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Resolution in support of the Second Continental Conference Against “Free Trade” and Privatizations (Mexico City – March 2008)

Whereas, the San Francisco Labor Council sponsored the Western Hemisphere Conference Against NAFTA in November 1997, with the presence of 412 delegates from 20 countries in the Americas, including the main labor federations of these countries;

Whereas, the Western Hemisphere Conference Against NAFTA initiated an open discussion in the U.S. trade union movement about the need to link up with the labor movement in the rest of the hemisphere to beat back this attack on working people and on democracy itself – a discussion that was begun with the participation at the conference of a representative of the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO and that continued in the streets just two years later with a massive labor demonstration of more than 50,000 unionists against the World Trade Organization summit in Seattle; and

Whereas, the resistance to the corporate "free trade" agenda has continued to deepen across the United States and the Western Hemisphere, forcing the Bush administration to change its tactics from pushing the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) to implementing this very same objective through bilateral and regional "free trade" agreements – such as CAFTA and the recent Peru Free Trade Agreement; and

Whereas, numerous important trade unions in Mexico that have worked closely with U.S. and continental trade unions in organizing the fightback against the "free trade" agenda – namely, the Mexican Electrical Workers union (SME), the Union of Workers of the Autonomous University of Mexico (STUNAM), the Oaxaca Teachers Union (CNTE-SNTE Section 22), and the Metropolitan University Workers Union (SITUAM), among many others, have issued a call to organize a Second Continental Conference Against Free Trade and Privatizations, to be held in Mexico City in March 2008; and

Whereas, this Second Continental Conference aims to coordinate the resistance and fight back by unions and labor federations across the Americas against this destructive corporate agenda, but also to advance the struggle for democracy and labor rights in Mexico itself against a president, Felipe Calderon, who was imposed by Bush and his corporate cronies; and

Whereas, the call for the Second Continental Conference summons working people across the Western Hemisphere "to come to gather to organize the fight to defeat the Free Trade Agreements (in their various forms); to defend public services and enterprises, collective-bargaining agreements, and trade union independence; to renationalize all that has been privatized; and to affirm the role of the workers' and popular movements in the struggle for national sovereignty. These are all concrete questions that affect all workers and peoples from the top to the bottom of the continent"; and

Whereas, the call for the Second Continental Conference already has been endorsed by leading trade union federations across the Americas, and is being coordinated in the United States, among others by Sister Nancy Wohlforth of OPEIU and Brother Baldemar Velasquez of FLOC,

Therefore be it resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council endorses the Second Continental Conference, urges its affiliates to endorse, and calls upon the Bay Area Labor Councils and the California Labor Federation to endorse and help promote this conference among its affiliates.

Submitted by Frank Martin del Campo, LCLAA, and adopted unanimously by the San Francisco Labor Council on November 26, 2007.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Paulson", with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Tim Paulson
Executive Director

OPEIU3 AFL-CIO 11