

# TEXTS SUBMITTED FOR DISCUSSION AT THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

- ***International situation***
  - ***Social movements***
- ***Role and tasks of the International***
  - ***Minority texts***

At its meeting on 24-28 February 2024 the International committee of the Fourth International adopted the resolutions proposed to the 18th World Congress scheduled for February 2025.

The IC approved the four resolutions submitted by the Executive Bureau. Four alternative texts submitted by two IC members were rejected.

All these texts are published in this bulletin. Further contributions to the discussion (as outlined in the organizational motion) will be published during the pre-congress period.

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# As crises converge, the challenge of how to move forward for those below

International Committee of the Fourth International

**Text adopted by the IC: 33 in favour 9 against, 3 abstentions 0, NPPV**

## Introduction

The bloody war offensive unleashed by the Zionist state of Israel and US imperialism against the Palestinian people after the Hamas attack on 7 October has violently upset the fragile and chaotic situation of a world in multidimensional crisis. In addition to this new fact, there is the continuation of the Russian war against Ukraine, as well as the growth of the extreme right – with Milei’s victory in Argentina and the prospect of a new victory of Trump in the United States –, the sharpening of tensions between the United States and China over the future of Taiwan, and the scientific confirmation that global warming is already causing the disasters predicted for 2030. In short, the broad outlines of the situation set out in October 2023 have not been disproved, but tragically confirmed in recent months.

## An imperialist attack on the entire Middle East

The war in Palestine opens a new chapter in history. Having already provoked a new Nakba, the present war has acquired genocidal characteristics over the months – with the bombings, the destruction, the deaths of women and children, the closure of humanitarian aid and the hunger that is rampant in the territory.

In February 2024, of the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza, one million have been expelled from the northern areas to the south of the Strip. Of the more than 30,000 killed in four months, 40 per cent are women and children. With the siege of the population in the terri-

tory without food or assistance and the probable bombing of Rafah, Israel is demonstrating that its objective is the colonial retaking of the Gaza Strip. At the same time 16 Palestinian communities have been forcibly removed from the West Bank. It is an attack and threat against all Palestinians and neighbouring Arab and Islamic peoples, which has already become a regional war.

This is not an “Israel-Hamas” war. Nor is it merely a continuation of the 75-year war of the colonial settler state, apartheid, and “ethnic cleansing” against those who inhabited Palestine before the imposed creation of the state of Israel.

This is the first time since the offensive against Iraq in 2003 that the United States, has intervened so directly. Its support in arms and millions of dollars to Israel is decisive in producing a historical massacre of civilians.

Thus it is a multi-targeted colonial and imperialist offensive, with violent repression and encouragement of new settlements in the West Bank, of the disappearance or massive exodus of Palestinians, military incursions into Southwest Syria; bombings in the south of Lebanon and Beirut, to inflict casualties on Hezbollah, bombings of the Houthis of Yemen, who are trying to block the manoeuvres of the US Navy and merchant ships at the entrance of the Red Sea. The pro-Assad battalions in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis of Yemen, rebelling against a government controlled by Saudi Arabia; all forces with a relationship with the theocratic and deeply repressive regime in Iran, claim to be acting in the interests of the Palestinian people, while actually trying to progress their own interests. The conflict is already having an impact outside the region, expanding to Pakistan.

The present carnage is facilitated by the neo-fascist nature of the Netanyahu government. Greatly weakened by

months of popular protests against his arrogant overruling of the judiciary but exploiting the extreme weakness of the anti-Zionist left, Netanyahu has seized the opportunity of the attack by Hamas to try to regain control of the internal situation, to fulfil the historical imperative of his western gendarme state in the Middle East. Netanyahu is today the vanguard of the extreme right in the world, whose traditional antisemitic axes are relativized by the global Islamophobic axis.

The Israel-USA offensive is coming up against cracks and major contradictions. It is developing with the complicit silence or hypocritical protests of the great Western powers, tardy protests of China or the tightrope walking of Putin’s Russia. As for most governments in the Arab world, their logic of “normalization” of relations with Israel and invisibilization of the Palestinian cause, which prevailed before 7 October, renders their critical statements on the bombing of Gaza under popular pressure ridiculous.

What Israel is doing is not self-defence but one of the most shameful massacres in recent history, rightly denounced as genocidal by South Africa before the Hague Tribunal. The ongoing tragedy is causing political-ideological upheavals throughout the world. It is increasingly difficult for their allies to defend both the US and Israel. The carnage in Gaza is having a particular impact on the university and peripheral youth of the Global North. Racialized youth from working-class neighbourhoods, victims of the rise of Islamophobia, identify with the Palestinian cause, while actions in support of this cause are quickly branded as antisemitic. Young Jewish humanists in the West, many of whom are non- or anti-Zionists, are moving in the opposite direction to the pro-Israeli emotions of 7 October. We need to act and dialogue with all these sectors.

## The rise of the extreme right challenges the neoliberal so-called “democracies”

We are witnessing the rise of a constellation of new far-right forces around the world, which has perhaps not yet reached its apogee. In Italy they are in power, they are co-governing in the Netherlands and Sweden, are gaining strength in Germany and could win the government in France. The authoritarian Erdogan is holding on in Turkey.

In Central and Eastern Europe, in addition to the deepening fascist nature of the Russian Federation under Putin since the open invasion of Ukraine, the far-right Fidesz party has been in power in Hungary since 2010; similarly, PiS, the embodiment of the Polish far-right, has been in power for eight years; and although the PiS narrowly lost its domination in the last elections in October 2023 to a pro-European coalition, it retains the country's presidency; at the same time, in Bulgaria, the populist conservative party (Smer-SD), which came out on top in the last legislative elections, has joined forces with the far right (SNS) to govern.

In Latin America, after Bolsonaro's disaster and Dina Boluarte's coup d'état in Peru two years ago, they conquered Argentina's Casa Rosada, declaring a war to the death on one of the most combative and organized workers' and popular movements. They threaten the United States and the world, with the possibility of Trump taking back the White House.

They pose real threats in Asia, where Bongbong Marcos, son of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, rules the Philippines, and the anti-Muslim Narendra Modi rules India since 2014. His Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government has limited civil liberties, labour and environmental rights, as well as the constitutional autonomy of Kashmir region. In Indonesia the far right Prabowo Subianto has just been confirmed president.

Since 2008, and more markedly since Brexit and Trump's victory in 2016, movements and parties of a supposedly “renewed” far right have strengthened and multiplied with electoral victories. They present themselves as counter-systemic, even if they are (ultra) neoliberal, conservative in their mores, nationalist, xenophobic, racist, misogynist, enemies of LGBTQIA+ rights, transphobic and

massively inspired or supported by religious fundamentalism. They spread science denialism concerning climate change.

The advance of this constellation of the extreme right, is the result of decades of crisis of (neoliberal) democracies and their institutions, due to the increase in inequalities and the inability of these regimes to provide satisfactory answers to the aspirations of the peoples and workers.

The deep roots of the new far right are the desperation of the impoverished social sectors in the face of the worsening crisis, the disintegration of the social fabric imposed by neoliberalism, combined with the failures of the “alternatives” represented by social liberalism and “progressivism”. As a result, fractions of the bourgeoisie have emerged and grown throughout the world supporting this new version of fascism as a political-ideological solution capable of shutting down regimes, controlling with an iron fist the mass movements, imposing brutal adjustments and dispossessions to recover the rates of capitalist accumulation. The most notable example of this division is the polarization between Trumpism (which has taken the Republican Party by storm) and the Democratic Party in the United States.

This panorama poses as a fundamental task for the Fourth International: the fight to the death against these far-right forces, authoritarianisms and neofascism.

## Ukrainian people defends its right to national self-determination

The invasion of Ukraine by Putin's army in 2022 accelerated the geopolitical redesign of the world. Putin's regime reproduces, with its aggression, the relations of domination inherited from the Tsarist empire – not without borrowings from Stalinism and convergence with the ideologies of the extreme right around the world.

The war is inflicting these atrocities long-term. Russia continues to shell civilian areas and attack Ukrainian infrastructure (railroads, roads, schools, hospitals, mills, warehouses, ports, etc) throughout the territory. In the occupied zones, mass rapes and massacres, the destruction of Mariupol

and bombardments affecting civilians – supposedly “protected” by Russia – have gone hand in hand with repressive imposition of Russian passports, destruction of Ukrainian culture, deportation of children, etc. Millions of Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes or leave Ukraine tearing apart their families and social networks, turning them into refugees in different countries.

It was the popular armed and civilian resistance to the invasion of February 2022 (unexpected by both Putin and the Western powers) that forced Putin to make opaque adjustments to the aims of his military offensive, which was supposed to “denazify” Ukraine and protect the Russian-speaking population of the Donbas. The ground front has stabilized (in early 2024) after huge human losses, without the Russian forces being able to stabilize their control of all the territories proclaimed Russian.

