, impoverished, industrialized, emergent...)

**7. Organization and facilitation team.** It is necessary to assure the independence, capacity and confidence of the team organizing and facilitating the process. The initiative has come out of the project Novaterra, promoted by the Nova association - Centre for the Social Innovation of Barcelona (see [www.nova.cat](http://www.nova.cat)).

**8. Logistical and financial support that guarantees the feasibility of the process.** We count with the support of the Ajuntament de Barcelona (Barcelona Solidaria) to organize the process with a small team of young professionals acting as facilitators. We also have the support of Delibera - Interactive Participation Services for the platform that will allow the debate to occur at a distance. Please visit [www.deliberaweb.com](http://www.deliberaweb.com) for more informations.

**9. The Network of support organizations.** The organizations that want to back up the initiative commit to one of the following actions: 1. Provide a list of possible participants for the process. 2. Make an economic contribution to the independence of the process.

**10. The Advisory Board.** Renowned by their critical and pro-positive trajectories, they guarantee the focus and plurality of the process and endorse the main decisions (participants, topics, funding...). The following have confirmed their participation as members of the Advisory Board:

*Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Aminata Touré Barry, Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Ana Esther Ceceña, Aung San Suu Kyi, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Cândido Grzybowski, Fatma Alloo, Federico Mayor Zaragoza, François Houtart, Gertrude Mongella, Hazel Henderson, Ibrahima Coulibaly, Lau Kin Chi, Mustafa Barghoutti, Pan Guang, Pierre Beaudet, P. V. Rajagopal, Ruth Bamela Engo, Samir Amin, Shirin Ebadi, Sultan Bakarar, Susan George, Vandana Shiva, Virginia Vargas and Walden Bello.*