

EC-2: Interactive session – “Corporate Conquistadors and Earth Defenders: Strategies of Dominance and Modes of Resistance around Extractivism in Latin America” [in English]

Saturday 15 October, 15.15–16.45, Beskow

(Maddy Ryle, Communications Director, The Democracy Center, Cochabamba/San Francisco)

Extractivism - whether in its original or 'neo' forms - remains the central feature of most Latin American economies. Energy extraction in turn drives mineral extraction, and governments in the region keen to attract FDI continue to open up new areas to exploitation. The past decade of now-disappearing 'leftist' governments in the region has done nothing to shift this dynamic or present real alternatives to the established paradigm of economic development, despite the heavy social and environmental toll that a hyper-extractive global economy wreaks on dispossessed communities and their territories. Accumulation of capital and power by transnational corporations looking for new land and markets to exploit is at the heart of this situation. Meanwhile the region has become one of the most dangerous on the planet for those resisting extractive projects. Join Maddy Ryle from the Bolivia-based Democracy Center for an interactive session in which we will explore, through the stories of some of these earth defenders, the strategies that corporations are using to tighten their influential grip over extractive policies in the region and bulldoze through the concerns of local populations.