In Russia and Belarus, those who dare to speak of a “war” for what is officially a “special military operation” or who express the slightest opposition to it are criminalized. The partial mobilization of some 300,000 men in September 2023 caused hundreds of thousands of young men – often without refugee status – to flee, not without threats to their families back in Russia. Thousands of civilians in the border areas of Russia have now become victims of Putin's war, suffering from attacks by Ukrainian drones and shells.

Russian aggression has for the time being enabled NATO to be consolidated and enlarged on the basis of the fears of Russia's Eastern European neighbours. This is why the defeat of this invasion and of Russian imperial logic is a decisive factor for a successful popular campaign throughout Europe for the dismantling of all military blocs - NATO, CSTO, AUKUS.

## Unprecedented internationalization

We are experiencing an unprecedented internationalization of the major issues facing humanity. The crisis of capitalism has acquired a new quality since the 2008 crash and the recession that immediately followed, and even more so with the Covid pandemic. The capitalist crisis has clearly become multidimensional. There is a convergence between the environmental crisis – which for

some years now has been producing increasingly extreme climatic phenomena, among which the recent excessive heat waves stand out – with the phase of lasting economic stagnation, with the intensification of the dispute for hegemony in the inter-state system between the United States and China, with the advances of authoritarianism and neo-fascism, with the resistance of the peoples and workers and the multiplication of wars in the world.

We have entered a new moment in the history of capitalism. A period qualitatively different from the one we have lived through since the establishment of neo-liberal globalization at the end of the 1980s, and particularly more conflictive from the point of view of the class struggle and the struggle between states in comparison with that which opened 33 years ago with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the bureaucratic regimes of Eastern Europe.

There are two major differences between this situation and the convergence of crises at the beginning of the 20th century, which resulted in the “age of catastrophe” (1914-1946), including two bloody world wars.

The most immediately threatening facet of this multidimensional crisis is the ecological crisis provoked by two centuries of predatory capitalist accumulation. After all, what is the ecological crisis if not the result of the fossil fuel-based capitalism? The escalating climate and environmental crisis is hitting humanity and life on the planet hard: the rate of increase in average temperatures on Earth is double what it was up until last decade; biodiversity is being lost, there is pollution, contamination and pandemics, all of which shorten the deadlines for decisive action.

The globalized corporate economy, based on burning fossil fuels and increasing consumption of meat and ultra-processed foods, is rapidly exacerbating the climate crisis. A climate that will reduce humanity’s future on the planet. Melting poles and glaciers are accelerating the rising seas and the water crisis. Agribusiness, mining and hydrocarbon extraction are advancing (not without resistance) on tropical forests, essential for maintaining the planet’s climate systems and biodiversity. The effects of the climate crisis will continue to manifest themselves violently, destroying

infrastructures, agricultural systems, ways of life and producing gigantic human displacements. None of this will happen without a leap in social conflicts.

## The economic and social crisis

We are still living under the impact of the great financial crisis of 2008, which opened a new great depression, followed by a long recession, just like that of the years 1873-90 and particularly like that of 1929-1933. We are experiencing a crisis of neoliberal globalization. Firstly, because this mode of capitalist functioning is no longer capable, as it used to be, of guaranteeing the growth, profit and accumulation rates that it did at the end of the 1980s and 1990s. Secondly, because geopolitical polarization, aggravated by the wars the advance of nationalism, is shaking up the super-internationalized value chains (eg the Europe-Russia energy chain and global chip production, the target of U.S. fury to prevent Chinese leadership in telecommunications and artificial intelligence). There is a tendency to redesign the already shaken global production chains. However, none of these difficulties prevent the neoliberal imperialist governments and their underlings from continuing their adjustments and vicious attacks on wages, social budgets and the commodification of agriculture.

Despite paltry growth after 2008, the neoliberal economy tries to evade its own crisis by rushing headlong into continued concentration of capital, financialization, public and private indebtedness, digitalization – which brings more and more power to big transnational corporations in general and to Big Tech in particular. Stagnating or slowing growth, with inflation (aggravated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine) and the implementation of the same old neoliberal policies only exacerbate social, regional, racial and gender inequalities between and within countries.

The unbridled search for protection against the crisis (or maintenance of profits) encourages financial speculation and permanently threatens the system with the 2008 wave of bankruptcies that has affected not only banks but also large industrial corporations such as General Motors, Ford, General Electric, or large real estate corporations. In addition to its recessionary character

-which shakes the living standards of the working masses-, the rise in interest rates makes sovereign and private debts grow, creating the conditions for new regional or even global default crises.

## The absence of mass revolutionary alternatives

It is not that there are no struggles and resistance movements, on the contrary. We have had in this century at least three waves of democratic and anti-neoliberal struggles (beginning of the century, that of 2011 and that of 2019-2020), a renewed women’s movement, the anti-racist movement that emerged in the United States and a constellation of struggles for climate justice across the globe. However, these great struggles have been confronted, objectively, not only with neoliberal capitalism and its governments but also with the dilemmas of structural reorganization of the world of labour - the industrial working class has lost social weight in much of the West; oppressed sectors, youth and new fringes of precarious workers are not yet organized in a permanent way, and in general have difficulty in unifying with the trade union movement.

In the midst of increasingly rapid changes, one element of the previous period remains and is aggravated by the reconfiguration of the exploited class and the oppressed sectors (as a result of the so-called productive restructuring): the absence of an alternative to capitalism that is credible in the eyes of the masses, the lack of an anti-capitalist force or set of forces leading the economic and social revolutions. The extremely critical moment for the system is, therefore, also that of a great political and ideological fragmentation of the social movements and the left. This is linked to a regression in the consciences of the oppressed and exploited, affected by geographical, technological and structural reconfigurations and by neoliberal hyperindividualism. Added to this are the negative outcomes of “left” governments such as Syriza and Podemos, and the tremendous fragmentation of the socialist left to give rise to a picture in which the struggles are more difficult and their impact in consciousness raising and political organization weaker.

## How the many crises reinforce each other

To characterize the capitalist crisis as multidimensional means that it is not a simple sum of crises, but a dialectically articulated combination, in which each sphere impacts on the other and is impacted by the others. The link between the war in Ukraine (before the conflict in Palestine exploded) and economic stagnation has worsened the critical food situation of the poorest people on the planet, with more than 250 million more hungry than ten years ago (2014-2023). The flow of people displaced by wars, climate change, the food crisis and the spread of repressive regimes is increasing, especially among the countries of the South, although the media give more prominence to South-North displacement.

The disastrous prospects in the environmental and economic fields, since at least 2016, have undoubtedly played an important role in pushing part of the bourgeois fractions in different countries to detach themselves from the project of formal democracies as the best way to implement neoliberal precepts. Increasingly significant sectors of the bourgeoisies adopt authoritarian alternatives within liberal democracies, resulting in the strengthening of right-wing fundamentalist movements and far-right governments.

The expansion of a hyper-individualistic neoliberal sociability, combined with the right's use of social networks and possibly now AI, further fosters depoliticization, class fragmentation and conservatism. Digital technologies also help to deepen the subordination-clientelization of the medium and small peasantry, considered as the main food producers in the world, or even the massive reduction of these peasantries. On the other hand, neoliberalism, by continuing to violently attack what remains of the welfare states, imposing the super-exploitation of industrial and service workers and particularly of care and social reproduction work, throws women, particularly women workers, into the dilemma between surviving (badly) or fighting.

Neoliberalism keeps women in the formal labour force (in the North) or in less structured and more informal forms (in the Global South), further reducing

the wages and incomes of those who "work outside" or provide services, while burdening working women as a whole with the tasks of caring for children, the elderly, the sick, the different; work previously covered by the welfare state, notably in advanced capitalist countries but now brutally cut back. With the networks of social reproduction in crisis, more so in the neocolonial countries than in the metropolises, neoliberal society is domesticating (handing back to the family) and racializing (handing over to non-whites, blacks, indigenous women, immigrants) the tasks of care, but does not take responsibility for social reproduction as a whole.

From an overall geo-economic perspective, today's neoliberal capitalism and its interstate system introduce digital devices and algorithms as new productive forces, giving rise to the emergence of digital platforms, as well as new forms of social relations of production, such as uberization, and various social relations mediated exclusively by the market. At the same time, the centre of gravity of global capital accumulation has shifted in the 21st century from the North Atlantic (Europe-USA) to the Pacific (USA, especially Silicon Valley, and East and Southeast Asia). Not only China is decisive, but the whole region, from Japan and Korea to Australia and India.

