Translated from: http://www.redlanpud.net/uncategorized/manifiesto-feminista-antiprohibicionista/

Who are we?

We are women and dissidents who are drug users, we are those who live and experience the impacts of prohibitionist, patriarchal and racist policies in our territories, communities and bodies.

We are women and dissidents, lesbians, bisexuals, trans women, afro women, mestizos, and anti-prohibitionist feminists from Brazil, Mexico, Ecuador, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Peru, Honduras and Guatemala. We are activists who research, activate, militate and work in different areas such as: feminism, prison abolitionism, cannabis activism, social regulation and legalization of drugs, anti-prohibitionism, risk and harm reduction, rights of people who use drugs, sexual and reproductive rights, and rights of people with HIV. We will meet in the city of Olinda, Pernambuco between November 25 and 28, 2022.

In our trajectory through cannabis activism and other social struggles, we noticed that most movements are governed and dominated by cis, white and upper-class men, despite the fact that those who live the greatest consequences and violence of prohibitionist and racist policies are women and dissidents, black and indigenous people, also systemically impoverished and homeless people. From this arises the need to identify ourselves as an anti-prohibitionist feminist movement.

We identify the need to create spaces of, by and for women and dissident drug users that allow the articulation and organization in our territories, as well as to open a space to raise our voices and denounce the violence and traumas to which we are exposed due to the consequences of the war on drugs.

We seek to strengthen our feminist anti-prohibitionist agenda in LANPUD, bringing to the center of the debate the differentiated impacts that certain groups, bodies, identities and territories that derive from the intertwining and continuity of prohibitionist, patriarchal and racist systems of oppression, such as women, racialized peripheral populations, sexual dissidents and indigenous peoples, go through.

What do we deconstruct?

Anticolonialism

Colonialism is a structure strongly established in our territories, it is learned within our homes and communities, it makes us absorb and enjoy a culture that is not ours, which constitutes the slow death of our own history. The native peoples maintained a strong relationship with nature and animals, however, this has been replaced by a Eurocentric culture established through oppression, violence and genocide of the native peoples. Nature is not recognized as an entity with rights as it is known by the native peoples of Abya Yala. Colonialism comes with the project of appropriating and silencing culture, identity and memory. Despite this, Afro-Brazilian, Caribbean and indigenous peoples throughout Abya Yala have historically maintained a resistance and struggle for their survival, a resistance that is maintained to this day in their ancestral, sacred and millenary culture from the resistance of the quilombos and palenques to the struggle to protect sacred territories from the continuous and heartless exploitation of extractivist and racist capitalism.

This colonial and racist structure is defended by the State and its armed forces made up of the police and the army, corporations that constitute a force that persecutes and controls according to its racist institutional project. The State creates and sustains these racist public policies of control. Our struggle is not and should not be only with the internalized racism in our homes and families, our struggle is and should be against the State as well, which violates the rights of traditional peoples who maintain a continuous struggle for the survival of their culture, habits and traditions, often linked to the use of plants and sacred elements that became prohibited by capitalist interests and racist persecution.

Colonialism is also expressed through a moralistic control of bodies based on gender roles, denying non-normative corporealities and women the right to pleasure, healing and freedom. Colonialism manifests itself by preventing women from accessing our ancestry and healing with natural substances, such as cannabis and coca, plants that heal physical, emotional and spiritual discomfort, thus guaranteeing the possibility of self-determination over our bodies. Colonialism robs us of our link to our history, to our peers and to our essence, as it continually promotes attempts to erase traditional cultures.

Drug Policies

Current drug policy in Latin America has its origins rooted in these racist and colonialist practices. Drug policies have evolved from the persecution of Afro-descendant cultures and native peoples to a structurally racist policy of control, so it is not only a question of health but also of culture and community.

The war on drugs is defended behind a moralistic discourse, however, it is Afro-descendants, indigenous people, women and dissidents, trans people, people with HIV and vulnerable communities who continue to be murdered, persecuted, disappeared, imprisoned and criminalized for issues related to drug policy. Drug policies, besides being violent, prevent the promotion of honest education about drug use, its effects, risks and harms, so that most of the material related to drugs is focused on fear, morality, punishment and sensationalism. Prohibitionism and the war on drugs generate disinformation, death, violence, preconceptions and other consequences more harmful than the use of substances by itself.

The Right to Decide: Health, Sexual and Reproductive Rights

We defend the recognition of diverse and chosen maternities, the right to maternity of trans women and dissidents, lesbians and bisexual drug users, women and dissidents with HIV, women and dissidents in street situations, women and dissidents who are older adults. The current health policies and health services in Latin America are crossed by transphobia and moralistic discourses that pose a barrier to access to sexual and reproductive health for women and diversities. The preconception around drug use makes many women and dissidents stop seeking shelter and understanding in health services, to avoid being physically and psychologically violated, leaving their health and that of their children even more vulnerable, adding to the consequences of morality and prohibitionist and punitive public policies.

