



Language

Introduction

Movements round the world have mounted resistance to IMF conditions for financial assistance, and their government's endorsement of these neoliberal policies of privatizing large sectors of the economy, and opening them up to multinational corporations. These struggles were viewed as part of the Global Justice Movement after 1999, but predated the protests at global summits, and have continued after such protests have waned, since they have roots in community opposition. Some of the most significant movements have occurred in Latin America – the successful resistance to the water privatization (and the Bechtel Company) in Cochabamba, Bolivia is often cited. There were widespread demonstrations by most sections of society in Peru in 2003 when protesters blocked the roads into Lima; in 2008 unions called a nationwide strike against high food prices seen as a consequence of neoliberal policies, and indigenous people marched in the old capital of Cuzco, which was hosting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation annual summit (*Red Pepper* (July 2003), p. 16 and *New Internationalist* (December 2008), pp.10-11). Moreover in three Latin American countries the scale of popular resistance to privatization and/or other neoliberal policies forced changes in national policy and led to immediate (or subsequent) changes of government: Argentina 2001-2002, Bolivia 2003 and Ecuador 2005. These national movements are included in Volume 1 of the *Guide to Civil Resistance*, [E](#) [1]. [IV](#) [2]. [2b](#) [3]. [3b](#) [4] and [7](#) [5]. The Bolivia entries include several studies of the Cochabamba struggle. These titles are not repeated here – though an additional Cochabamba reference is listed.

Many trade unions in other parts of the world have opposed the terms of IMF and other loans and 'free trade' agreements requiring privatization. For example South Korean unions called strikes 1996-97 against plans for a more 'flexible' labour market and in 1998 calling for renegotiation of an IMF loan, and Indian unions called a general strike in 2003 against privatization and changes to the labour laws. Indian trade unions also brought one million onto the streets in a one day strike against neoliberal policies on 28 Feb. 2012, and even larger numbers in a two-day strike in Feb. 2013 (*Red Pepper* (Jun/Jul 2013) p. 40. Unionists have often been joined by students and women's groups: *New Internationalist* in a March 2004 issue focusing on the IMF and World Bank provides snapshots of demonstrations and strikes in Indonesia, Zambia and Romania among others.

Resisting privatization includes opposition to handing over state services, such as railways and the post office, and social services, such as the health care and education, to large corporations. There are examples of trade unions and others resisting these policies: health workers in San Salvador in 2002, teachers in Guatemala and Peru in 2003. More recently health care workers in Colombia were in 2013 resisting effective privatization as part of a wider resistance to the US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement: [Colombia Nationwide Strike Against 'Free Trade.' Privatization, Poverty](#) [6], commondreams.org, 25 Aug 2013. The best documented struggles are, however, those against energy and water privatization: some references are listed below.

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