## Geopolitical chaos and reconfiguration of the global order

The "new order" or disorder under construction, which already carries the threat of more inter-imperialist conflicts and a resumption of the nuclear race, makes the world more conflictual and dangerous. The "geopolitical chaos" of a few years ago is worsening, while giving rise to a crisis of the imperialist system: i.e. a weakening of the hegemonic power. This is combined with the assertion of a new imperialism, such as Russia, or an emerging imperialism, like China. It is a reconfiguration underway in a global context of immense instability, with nothing consolidated. In any case, the unipolarity of the bloc under US leadership (following the collapse of USSR) no longer exists.

The facts show that, with the strengthening of the Asian giant in the economic, technological and military

spheres, in the last decade we have been experiencing a hegemonic dispute based on the rivalry between the old imperial system – the US bloc, with the European imperialisms, the Canadian state, Japan, South Korea, Australia – and the emerging bloc that China is trying to build. This latter bloc, expanding and on the offensive, includes Russia (despite its particular interests and contradictions with Beijing), North Korea, many Central Asian republics, new friends among the caliphates of the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Iran) and is trying to turn the BRICS into an alliance against Western imperialisms. India however remains a strong ally of the USA, including against China.

We are witnessing the proliferation of war situations around the world, such as those continuing in Syria, Yemen, Sudan and the conflict in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, we observe overt or covert civil wars, such as the case of Myanmar, as an example of the former, and the constant struggle of Latin American states against criminal organizations, and in turn, of these against the populations, as evidenced in Mexico, Brazil and Ecuador. This conflictive situation is advancing in the geoeconomics and geopolitics of Africa, where Russia competes economically and militarily with France and the United States, particularly in the former French-speaking colonies of West Africa. For its part, China is continuing to try to increase its economic influence in all parts of the African continent and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

## The nature of present China and Putin's Russia

The nature of the Chinese "great leap" of the last 30 years was capitalist. Heir to a great social revolution and a turn towards restoration from the 1980s onwards, essential for the neoliberal redesign of the world (carried out in partnership with the US and its allies), the emerging Chinese imperialism has specific characteristics, like all imperialisms. It is based on a statist capitalism planned and centralized in the CCP and the Armed Forces (PLA, the People's Liberation Army): a developmental capitalism with openly developmentalist policies where most large corporations are joint ventures between state-owned

or state-controlled enterprises and private enterprises.

Chinese emerging imperialism is still, of course, under construction. In the last 10 years China has made a leap in the export of capital: it has acquired big participation in energy, mining and infrastructure companies in neo-colonial countries (Southeast Asia and Central Asia, Africa and Latin America) and has become the world's largest patent filer and registrant. Since 2022, China is a net exporter of capital (it exports more capital than it imports). It has been investing more and more in armaments and warning with increasing vehemence that there is a line (or several lines) – Taiwan and the South Sea – that rivals and weaker states must not cross. It has not yet invaded or colonized “another country” on the European or U.S. model, although its policy toward Tibet and Xijiang (and with the small territories historically in dispute with India and Bhutan), is essentially colonialist.

Russia today is the state resulting from the massive destruction of the foundations of the former Soviet Union, and from the chaotic and non-centralized restoration that took place in it, from the takeover of old and new businesses by bureaucrats turned oligarchs. At the beginning of the century, Putin and his group, coming from the sectors of the former espionage and repression services, devised the project of recentralizing Russian capitalism, using Bonapartist relations between oligarchs and a 21st century version of the old national-imperialist ideology of Great Russia. This was transformed into the main instrument for reasserting Russian capitalism in competition with other imperialisms, and qualitatively increasing the repression of the peoples of the Federation, including the Russian people. The ultra-repressive nature of the Putin regime can be considered as developing towards fascism.

## The United States, a hegemon in crisis

The emergence of rivals does not detract from the nature of the United States as the richest and most powerful country militarily, with unprecedented war power and the bourgeoisie most convinced of its “historic mission” to dominate the planet at any price, and

therefore to wage war in favour of the continuity of its hegemony. It is indeed Uncle Sam who still has the last word in the still hegemonic imperialist “collectivity”. The point is that, although the United States is unbeatable in coercion, it has as never before (at least since the Vietnam War) a serious problem: an imperialist hegemony, like all hegemonies, can only be sustained if it also convinces its allies and its domestic public. And there's nothing more dangerous than a cornered hegemon.

The United States has serious problems of external legitimacy, but also, and more seriously, internal legitimacy – elements that did not exist in the previous period of supposed “unipolarity” and “war on terror” in the 1990s. Its business, bureaucratic and political elite is more divided than ever over the project of internal domination and is forced to face the mess of undoing the value chains that have deeply linked the U.S. economy to China's over the past 40 years.

In addition to its relative economic decline, the United States is a bourgeois democratic society and regime in open crisis since the Tea Party and Trump took control of the Republican Party from within – with pretensions to change the rules of the world's oldest bourgeois democracy – and polarization deepened. The tendency of this crisis is to deepen more and, with Trump or Biden in the White House, contribute to weaken the once all-powerful “America”, which will face onslaughts between Executive, Congress and Justice, capable of harming its global objectives.

## The Global South

Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and a large part of Asia (in particular its southern and southeastern portions) make up the territories of the neo-colonial countries known as the Global South. Despite the inequalities between their various states and social formations, as a whole they make up that fundamental part of the world – where most of humanity lives or survives – in debt, producing raw materials, possessing the least destroyed ecosystems, extensive food systems and cheap labour that are fundamental to the permanent and predatory enrichment of the imperialist North.

After forty years of neoliberal globalization, the Global South continues to concentrate greater proportions of inequality, hunger, lack of social protection systems, authoritarian governments, expropriation and bloody social conflicts. However, financial, productive, commercial and cultural internationalization has also produced a perverse equalization with the North in terms of problems and political polarization: the rise of the extreme right (Duterte, Bolsonaro, Modi, Milei), the growth in the power of criminal organizations, climate tragedies (as in India, Bangladesh, Philippines, Brazil), crises of state and political systems, civil wars (as in Myanmar, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti) and wars between countries.

## Latin America

Since the beginning of the century, South America has been the scene of a series of struggles, multitudinous demonstrations, popular *estallidos* (riots), election of reformist governments born out of these struggles and a lot of political polarization – because neo-extractivism, predatory exploitation of nature, social breakdown, inequality, daily violence, militarization and political crises are growing, which also feed far right alternatives. Since 2018, a new cycle of mobilizations has, in a radical way, swept through the Andean countries. Resistance, explosions and social struggles - which have combined democratic and economic demands - are combined on the one hand, and the permanence of the extreme right as a central enemy on the other. These struggles are sometimes channelled through the election of the so-called “progressive” governments of the second wave.

They are not governments of the workers and the oppressed, therefore they are not “our governments”. We do not participate in them, nor do we owe them unconditional support. However, in a period marked by the presence and growth of the ultra-rightists, they are governments seen by broad sections of the masses as an alternative to neo-fascism, because in general they are alternatives on the electoral plane. Thus, studying each national case in the current world context, and considering the necessity of defeating the extreme right, our policy cannot be

other than popular mobilization and a careful combination of programmatic demands, encouragement and support for the struggles against the neo-liberal and predatory measures of these governments, denouncing what is most reactionary, promoting the best ways of fighting the extreme right, with the indispensable maintenance of the independence of the movements against these governments.

## Africa within the vortex of crises

This region with 1.2 billion inhabitants exists in a capitalist world, which shapes and constrains their lives at every turn. In spite of the narrative of Africa rising, which suggested Africa was finally throwing off the yoke of neo-colonial underdevelopment, Africa and particularly sub-Saharan Africa is a victim of the “uneven” part of uneven and combined development. It remains the poorest continent in the world. The World Bank estimates that 87% of the world’s extreme poor will be in Africa by 2030.

The multi-dimensional crisis of capitalism is having catastrophic effects across the whole continent. Africa is responsible for just 4% of global carbon emissions, yet 7 of the 10 most countries vulnerable to climate disaster are in Africa. Four years of drought in the Horn of Africa has displaced 2.5 million people. Several conflicts that mark the political situation in Africa, especially the war in Sudan, have their roots in extreme disruption brought on by the accelerating climate crisis.

For some time, we have been witnessing the new scramble for Africa, which is fuelling a wave of conflicts across the continent – from Sudan to Mozambique. While many of these conflicts are related to new oil and gas finds, an increasing focus is the race to control and extract rare earth minerals and other critical minerals (cobalt, copper, lithium, platinum) for low carbon technologies needed for the “green economy” in the advanced economies.

Together with the former colonial powers and of course the imperial hegemon, the USA, China and Russia play a significant role in extracting wealth through forms of super-exploitation and fuelling conflicts on the continent.

Consequently, new conflicts, regional wars, coups and civil wars continue to define the continent’s political economy. Taking advantage of conflicts in several African countries and where regimes backed by Western powers face new insurgencies or are toppled, a familiar pattern plays out. Russia, principally through the mercenary Wagner group is deployed to undermine Western influence and gain access to influence in the region. This is also true for the series of coups in West Africa which are challenging the power of French neo-colonialism and where the new regimes turn to Washington’s competitors for military and financial lifelines.