The system places a cis heteronormative perspective in its entire process, therefore we need the social movement to be a safe space for everyone. We recognize that drug use is intersectional and crosses many populations, and cannot be an impediment to the exercise of motherhood for any woman and dissidents.

What we report

Overdose

We denounce the violence exercised by medical institutions as well as the discrimination against people who use drugs, which manifests itself in the denial of medical attention and the underreporting of cases of death by overdose that are registered as suicides. Health professionals work from the stigma and moralistic discourse towards drug use.

Obstetric violence

We denounce obstetric violence against black, indigenous and impoverished women, who have more difficult access to the use of anesthetics, to the humanization of their deliveries and to contact with the newborn. We also denounce the violence exercised against women and dissident drug users from whom the State steals their children under the allegation of inability to care for them, leaving them even more vulnerable. We understand that motherhood can be a facilitating agent for the organization of these women's lives and that they need the support to take in and care for their own children, without losing the right to live with them.

Narcofemicide

We denounce the forced disappearance, persecution and femicides related to drug use that operate within the prohibitionist system and the war against people who use drugs.

The vast majority of women deprived of liberty in the region, as well as systematically impoverished populations, are deprived of liberty for non-violent crimes related to the transfer, supply and simple possession of drugs. While current regulations benefit only the industry, pharmaceutical companies and organized crime, demonstrating that prison and justice are a round business at the cost of our lives and exploitation.

They kill and disappear us for being free, for defending our lives and territories, for defending dignity.

Health System

We denounce the discrimination suffered by people who use drugs in health services, the denial of health promotion, medical care, prevention and primary care services. We denounce the discrimination against people with HIV who use drugs, through the denial of services and medicines. We denounce the ideal of abstinence as the only option to drug treatment and the lack of public services for risk and harm reduction, which has proven results as a technology that respects individuality, autonomy and the autonomy of the drug user and the care of their use.

We denounce the abuses and violations of physical and psychological integrity exercised against women and dissidents within institutions of internment, often involuntary, for people with problematic drug use, a process that resembles in its repressive and pathologizing response to efforts to correct sexual orientation and gender identity (ECOSIG), where women and diversities under the guardianship of public medical and mental health agencies are victims of rape, torture, physical abuse, psychological abuse and the denial of properly supervised medical care by health professionals to ensure an appropriate

detoxification process. We demand the depathologization of our identities, bodies, desires and decisions!

State Practices

We denounce the persecution, forced disappearance and assassinations of women and dissidents who work in defense of women and their ancestral territories, the creation of public policies that criminalize diversity and those who fight to defend ancestral territories from extractivist policies in favor of neoliberal and capitalist interests of countries of the global north and their economic interests at the expense of the resources of our territories.

We denounce the interference of churches and religious leaders in state affairs in our region, this interference accentuates the moralistic discourse around drugs and our diverse existences.

We denounce the criminalization and penalization of possession for drug use as an attack on our human right to free development of personality and autonomy, configured as a tool of the prohibitionist and racist system for the persecution and criminalization of women and dissidents, racialized, in street situations and other conditions of extreme vulnerability.

Sexual and reproductive rights

We defend the autonomy of native peoples and the need to recognize ancestral practices that are currently criminalized through colonial public policies that directly affect our indigenous comrades and their abortive and health care knowledge.

We women have ancestrally organized ourselves into support networks to provide and facilitate the right to safe abortion. We demand the right to safe and free abortion!

The State continues to exercise patriarchal and racist practices through a control of women's bodies based on a moralistic discourse and white hetero-cis superiority.

Anti-racist and anti-prohibitionist feminism

Anti-racist and anti-prohibitionist feminism emerges as an emancipatory political proposal to meet the demands of women and dissident drug users organized in collectives mostly made up of cis men and many spaces wrongly called feminist fragmented and exclusive of trans women, women sex workers and drug users; arises from the need to enable spaces in feminist groups that enable debates, discussions and questioning about sex work, social inequality, racism and machismo, spaces that do not reproduce machismo, lesbophobia, transphobia and racism, but rather are welcoming and proactive, for which it is essential that these voices, bodies and identities are those who speak of our realities, in the first person and without falling into the moralistic stigmatization of otherness.

We need to build care and protection tools for drug users, to accompany them in maternity wards, for which it is important that institutions such as the public defender's office, justice and health services are trained to ensure that these people are welcomed without discrimination or violence, and that they have a guaranteed quality care.

In Latin America and the Caribbean there is a policy of moral control of women and dissidents in which our freedom and our presence in all spaces is limited because this represents a confrontation with the

system. For us, the struggle for autonomy is essential. Anti-prohibitionist feminism has work and space for everyone.

Let's go together!