

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FISHWORKERS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS
ROME JULY 4 . 8 1984

REPORT
RAPPORT
REPORTE

*The fists emphasise the
centrality of the worker in
producing the wealth from
the sea.*

*That they are clenched
indicates determination
and that they do not touch
highlights the need to
forge new links.*

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AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

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PREAMBLE:

WHILE ISSUES RELATED TO FISHERIES WERE BEING DISCUSSED AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL TO DEFINE STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT, FISHWORKERS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS FROM MANY COUNTRIES - PARTICULARLY OF THE THIRD WORLD MET TOGETHER TO EXCHANGE THEIR, EXPERIENCES AND ANALYSE THEIR PROBLEMS.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FISHWORKERS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS TOOK PLACE IN ROME FROM JULY 4-8 1984. 100 PARTICIPANTS FROM 34 NATIONALITIES ATTENDED THIS CONFERENCE. ABOUT HALF OF THEM WERE FISHWORKERS (MEN AND WOMEN ENGAGED AS CREW MEMBERS, SMALL FISHERS, PROCESSING WORKERS AND SELLERS) COMING FROM ALL CONTINENTS. MOST OF THE FISHWORKERS WERE SMALL-SCALE FISHERMEN OPERATING IN THE COASTAL AND INLAND WATERS. THE SUPPORTERS WERE INDIVIDUALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANIZATIONS WHO IDENTIFIED WITH THE CAUSE OF THE FISHWORKERS.

nature and Objectives of Conference

The conference was an historical event. Fishworkers, the main actors of fisheries development have been excluded from discussions and decision making, both at broad policy level and concrete project level. At this conference they decided to initiate a process of building international collaboration and solidarity. This process will enable them to overcome the barriers to shaping their own future.

It was a people's initiative. Not waiting for an international governmental bodies invitation, they decided to meet on their own initiative, with their own style, own agenda and own working methods. This conference was not conceived as an intellectual experience. It became a living human experience in which spontaneity, life-sharing and self-expression at all levels played a major role.

It was a committed encounter. It carried an emotional meaning and an existential weight which added to its seriousness. It was a direct result of the fact that the participants live through the problems which they discuss and hence become dramatically concerned with solutions. It was a stage in an ongoing process of struggles and collective action. Rooted in direct experience at local level, this was an attempt to relate beyond national and regional boundaries

In this conference the main concerns WERE:

- TO SHARE CONCRETE LIFE EXPERIENCES
- TO GAIN FURTHER INSIGHTS FROM PROBLEMS FACED AND SOLUTIONS FOUND BY FISHWORKERS ORGANIZATIONS ELSEWHERE,
- TO REACH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MECHANISMS OPERATING AT GLOBAL LEVEL
- TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES THAT ENSURE THE FUTURE SURVIVAL OF THE FISHWORKERS AND THE REAPPROPRIATION OF THE SEA.
- TO DEVISE WAYS OF COORDINATING ACTIVITIES AND BUILDING UP SOLIDARITY AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