However, China is the main non-Western power extracting Africa’s wealth. China uses its economic power to exact unequal exchange, whether in the form of resource backed loans, other loans, trade deals and through its investments in Africa’s extractive industries and infrastructure. It is estimated that 62 percent of African bilateral debt is owed to Chinese creditors.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the so-called citizens’ movements (Le Balai citoyen (Burkina Faso), Y en a marre! (Senegal), Lucha (DRC), etc.) seem to be seeking a new impetus. Faced with popular demonstrations, including those of the political opposition, the regimes also respond with fierce repression (Senegal, Swatini/former Swaziland, Zimbabwe, etc.). In general, there is not a leftist or “progressive” (anti-neoliberal) anchorage, much less an anti-capitalist perspective (as raised by the Algerian comrades during the Hirak). The Sudanese uprising, with its remarkable self-organization and radical social and democratic demands, is now being stifled and the population decimated in the merciless armed conflict between generals, each backed by the most reactionary states. The Kais Saïed regime in Tunisia has strangled the democratic aspirations born out of the Arab Spring.

The military coups of 2023 in former French colonies in Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon) are an indicator of the political crisis in this continent. This crisis is accentuated by the rise of military action by Islamist terrorist groups financed from Gulf Monarchies, which have been strengthened by the defeat of Gaddafi in Libya and the result of the intervention of the Western powers. In

these four countries, the military who seized power, without encountering any resistance in a context of regime crisis, took advantage of the total discredit of the political institutions and the widespread rejection of the French imperialist presence (Françafrique) among the population, in particular among the youth of the Sahel. This rejection was also very clearly expressed in Senegal during the social movements of 2021. In the case of the military coup in Gabon, a former French colony in Central Africa, what is decisive is the internal crisis of the regime, since there has not been the same rejection of France by the new governants and by the population. In any case, the military who have come to power offer no real alternative to imperialist policies and the neo-liberal model, much like the Islamists who came to power through elections in Tunisia and Egypt after the Arab Spring.

## The exploited, the oppressed and the peoples of the world respond with mobilizations

After the crisis of 2008, there was a resurgence of mass mobilizations all over the world. Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, Plaza del Sol in Madrid, Taksim in Istanbul, June 2013 in Brazil, Nuit Debout and yellow vests in France, mobilizations in Buenos Aires, Hong Kong, Santiago, Bangkok. This first wave was followed by a second wave of uprisings and explosions between 2018 and 2019, interrupted by the pandemic: the anti-racist rebellion in the United States and United Kingdom, with the death of George Floyd, women’s mobilizations in many parts of the world, including the heroic struggle of women in Iran, revolts against autocratic regimes such as in Belarus (2020), a mass mobilization of Indian peasants that triumphed in 2021. The year 2019 witnessed demonstrations, strikes or attempts to overthrow governments in more than one hundred countries: in six of them governments were successfully overturned or modified against reforms, in four governments were overthrown, in two governments were completely reformed (study by Mediapart, 24/11/2019).

In the aftermath of the pandemic, the three months of resistance in France against Macron’s pension reform; and the workers’, students’ and popular



uprising in China that helped defeat the CCP's Covid Zero policy stand out. In the US, the process of unionization and struggle continues in the new branches of production (Starbuck's, Amazon, UPS), with the emergence of new grassroots anti-bureaucratic processes (rank and file), with strikes of workers in education, health. In 2022/2023, the big strikes of Hollywood screenwriters and actors stood out, in addition to the historic and so far victorious strike of the workers of the three big automakers in the country.

The working class in a broad sense, which is currently preparing to face the impacts of Artificial Intelligence (as evidenced by the resistance in the strike of American screenwriters and actors), remains a lively and numerous force. However, it has undergone processes of restructuring, repression, and a lower level of consciousness and organization can be observed compared to the last century. Large industrial complexes survive in China and spread throughout Southeast Asia. Peasants in Africa, South Asia (India and Pakistan) and Latin America are also bravely resisting the invasion of imperialist agribusiness. Indigenous peoples, who constitute 10% of the world's population, resist the advance of capital over their territories and defend the common goods essential for all humanity. The defeat of the Arab Spring and the Syrian tragedy retard the resilience of the peoples of the Middle East; despite this, we have seen the heroic uprising of the women and girls of Iran.

Workers continue to resist capital and fight for living conditions, albeit under new forms of labour organization and new ways of organizing to fight, and therefore with more difficulties than previously. What is at stake is to work harder than ever, in every country, in every urban periphery, in every workplace, in every occupation and strike, in every new grassroots union, in every new category and new popular movement of resistance to order, in unity around common demands, in the creation and strengthening of self-organization and in the anti-capitalist politicization of demands, towards the reconstruction of a consciousness of the exploited and oppressed and of their class independence against capitalism.

## The central demands for a new time

Faced with growing inequality between countries, imposed by the imperial capitalist system; faced with wars and nationalist disputes, which claim millions of lives, the Fourth International stands unconditionally against all imperialisms. We stand for the full independence of all colonies and neo-colonies. We stand for a world in which no state or ethnicity oppresses or restricts the rights of others. The peace we propose is an egalitarian and anti-colonial peace.

Our most urgent task in solidarity with Palestine is to win political and social forces to support the international call for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, allowing the unimpeded entry of humanitarian aid. We demand an end to the destruction of Gaza to the expulsion and displacement of Palestinians inside Gaza and the West Bank, the freeing of all Palestinian prisoners and of the Israeli hostages. We demand an end to other governments' complicity with Israel's actions and for an arms embargo against it. We work to build the broadest possible movement in support of the Palestinian people, stepping up the BDS campaign. This movement includes those Jews throughout the world who assert that Netanyahu and the Israeli government do not speak for them and for whom a peaceful Jewish presence in Palestine can only be concretized by defending the rights of the Palestinian people.

The strategic solution in the Middle East starts with the right of return for all Palestinians to their historically recognized territory, the elimination of apartheid from the river to the sea, combatting of all relations of oppression, racism and exploitation throughout the region, imposing equal rights for all peoples and therefore the dismantling of the Zionist state as the state "of the Jews". We work for the development of a vast egalitarian revolutionary movement of all the peoples of Palestine in their struggle for self-determination. But it requires a rejection of Zionism by the Jewish people of Israel and their participation in an Arab revolution carrying democratic, secular and socialist dynamics.

The only lasting solution to the war in Ukraine is the complete withdrawal

of Putin's troops. All possible ceasefire or "peace" negotiations must be public to Ukrainian and Russian peoples. It is up to the Ukrainian people to decide on the conditions for a ceasefire that will lead to the defeat of the aggression, the preservation of what is still left of Ukraine's infrastructure and the withdrawal of Russian troops – with the return of the population to their homes. We defend the right of the Ukrainian people to resist and receive help against the invasion, and build a free and democratic Ukraine, and we support all those in Russia and Belarus who oppose this war.

We fight for the dismantling of all military blocs – NATO, CSTO, AUKUS. We oppose any logic of sharing "spheres of influence" at the expense of the people and any neo-liberal and political conditioning of the aid provided. We oppose the cynical use of the war in Ukraine to increase military budgets, as in Europe. We denounce all nuclear blackmail on both sides. We continue to fight for world disarmament, in particular as regards nuclear and chemical weapons, for a world peace in which no state imposes, invades or oppresses another, i.e. a peace without colonisers and without cemeteries of colonized peoples.

In Africa, we reject the Western imperialist discourse which, under the pretext of re-establishing constitutional order, wants to support military intervention to preserve its interests. We are fighting for the complete withdrawal of French military troops from the entire region and the closure of the U.S. military base of Agadez in Niger. We demand the departure of the troops of the Wagner group. We support all efforts to conquer the political and economic sovereignty of the peoples, in the direction of a new and anti-systemic movement for the unity of the countries and peoples of Africa.

In the face of the extreme right of the North and the South, the unitary policies of the left (united fronts) are an important part of our repertoire in these times, although never negotiating or accepting the loss of our political independence, nor that of the social movements. In authoritarian regimes (such as in China, Russia, Belarus, Nicaragua, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Arab Emirates, Iran and the other caliphates) or those with

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ected governments but of an authoritarian nature (such as Turkey, Venezuela, the Philippines), our policy is one of frontal opposition to those in power, an unremitting struggle for democratic rights and unconditional support to the insurgents, such as those of Myanmar and Yemen.

In this context, the initiative of holding, in Brazil, a broad conference of activists against fascism in 2025 is of great importance for the International. It should be part of our priorities of action in all continents to support and strengthen this idea, working to realize it, through regional or continental pre-conferences.

