

# TIME TO GET IT DONE

## Why is this Year's Membership Assembly so Critical?

---

GGJ has a long tradition of important Membership Assemblies— and this year's is no different. When we gather in Detroit, more than 100 of this country's most dynamic organizers will be taking time away from some of the most important social justice struggles happening right now. We will be converging at a time when the situations in our communities and around the globe are getting more and more critical. Conditions are worsening for many, and struggles are widening and deepening.

This year's Membership Assembly is particularly important, as we will be building on the advances made at past assemblies.

In 2008, the Black Mesa Water Coalition hosted GGJ member organizations in Flagstaff, Arizona. At that Membership Assembly, GGJ members adopted a program that pushed us to engage the emerging climate justice and anti-war movements.

Two years later, the Miami Workers Center hosted GGJ member organizations in South Florida where we began talking about the intersecting crises of the economy, the ecology and the empire. It was then that GGJ members added the fight for a more just economy to the alliance's plate.

Then in 2012, when Black Workers for Justice hosted GGJ member organizations in Raleigh, North Carolina, GGJ members adopted the *No War, No Warming, Build an Economy for the People and the Planet* framework. Unfortunately, just a quick scan of what's going on in the world confirms the accuracy of our framework which points to the danger of a system that promotes war-making and prison-building in order to reap unbelievable wealth for the 1% while starving humanity and poisoning the planet. In many parts of the world, the popular uprisings that gave so many of us hope have been turned back by forces of reaction and neoliberalism.

As we prepare to come together, this time in Detroit with our hosts, GGJ member organization East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC), we do not need a new framework. We've identified many of the central problems we're facing. We have a sense of what needs to be done. This Membership Assembly will be about coming up with a plan to get it done.

A lot has changed within GGJ since our last Membership Assembly. The alliance has a new National Director. Our Anti-War/Anti-Militarization working group has struggled in parallel with the decline of the anti-war movement in the U.S., and our New Economy working group has needed more time and attention than we have had to give. Yet, GGJ is at the helm of a promising, new national climate justice campaign called Our Power: Communities United for a Just Transition. Our relationships with our social movement allies around the world have been strengthened, and we are seen as partners in movement convergence spaces.

Like so many social movements around the world, we face critical questions of how to take our struggles to the next level— questions like:

- What is our vision of an alternative to capitalist, white supremacist and

hetero-normative domination? Or What is our vision of the systems change that we want?

- What is our vision for an alternative to capitalism? And what are our principles of a Just Transition to get there?
- How do we move beyond isolated resistance to cohere a more holistic movement of movements?
- How do we lift up our struggles and fights, each with their own unique conditions and character, to be more coherent together?
- How can our day-to-day campaigns be connected to our vision of grassroots internationalism?

Where other Membership Assemblies have focused on diagnosing the different sides of the systemic crisis that we face, this Membership Assembly will build on what we've got and will push us to develop a plan to get in motion. For the Assembly, we have five key objectives:

1. Highlight the conditions and work happening in Detroit as examples of the crisis as well as the opportunities to fight for a just transition;
2. Deepen our understanding of the No War, No Warming, Build an Economy for the People and the Planet framework;
3. Clarify GGJ's positions in and contributions to the Climate Justice Alliance / Our Power campaign;
4. Give life to GGJ's work on grassroots internationalism, gender justice, just transition and system change; and
5. Make organizational commitments about what we will each do in the next year to advance GGJ's work.

In the coming weeks, GGJ's staff and Coordinating Committee will be sharing a proposal for discussion as well as pulling together two prep calls so we can all discuss and refine the proposal. We will also be reaching out to and available to all of the member organizations. It's a lot, but we are confident. After all, nothing less than the fate of humanity depends on us doing our part to get it done!