



2007 Campaign Report

By Anil Naidoo

Dear Friends,

Many thanks to all who participated in this years **Blue October Campaign 2007**.

We were again very successful with 36 countries now having taken part, sometimes with numerous events in each country put on by different groups. In other countries coalitions formed just for Blue October!

Many thanks to the international planning team again for another successful campaign and particularly Claudia Campero from Mexico for working tirelessly on the website and Sonia Vani for her continued support here in Canada.

Some highlights include *(sorry not all events could be listed):*

- In **Norway** a coalition of sixteen groups held extensive activities including an event where members of parliament were challenged to carry 15 liters of water in an original Indian water barrel. Something that girls all over India and around the world do every day but proved very difficult for the politicians in their suits.
<http://www.blaoktober.no/>
- In **South Africa** they mobilised a 'roadshow' in the Vaal to support the constitutional court case against pre-paid water meters which was filed against Johannesburg Water and will be heard from the 3rd to the 5th of December in the High Court.
- In **Colombia**, October was full of educational activities with teachers, students, farmers, and indigenous groups in an effort to collect signatures for a national referendum that will insert the right to water in the national constitution. Groups involved in the campaign have created a mural of water photographs that will accompany campaigners as they travel throughout the country.
- In **El Salvador** there was a march to the National Assembly to demand the government recognize the right to water.
- In **India** they held a fourteen days long awareness campaign (Yatra) "Jago! Dilli Jago" a move to protect the "Yamuna river", which finished on 7th Nov. 2007 at India gate.
- In **Canada** Maude Barlow launched her new book, Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water. We also met with the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing who then delivered a strong message to the Canadian government asking them to support the human right to water.
- In **Mexico** there were almost too many events to list with a Consultoria, forums, workshops, submissions before the Latin American Water Tribunal and much more. Events took place all around the country.
- In **Ghana** activists organized community meetings to fight water tariffs increases. The Public Utility Regulatory Commission has received a proposal from the

Utility companies to increase tariffs by 60-100% in October and this is being strongly resisted.

- In **Nepal** they have recently blocked the bid of Severn Trent Water International to privatize Kathmandu's water system. Now, for Blue October, activists organised a series of community consultation meetings to develop a pro-poor community participation strategy to ensure safe drinking water, something Severn Trent would never have done.
- In **Paraguay** they also did numerous events including two public "Audiencias en Defensa del Río Paraguay", many media events and Citizen Mobilizations.
- In **Peru** the water worker's union held events around the country designed to fortify the local and regional alliances with the social movements, local organizations, environmentalists, university youth, NGO's and all concerned with citizen rights.
- In the **United States** groups called on the U.S. Congress to establish a federal trust fund for water in order to safeguard water for future generations and they celebrated the 35th anniversary of the U.S. Clean Water Act.

As usual, our biggest challenge is getting people to send in pictures and accounts of all the great things they have done for Blue October.

So if you did something and want it recorded on the website - www.blueoctobercampaign.org - please send an e-mail to svani@canadians.org or claucampero@yahoo.com

Again, many thanks to all who participated or contributed their efforts. Please ensure you plan to be part of Blue October 2008!!!

In solidarity and on behalf of the full committee,

Anil Naidoo, *Project Organizer* Blue Planet Project www.blueplanetproject.net