We fight for the satisfaction of basic demands, such as universal and free health care, health infrastructure guaranteed by the states, decent housing, decent work, wages and pensions, as well as access to water and energy at low prices.

One of our central tasks is to encourage and support the socio-environmental struggles, working to make the ecological anti-capitalist demands those of all the workers' and oppressed sectors. Only the strength of the movements of the exploited and oppressed in the socio-environmental plan can confront the ongoing climate collapse.

We defend the right of women workers and society in general to compensation for care work (with children, elderly or sick people) guaranteed by state policies. We fight for the right to decide whether to have children, for the right to abortion and all contraceptive methods, sex education at all levels, for quality public day care centres, quality full-time schools; for equal pay, job opportunities and income between men and women.

Against structural racism that discriminates against Black people, indigenous peoples and all racialized minority ethnic groups, particularly when they are migrants in the North, we propose and fight for anti-discrimination policies, reparations for slavery and land theft, as well as affirmative actions. We stand with all migrants against xenophobia and expulsion policies. For the end of all walls.

Against conservative homophobia and transphobia, which attack the LGBTQI community worldwide, we raise our voices for the broadest right to

dispose of our bodies as we see fit and as we wish. For the full citizenship and rights of gay, lesbian and non-binary couples, with the possibility of marriage, conception and adoption. We defend the rights of the transgender community, the fight against violence and their full integration into social life.

All these struggles must unite to defeat the new fascisms, to overthrow the regimes of exploitation and oppression, to lead to the confrontation with imperialism, colonialism, capitalism in a word. The Fourth International fights for a world in which no state oppresses, invades, exercises oppression on the other, where a peace between equals is possible, with respect to the self-determination of the peoples. We fight for a decolonial, ecological and socialist - ecosocialist - world where the defeat of capitalism and its logic allows all to be equal in their differences. A feminist world, of all ethnicities and colours, all sexual orientations and identities, of all beliefs, of all forms of human life in symbiosis and balance with nature. ■

# Our orientation and tasks in social movements

International Committee of the Fourth International

**Text adopted by the IC by 40 for, 4 against, 1 abst, 1 nppv. 1.**

## Why social movements are strategically important

For many years the Fourth International has developed a practice – and to a greater or lesser extent a theoretical understanding – that social movements, in all their diversity, can and often will play an essential role in the struggle for socialism.

There are different forms of social movements: those defending collective working/living conditions (trade unions, neighbourhood movements, peasants/farmers movements, environmentalist movements) or movements of the oppressed (women's, LGBTI, indigenous, racialized, disabled). These movements overlap and intersect in many different ways as do those who are involved in them.

These movements are important because they are the self-organization of those challenging the capitalist system in different ways. The process of self-organization notably in workplaces but also in other collective contexts (educational establishments, neighbourhoods, rural communities, etc or on the basis of shared experience of oppression) encourages the development of class consciousness in challenges to the capitalist system notably employers and the state, politicization, and developing the premisses of a programme for a challenge to the capitalist system and the vision of different society.

While an anti-capitalist party aims to develop a class struggle programme as a synthesis of the demands in the best interests of the exploited and oppressed the development and formulation of those demands comes best from those most directly involved.

We initially developed this understanding in relation to our work in the women's movement and this approach can thus first be found in texts that have been adopted at various Congresses and leading bodies on the question of the struggle for women's liberation and our orientation to building women's liberation movements (Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation especially Part II The Fourth International and the Struggle for Women's Liberation Our Perspective, Latin America: Dynamics of mass movements and feminist currents especially part III Our Orientation; and Western Europe: Changing forms of the struggle for women's liberation).

The first text, among other things sets out our differences both with those on the left who downplay the oppression of women as women only considering them as wage labourers and those who see patriarchy and class relations as parallel processes, what today we would refer to as dual systems theorists.

As the document argues in response to this first: *"This view gives weight and importance to struggles by women only in their capacity as wage workers on the job. It says women will be liberated, in passing, by the socialist revolution, so there is no special need for them to organize as women fighting for their own demands."*

*In rejecting the need for women to organize against their oppression, they only reinforce divisions within the working class, and retard the development of class consciousness among women who begin to rebel against their subordinate status."*

Perhaps the main orientation of Part II of the document can be summed up in the slogan "No Women's Liberation without Socialist Revolution, No Socialist Revolution without Women's Liberation."

Our initial analysis was overly based on our experience of the women's

movement in advanced capitalist countries, this was corrected and developed notably with the work on the Latin American women's movement. The general understanding that the specific oppressions will not be overcome simply by a workplace-based fight without the active leadership of the movements of the oppressed leading the way and pointing to the reality of specific oppressions is more generally pertinent.

To a lesser but still significant extent we have also agreed texts which have drawn lessons from struggles of poor peasants and agricultural labourers, of LGBTIQ movements, of struggles around debt and the movements they throw up, around the anti-globalization and anti-war movements and around Indigenous/First Nation and environmental movements as well of course about the continuing role of trade unions. Social upheavals, fightbacks and alternatives, World Congress 2018.

i) Each of these movements and more have their own particular histories and dynamics and current relationship of forces. There are some important differences between social movements of the oppressed and more general social movements. In this text we also seek to draw out some general principles which we think are important.

a) Social movements are a key way of mobilizing sections of the working and popular classes, including the most exploited, oppressed and often marginalized, for social change – including potentially as part of revolutionary change. Social movements are first and foremost the elementary form of organization to defend oneself against the system on social, democratic or discriminatory issues. In this they can be the framework of action of the exploited, represent their social force. People come into action around their own political situation and then through that

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experience draw more general political lessons. From this point of view work in social movements can and should be a key area for recruitment to our organizations today – and of training comrades particularly those from more marginalised groups in mass work.

Social movements can impact each other – for example climate issues are accepted as part of the trade union agenda in many places in a way they were not a decade ago. They play a leading political role because the resulting mobilizations are places of confrontation against the policies of capitalists and their governments, situations of oppression or exploitation. The cumulative crises suffered in the current ecological, democratic and social situation strengthen the place and weight of social movements.

b) These movements are of strategic importance for us because these mobilizations of the working classes on their demands are the breeding ground for the class struggle and the construction of political relations of forces against capitalism. They are therefore the crucible of transitional anti-capitalist demands.

c) They also have another strategic dimension, which is to be the crucible of self-organization, taking charge of their own interests and political action by the exploited and oppressed themselves. In this they outline what a society based on council democracy; structures of self-organization in workplaces, neighbourhoods and cities might look like. This does not mean that they will be sufficient tools to achieve council democracy – that will of necessity involve a revolutionary organization – but they are an essential prerequisite.

We promote the principles of the Paris Commune (rotation of positions, transparency in accountability and direct democracy in decision-making) to which we add the need to recreate the culture of live broadcasting of any negotiation processes with governments and authorities as a way to put an end to the anti-democratic culture of secrecy.

We fight for the movements to jealously guard their independence from the powers that be, including from parties claiming to be fighting against

the system. The recent experiences of the governments of Lula, Syriza, the Arab Spring, and many others, show the importance of the mass movement being there to guarantee the interests of the exploited.

ii) We therefore seek to champion the building of social movements and to intervene within them, fighting for demands and ways of organizing that take forward an agenda that fights for the interests of working-class people, fighting for a class struggle perspective to be adopted by the movement as a whole. Our militants adopt the attitude of listening to and learning from what other activists rather than assuming we have all the answers.

iii) We fight for the widest possible democracy within social movements and hope to ensure the most exploited and oppressed have a voice for their demands and representation as much as possible. This means that we also fight for clear structures and processes of delegation – arguing against both the “tyranny of structurelessness” and bureaucratization as the best way to actively involve the maximum number of people.

iv) While fighting for the broadest unity of the movement as a whole we do sometimes participate – or even create – an organization/caucus/network of more leftwing forces that develops a common public intervention within a movement on all or some key questions. It is difficult to codify when that is appropriate but some of the relevant circumstances would include where the existing leadership is bureaucratized and failing to act and/or where there is a danger of significant forces (perhaps particularly amongst young people) dropping out of activity because of lack of success. Another context where we might organize with others is in so far as the movement as a whole is not listening to the demands of key sections – eg Indigenous/First Nation people, migrants, trans people etc. Decisions to participate in or create such structures should always be taken collectively through our own organization – either through fractions or commissions to co-ordinate this area of work or through our leadership structures. We

should regularly assess whether this is the right course and that we are able to argue for our own ideas independently and are doing so where this is relevant.

v) We fight for the greatest coordination of social movements around similar demands and themes on an international basis which are widely understood within the movement and make sense at that particular time. We seek to make sure that structures at an international level do not only reflect parts of the movements which have access to funding - a struggle that should be made easier with the development of technology that permits online meetings with translation. We fight to make sure they are genuinely international and reflect the concerns and demands from all parts of the globe and are not dominated by organizations of the global North.

vi) We fight for all social movements to take an intersectional approach without losing focus on their own particular demands.

vii) We fight for co-operation and mutual support between different social movements. We supported the development of the World Social Forums where the general assemblies of social movements were an opportunity for joint declarations highlighting the links and points of convergence of various social movements, including trade union movements. Today that idea is best summed up in the idea of a “movement of movements” – but the idea is not really concretized anywhere at an international level at least.

viii) In different contexts, movements can be faced with the situation where parties that stand on policies advocated by the movements themselves, and in which movement activists and leaders are themselves active, are able to win control of local or even national governments. Movement leaders as activists of these parties may then even be offered and accept posts of responsibility in these governments. Similarly, such governments may offer non-aligned movement activists post arguing they will “represent” the movements.

