

Inter Pares

Highlights 2006

In 2006, Inter Pares provided \$5.5 million as well as political and technical assistance in support of the work of our counterparts in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Canada. The following are highlights of some of these activities. More detailed information is available on the Inter Pares Web site at www.interpares.ca.

Africa



Caroline Boudreau

- In the wake of the Darfur peace agreement signed in May, women from the Gender Center for Research and Training, an Inter Pares counterpart, completed a training program with women representatives from various regions. In the midst of a fragile peace

agreement, and with villages still being attacked, Darfuri women are working together to define a common agenda so that their concerns will be heard as the implementation of the agreement unfolds. By providing this opportunity for Darfuri women to work together in relative safety, the Gender Centre is promoting the integral role of women as agents of peaceful and democratic change.

- With Inter Pares' support, Third World Network-Africa continued to strengthen coalitions across Africa to engage their governments in developing mining and resource extraction policies that

respect environmental and human rights standards. As Canada is a major player in the African mining sector, Inter Pares facilitated the participation of an expert witness from Chad in Canada's National Roundtable process, which examined corporate social responsibility of Canadian companies operating overseas. To raise awareness about this issue, Inter Pares produced a photo essay on mining in Ghana and staff have spoken at a variety of public events. The photo essay is available at www.interpares.ca/priceofgold.

Canada



Faris Ahmed, USC Canada

- As a co-founder of Canada's Ban Terminator Campaign, Inter Pares worked to advance public understanding of Terminator technology, a technology of genetic engineering that renders seeds sterile. In March, Inter Pares helped organize the "Terminator on Trial" public event in Ottawa, where

Saskatchewan farmer Percy Schmeiser, ecologist Dr. Vandana Shiva, and Colleen Ross, Women's president of the National Farmers Union made the case for defending an international moratorium on Terminator seed technology. The mobilization in Canada and around the world prompted the Canadian government to conform to world opinion and strengthen the moratorium on Terminator. Inter Pares has since helped launch the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, an organization that brings together over 25 groups from across the country to work on issues of food sovereignty and environmental justice.

- Inter Pares advised and provided financial support to the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG). Co-founded by Inter Pares in 2002, the ICLMG is a coalition of 37 Canadian organizations monitoring government policies and practices that undermine civil liberties, human rights, and the rights of refugees and migrants. In 2006, the ICLMG continued to challenge Canada's use of security certificates to detain people, and served as an intervenor in the Maher Arar Inquiry.

Latin America



Project Counselling Service

- Inter Pares continued to work with counterparts in Peru to assist marginalized people to engage in their communities and society as citizens with rights and responsibilities. The Integrated Community Development Centre operated a leadership school in Castrovirreyna that strengthened women's organizations and promoted women's participation in local governance. Members of these women's organizations are now participating in citizen oversight committees, bringing community perspectives to local policies, and

ensuring government accountability and transparency.

- In September, the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia, (ONIC) organised an International Verification Mission to examine the compliance of the Colombian government with the recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples. As part of this mission, Inter Pares worked with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) on a Women's Forum that allowed indigenous women throughout Colombia to make public their experiences with violence and political marginalization. It also provided an opportunity for indigenous women from Colombia and Canada to compare and share their experiences and strategies on issues that affect indigenous communities in both countries.

- With Inter Pares' support, the Guatemalan consortium "Advocates for Change" accompanied sixty-five women who survived sexual violence committed during the armed conflict. Indigenous mental health promoters, all local women, received training to support these women in their search for healing and justice. Inter Pares also supported regional meetings of women's organizations that provided an opportunity for women to learn from one another's experiences on the relationship of sexual violence to identity, sexuality, citizenship and political participation.

Asia



Philip Chin

- Since 1992, the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG) has produced reports documenting villager accounts of human rights abuses in rural Burma. KHRG's reports have provided vital information to the UN system, governments and human rights organizations throughout the world. This year Inter Pares supported KHRG to document the human rights consequences of the massive military offensive in eastern Burma, which has displaced over 18,000 people.

- In the Philippines, TriCom assisted indigenous Lumads in Mindanao to establish Ancestral Domain Claims,

ensuring formal control over their traditional lands. With support from Inter Pares, TriCom worked with these communities to implement sustainable development plans and programs related to seed preservation, communal agriculture, watershed management, primary health care and early childhood education. TriCom facilitated skills-training and income-generation programs for women, and promoted awareness of women's essential roles in production and in society. As a result of TriCom's agricultural support activities, crop output has increased, ensuring food security for over 300 farm families.

- Inter Pares has supported the Thailand-based Back Pack Health Worker Team program (BPHWT) since its inception in 1998. This year, the BPHWT expanded the scope of their community health care program in eastern Burma and reached over 170,000 internally displaced people. In September, the BPHWT program

released a groundbreaking report on health and human rights in eastern Burma entitled, "Chronic Emergency," the result of systematic monitoring over the past five years of communities of uprooted people living in conflict zones. A short video of the BPHWT program can be found on the Inter Pares Web site: www.interpares.ca.