We argue that the stance of the

movements should be to remain totally independent from all governmental structures. Nevertheless, movements can be faced with the difficulty of how to continue to organize independent mass mobilization faced with a government enjoying popular support that claims to support and implement the demands of the movements.

ix) While our methods of organization within social movements attempt to be as close to the base as possible and for political independence from the state, we are also not opposed in certain situations to putting energy into – or even creating - non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The assessment of whether to do this in the first place and whether to continue needs to be made collectively through the democratic structures of our organization; assessing whether the rules that govern them and the access to funding on balance enhance the political objectives set out below or restrict them.

x) We are in favour of social movements raising the question of power. If they are to be able to do so without becoming lost in leftism or substitutism, they must be sufficiently broad for their strength and nature to objectively pose a confrontation with the power of the ruling class. This was the case with the HIRAK in Algeria, the Arab revolutions, the Indignados in Spanish state, the peasant movement in India and the popular mobilization in Chile, for example. In line with the great revolutionary movements of the last century, we argue that mass movements, with structures of self-organization in the proletariat in particular, are an alternative form of power to that of the bourgeoisie. Classically, we put forward the slogan of the constituent assembly, linked to transitional demands, particularly on social issues - even if this type of slogan has to be adjusted on a case-by-case basis - to defend this perspective.

xi) We believe that democratic social movements should continue to organize even after the seizure of power let alone the achievement of their main demands or a change of government in a 'progressive' direction. We note for example the important experience of the women's movement in Nicaragua

fighting against the corruption of the original Sandinista revolution as well as for the demands of women specifically. It is also highlighted by the difficulties of the landless movement in Brazil in fighting for real agrarian reform against the Lula government in 2005/2006.

## 2. Reactionary social movements

Within our tradition, we have tended to view social movements as innately progressive. However, we should not ignore the fact that the radical right has a whole tradition of organizing around social questions. Comrades in the Arab world have often spoken about the tradition of fundamentalists organizing social services directed at the poorest sections of society to provide food, medicine etc where the state does not do so. This is also an experience that comrades in Pakistan and even more so in India –where the BJP and its predecessor organizations was built on this basis. Evangelicals in Brazil had a similar trajectory in 'organizing' in the favelas. Pegida is another example as are anti-vax organizations in the Global north as well as antiabortion movements internationally.

In general, these movements have no democracy but are much more like "front" organizations for far-right political parties (see section 3). Where their foundational demands are reactionary, we obviously have nothing to do with them but there may be situations where we might be part of a common mobilization around demands we support while seeking to win their base to a genuine social movement based on democracy and a more rounded and positive programme. In other situations, social movements in which we participate may prefer to call their own mobilizations which can seek to achieve the same thing – it is a question of assessing the relationship of forces and the fact that we do not wish to do anything that give these reactionary movements credibility.

In any case, this reinforces the need to be part of social movements and to fight within them to advance demands and programmes that challenge capitalist policies and the capitalist organization of society, who organize democracy and solidarity, in the face of racist

or reactionary programmes that can try to implement far right ideas which bolster capitalist interests.

## 3. Errors on the left

Unfortunately, our approach to social movements is not universal on the radical left. There is a long tradition by Stalinist and Maoist organizations rather than building unitary social movements of setting up front organizations, the main purpose of which is not to take the struggle forward but to act as transmission belts for their own parties. While such an approach is not theorized in the same way by other organizations on the radical left both the IST (with the British SWP at its centre) and the CWI (with the British Socialist Party at its centre) have often tended to use the same approach.

In these latter cases the other tendency is that their investment of cadres in these projects tends to be sporadic – and one at a time – based on their judgement not on the objective importance of the issues mobilized around but on their potential to recruit.

This is also true of some organizations not exactly within the same framework – and within which some of our comrades' work. The Left Party in Sweden for example talks about being "the voice of the movements" – but only mean their fronts not broader formations.

Similar things happening in every continent and probably every country which is problematic because it undermines the potential unity of the relevant movement but also because it gives the whole radical left a bad name within those social movements.

At the same time, we should guard against the opposite danger; that our support for the autonomy and democracy of social movements does not result in us failing to promote our overall politics and win militants to our flag.

## 4. General dangers in the movements

### a) Bureaucratization/lack of democracy

There is a real danger of bureaucratization in any social movement unless those who are active at the base have

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a real impact on the direction of the organization. This is true even in social movements where there are no paid staff or the material conditions of the paid staff are little different to those of the unpaid volunteers. When new organizations are launched, it is usually because there is an urgent common purpose which means many people do not pay attention to these issues – but once mistakes are made it is harder to change afterwards and likely to undermine their ability to sustain themselves long term. When organizations get bigger there is more of a danger as structures become more cumbersome. And some organizations become hostile to discussing ways of avoiding these dangers because they become focused on lobbying and influencing politicians or larger NGOs

## b) Clientelism and self-helpism

The 1991 world congress text Latin America: Dynamics of mass movements and feminist currents raised the dangers of both clientelism i.e. the expectation that support for (some of) the demands of the movement will be reciprocated by support for the political party doing so and self-helpism: i.e. the movement providing services that should be provided free by society as a whole.

*“Placing demands on the state in relation to social and political problems has the enormous advantage of putting the responsibility where it should be, on society as a whole and its institutions, and more easily gives mass action a political character. Successful struggles and mobilizations advance both their overall consciousness and their strength and confidence in themselves.*

*Practice has taught us, however, that reliance on the state is not without its dangers. On the one hand there could be a clientelist dynamic and, on the other, in partially winning certain demands women can become absorbed into administrative tasks of providing services.”*

It seems to us that such dangers, which the text argues can be most successfully guarded against by fighting for the most thoroughgoing democracy in the movement, are difficulties that all social movements, particularly in countries of the Global South, are likely to be prey too.

At the same time, we are conscious

that sometimes movements organizing to meet people’s immediate needs can be essential in drawing in more forces to activity eg the activity of comrades in Pakistan providing food for released political prisoners who had no other forms of sustenance and where they are the single bread winner for their families while they are in prison. These forms of prefiguration can on other occasions act to successfully put pressure on the state to provide services on an ongoing and or a wider basis eg in Britain in the 1970’s Women’s Liberation groups campaigned for community nurseries and in some cases occupied suitable empty buildings and set them up themselves resulting in such services being introduced by a number of local councils.

## c) Ultraleftism/fragmentation

While we are in favour of intersectionality and mutual support – sometimes referred to as ‘a movement of movements’ this is not the same as the movements adopting demands on everything.

So, for example, it is excellent that within La Via Campesina there are women’s and youth sections and specific events taking up their specific needs within the framework of campaigning around land and food sovereignty. On the other hand, within Ende Gelände, the direct-action environmental movement in Germany, some people have suggested it needs to take a position on every political issue going in a way that has the danger of fragmenting and blunting the movement.

## 5. The rise and fall of the anti-globalization movement

The high point of co-ordination of social movements at an international (and regional) level so far took place through the development of the World Social Forums (WSF) and the regional forums that also developed. The WSF first took place in Porto Alegre Brazil in 2001 and ran annually until 2016. The withdrawal of both the World March of Women and La Via Campesina from the World Council of the WSF around 2005 was both a reflection of and a contribution to the decline in its significance.

The participation curve of the forum was uneven – to some extent reflecting the curves of the major social move-

ments that were involved but also more general political developments. The context was first the cycle of struggles between 1995-2005 and then the cycle after that. It is notable that neither the cycle of struggle which led to the development of the indignados/occupy movements, nor the rise of the Arab spring had the WSF as a major reference point nor led to permanent social movements with international coordination.

The political context of the early forums included major developments in Latin America – building on but centralizing some of the work of the Encuentros in the wake of the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas in 1994 and also the growth of the PT leading to Lula’s first election in 2003. The massive demonstration against the WTO in Seattle – including the involvement of a significant contingent of trade unionist was also an important factor – as well as the mobilizations against the World Bank, the IMF, and the G8 (Washington in April 2000, Prague in September 2000, Genoa in July 2001) particularly in North America and in Europe. A third key impetus for some of the early forums was the development of a very significant international anti-war movement from the autumn of 2002 protesting against the invasion of Iraq – in advance of the invasion in March 2003 and continuing afterwards. The extent to which political developments following the fall of the Berlin wall opened up a debate about alternatives to capitalism are worth exploring.

These strands were not the only major organizations to be involved in the WSF from the beginning. Other key organizations included CADTM (founded Belgium 1990). La Via Campesina (founded Belgium 1993) Attac (founded France 1998) The World March of Women (founded in Quebec in 2000)

Trade unions and trade unionists supported the project including from the CUT of Brazil, the KCTU of South Korea, WOSA from South Africa, the French CGT and FSU, unions of the DGB such as IG Metall or ver.di, the Belgian confederations FGTB, CSC, in Britain UNITE and RMT, in Italy FIOM, American unions of the AFLCIO around Labor Notes and the current of revolutionary syndicalist unions (CGT of the Spanish State, Italian COBAS, STI, USB, in Brazil

CONLUTAS, Argentina CTA, SUD Solidaires from France, now part of the International Labour Network of Solidarity and Struggle.

Following the first forum in 2001, the Brazilian organizations that organized the forum drew up a "Charter of Principles". Two things merit comment: first the attitude to political parties (which in the text are almost always merged with governmental parties) e.g. "Neither party representations nor military organizations shall participate in the Forum. Government leaders and members of legislatures who accept the commitments of this Charter may be invited to participate in a personal capacity."

Further parties were not able to organize workshops as part of the forum or have stands on the site. But the statement also reflects a growth of autonomist ideas within the movement emphasizing the idea of parallel power rather than the need to confront and dismantle the state. The slogan Another World is Possible could be and was supported by currents with different approaches to this and other debates.

A second statement barred the Forums as such from issuing declarations or statements as such but at the same time created the space for the assembly of social movements which could and did do so.

The FI put major resources into the anti-globalization movement, the anti-war movement and into other movements that were involved in the social forum process as well as into the WSF itself. In particular our comrades played a major role into convening the assembly of social movements which issued important declarations from 2005 -2015, which were somewhat at arms-length from the forum itself but never the less had an impact

We should try to assess the extent to which the relative atrophy of the movement in this form was a result of turns in the international political situation (e.g. retreat of Pink Tide, rise of new far right, decline of antiwar movement etc) and to what extent a result of strategic errors from the leadership/dominant political currents in the movement.

## 6. Conclusion

This text builds on our previous collective discussions on the importance of social movements in the battle for socialism: their strategic importance in mobilizing and politicizing layers of the exploited and oppressed and their development of programmatic elements and demand which enrich our own programme. This is an approach which is a major gain for our political current over decades and to codify it more systematically is an important task. To produce the most comprehensive outcome which impacts on our theory and praxis beyond the Congress itself we need a more broad-based discussion.

It will be important to receive supplementary contributions on the theoretical and practical conclusions derived from this work. We can already indicate a number of themes to be developed:

- do movements of poor peasants, agricultural labourers and farmers challenge the assumptions of early Marxists about the strategic relationship between the proletariat and the peasantry;
- the strategic role of indigenous communities and their essential contribution to other social movements such as the women's and/or environmental movements;
- why the anti-debt movement has had a particular success in extending its international reach during a period where other movements have receded or needed to significantly change focus and or organizational forms.
- the role of reactionary social movements – perhaps particularly from Asia and North Africa;
- the current relationship of forces in the women's and LGBTIQ movements, and any new theoretical challenges we are facing.

We also note that our collective discussion is underdeveloped on two particular questions of oppression – around racism and racialization and around disability.

The former is particularly complex because the history of self-organization is not only very different in different parts of the Global South but also within the Global North. Different historical and current factors such as the nature of the colonial relationships, the presence of a pre-colonial settler

indigenous population, an Afro-descendant population resulting from a slave-owning economy, the different forms and causes of migratory movements, all shape how racism is experienced and the forms of anti-racist struggles and movements. At the same time our responses to the challenges posed by Black radicalism and Black Marxism are underdeveloped. Finally, we have not collectivized the intersection between indigenous and Black self-organization which is important for example in Brazil. Again, it would be important to have contributions on these questions.

On questions of disability, there is a large amount of theorization from a Marxist perspective by disabled people from within the disabled people's movements and individual activist and academics. However, there are fewer intersections between disabled people's movements and other social movements; although there are disabled people's organizations which are intersectional, notably, disabled women's movements. Despite historical weaknesses in organizing disabled people as well as participating either as disabled people or in solidarity with disabled people's movements from the left as whole, it is important that we are consistent champions of the social model of disability. The social model of disability maintains that it is not impairments themselves that are the cause of oppression of disabled people. Rather disability is the social exclusion of impaired people due to needs of capitalist society. We support the autonomous self-organization of disabled people and we must also fight for all social movements and for the left to be organized in ways that are as accessible as possible to disabled people to ensure their inclusion in the left – this means standing in solidarity with the demands of both disabled people's and their organizations and their chosen tactics and demands. This is an area where some of our organizations are doing some work and developing their ideas – and we welcome contributions on this theory and praxis.

Social movements are inevitably being born and reshaped in the context of crisis and upheaval so there may well be many new questions to address.

In particular, it would be remiss to ignore the major development of the

# Social movements

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movement in solidarity with the Palestinian people that has arisen since 7 October 2023 and the genocidal response of the Israeli state to it. We have made some assessments of the strengths of the movement – including its international spread, the youth and feminization of its leadership, the growing strength of Jewish participation in solidarity with the Palestinian people and the positive relationship of this solidarity movement with other social movements as well as its weaknesses – particularly its relative lack of strength in the Arab world as well as obviously the appalling relationship of forces for Palestinian people as a whole. These assessments need further developing and/or updating in response to subsequent developments.

The understanding and orientation to social movements developed here informs our political activity as the Fourth International at national and international level. ■



# Towards a resolution on party-building tasks for the Fourth International

International Committee of the Fourth International

**Text adopted by the IC by 40 in favour, 5 against, 0 abstentions, 0 NPPV.**

## Introduction

The situation of multiple and interlocking crises and the resulting growing urgency for humanity to leave the capitalist mode of production to avoid the larger catastrophes outlined in our resolutions renders the role of the Fourth International as an international current with active and militant national organizations still more necessary.

The resolution does not go over the arguments for our current orientation to building new left and anti-capitalist parties, understood as a transitional form in the current level of politicization and radicalization as outlined in our resolutions since 1995 (2003, 2010, 2018). We summed this up in 2018:

Our task today is building parties that are useful in the class struggle. That is to say parties that can assemble the forces and decide on actions that have an effect and advance the class struggle on the basis of a class struggle approach and programme, the ultimate goal of such a party being obviously to get rid of the existing capitalist system, in whatever general terms this may be expressed. This perspective commits the forces of the FI to being an integral and loyal part of building and leading these new parties, not simply aiming to recruit or wait to denounce eventual betrayals. Our strategic objective is the building of mass revolutionary parties and a mass revolutionary International.

This resolution focuses on how to strengthen our own politico-organiza-

tional profile and capacity as an international current that is a source of theoretical, analytical and programmatic work, attractive and welcoming to currents from other traditions, and a force for impulsing international campaigns, as well as the activity of our organizations at the national political level and in social movements. As the resolution Role and Tasks of the Fourth International of the World Congress 2010 said:

The Fourth International and its sections have played and still play a vital role in defending, promoting and implementing a programme of demands that are both immediate and transitional towards socialism; a united-front policy that aims for mass mobilization of workers and their organizations; a policy of working-class unity and independence against any type of strategic alliance with the national bourgeoisie; opposition to any participation in governments that merely manage the State and the capitalist economy having abandoned all internationalism or fight for an end to inequality and discrimination on gender, racial, ethnic, religious or sexual orientation grounds.

The Fourth International has played and still plays a functional role in keeping alive the history of the revolutionary Marxist current, “to understand the world”, to confront the analyses and the experiences of revolutionary militants, currents and organizations and to bring together organizations, currents and militants who share the same strategic vision and the same choice of broad convergences on revolutionary bases. The existence of an international framework that makes it possible “to think about politics” is an indispensable asset for the intervention of revolutionaries. Consistent internationalism must pose the question of an international framework. [...]

[...] a major difference between the FI and all these tendencies, over and above political positions, which is to the

credit of the International, is that it is based on a democratic coordination of sections and militants, whereas the other international tendencies are “international-factions” or coordinations based on “party-factions” which do not respect rules of democratic functioning, in particular the right of tendency. [...]

We have, in fact, a particular role that is recognized by a series of political currents. We may be the only ones who can make political forces of various origins converge. [...] We want the FI to play the role of a “facilitator” of convergences in the perspective of new international groupings.

As a result, in order to strengthen ourselves and play this role all the bodies of the FI must be reinforced: regular Bureau meetings, International Committees, specific working commissions, travel, exchanges between the sections. It is necessary to reinforce the activity that the International has deployed over the last few years in regularizing and strengthening EPBs meetings and the efforts of coordination between the Latin American sections. The meetings of the International Committee (IC), which are held every year representing about 30 organizations, must ensure the organizational continuity of our international current.

## A/ International public profile

Since the 2018 World Congress we have fulfilled the mandate to create a multilingual fourth.international website which ensures simultaneous publications of our statements and leadership resolutions in our three working languages (and others where sections pick up that task from that resource) as well as a selection of significant articles representing in general the opinion of our own organizations on the situation in their countries, and our general positions on international

# Role and tasks

questions, even if in the form of signed articles. It is also an archive resource with the published resolutions of our previous World Congresses and International Committees.

The Bureau and IC have been more active in adopting statements giving a position of the international on major international events for publication – issuing about 50 statements since the World Congress, although the rhythm has slackened since 2021.

We have also relaunched the Punto de Vista site in Castilian - alongside International Viewpoint in English and Inprecor in French (and Al-Mounadil in Arabic insofar as it is able to function). The question of publication in Portuguese is not yet resolved. Further discussion with and among the comrades in Brazil is necessary.

These monolingual websites have a broader role than fourth.international. They take into account the specificities of their linguistic audience, publishing articles on current affairs but also reviews, debate and so on. The weakness of our international apparatus means that apart from Inprecor all our own websites are dependent on the voluntarism of comrades who already have many leadership tasks.

The next step is to create a more coherent international presence based on these websites.

This means developing a more coherent editorial policy between our websites, with the same general priorities for coverage of major questions of the current situation, theoretical and analytical questions. This requires a more active coordinated editorial policy in soliciting articles from our organizations and our individual “specialists” that we can publish and promote, as well as monitoring the publications of our national organizations for material to translate and republish. Small steps have been taken in this direction following a meeting at the February 2024 IC of comrades interested and involved in our publications which will enable us to begin to broaden and strengthen the team around the website fourth.international. A broader editorial committee

for Inprecor is also beginning to be put in place. Similarly, the English-speaking organizations have been invited to strengthen the team around International Viewpoint.

We should also consider how to have a more coherent graphic presence in the design of the websites and our profiles on social media platforms.

Developing the use of social media to promote the articles we publish (Facebook, twitter, etc etc) is a priority. We currently have Facebook pages for IVP, Inprecor and PVI and Fourth International which relay the articles published on these sites, as well as twitter accounts for Fourth International <https://twitter.com/FourthIntern>, International Viewpoint <https://twitter.com/IViewpoint> and Punto de Vista International <https://twitter.com/PuntodeVista1>.

There must be a mutual reinforcement between our national and international public expression with mutual promotion of websites, social media publications, sharing of articles and so. Many of our national leaders have audiences far larger than those of our international publications - this should be used to promote articles, statements etc of the International.

We have to note other sites in our “perimeter” (IIRE) as well as ESSF, and important independent websites where our comrades are active (for example Spectre, Tempest, New Politics (USA), Contretemps (France) Jacobin America Latina, Jacobin Italia, Viento Sur (Spanish state), Amandla (South Africa), Asian Marxist Review... which to a certain extent our “rivals” for the publication of original material for our websites. Our websites cannot simply be channels for republication of existing material.

## Book publishing

We have developed an English language publishing operation through joint SR/IIRE publications although the IIRE may publish books in other languages and Socialist Resistance/Anti\*Capitalist Resistance may publish books of specifically British interest. We have also an agreement with a publi-

shing house (Merlin Press) in Britain, which ensures better design and distribution for books they agree to jointly publish. We have also cooperated with Haymarket Books and the Historical Materialism book series to publish books written by comrades.

Our comrades in Italy and in the Spanish state also have viable publishing operations, and in the case of the Spanish state the project of extending their audience into Latin America.

It is important to cross-fertilize these operations and to help to project works by our own comrades internationally. One of the most difficult barriers to overcome is translation. There are several books by comrades that we would like to publish in translation. We have been able to publish books in translations thanks to the efforts of individual comrades.

Based on the contributions developed in the publications of our websites, our books and activities organized by the IIRE we should seek to strengthen our presence in spaces where the Marxist left is discussing: Historical Materialism conferences notably the annual London conference including its Marxist-Feminist stream, Socialism in the US and other occasional or regular conferences such as those organized in Latin America around Trotsky and Trotskyism.

## B/ National organizations and the International

Our statutes state:

### Preamble

[...] The national sections constitute the basic organisational units of the Fourth International. The aim of every national section is to bring together all the forces which share our common goals to build a mass revolutionary Marxist party capable of playing a decisive role in the class struggle within the country to a successful conclusion in a socialist victory. This is the means through which the Fourth International aspires to achieve its great emancipating goal since an international organisation does not replace or substitute for a national leadership in acting in a revolution. [...]

## Part I. The Sections

### Article 1

The International is made up of national sections, which subscribe to the principles laid out in the preamble to its statutes, participate in its activities and organizational life, and pay the agreed dues. National sections are rooted in the reality of their countries' class struggles while building the International together, including by committing people and resources to it. The dues to be paid to the International are agreed with the section leaderships taking into account their resources.

It is through the very existence of the national sections and their active participation in the meetings, schools and other activities that the International itself exists.

They are informed of these activities by circular letters sent under the responsibility of the Bureau by electronic mail to their IC members and their national organization addresses. The national leaderships must therefore ensure that these mailings are monitored, that the destination addresses are kept up to date, that their contents are brought to the attention of the appropriate leadership bodies, and where possible comrades proposed to participate in the activities.

Similarly, the different regional and thematic email lists should be monitored, and the possibility for the exchange of information used to develop the internationalist consciousness of all our comrades.

The publications online or in paper of the International also rely on the efforts of the sections in supplying articles and in their turn diffusing them by sharing the websites, Facebook pages, twitter feeds of the international publications prominently in their own publications.

The financing of the International is similarly the product of the contributions of the sections. The payment of direct dues to enable the International itself to have the means to maintain a (very limited central apparatus) and to attempt to aid the sections which need it to attend international events is crucial.

There is not a fixed formula - in the budget of the sections this item should be a priority.

The sections also contribute to the financing of the International by the payment of the travel and fees for their own comrades attending international meetings and schools.

The payment of direct dues comes essentially from the advanced capitalist countries (who also take the full burden of financing their participation) while from the global south we ask the sections to pay at least 50% of their travel and participation fees as their contribution.

### Article 3

In order for the International to be effective the ranks of revolutionaries identifying with the FI should be united in each country. For this reason, members of the International should act in such a way as to bring about such unity within the framework of one unified section of the International. [...]

In recent years we have seen a growing number of cases where our sections have divided usually over national orientation and yet all sides wish to remain within the Fourth International.

Thus we have had to recognize as groups of members two or more organizations in the same country, considering them taken together as the section. This has been done with the goal of maintaining comrades as far as possible within a common framework that we hope in time will make it possible to reconstitute a united section. In such cases this objective should remain a constant in the organizations' activities and forms of common activity such as publications, schools, public meetings as Fourth Internationalists should be pursued. The ultimate aim should be the building of a common orientation in national politics, which should be the basis for the reunification of the section.

The Mandates Commission at each world congress should examine these cases with a view to assessing how far this commitment continues to be present and whether this status should

continue.

The Mandates Commission at each congress in any case reverifies the status of each organization and whether it continues to meet the criteria for recognition. In certain cases a special commission of the congress may be formed to do this work and make recommendations. The Mandates Commission and any specific commissions report to the Congress which votes on their recommendations, in line with the statutes which state *"On questions involving the national sections the World Congress serves as the final appeal and decision-making body."*

The statutes provide for two other statuses.

### Article 7

To recognize that in varying conditions there will be organisations which support the FI and are not yet able or ready to assume the responsibilities of sections the World Congress, or its elected IC, can grant the formal status of sympathising organisation to such groups. Sympathising organisations publicise the positions and promote the press of the FI, support and participate in internal and external FI activities and make a regularised contribution to the FI.

Representatives of sympathising organisations will be invited to meetings of the IC and to the World Congress where they will be granted voice, and are entitled to cast consultative votes in cases where the criterion of formal financial contribution has been met. The goal of the formal status of sympathising organisation is to provide a bridge to the development of national sections in the countries concerned.

### Article 8

Organizations who share the International's perspective of struggle but do not wish to join it formally can obtain the status of "permanent observer". This status enables organizations to participate in meetings of leading bodies - which bodies will be specified in each case - with the right to speak but not to vote.

## C/ Functioning of leadership bodies

**The International Committee is the leadership body of the International elected at the World Congress** on the proposals from the different national delegations. We have decided in recent years to represent all our national organizations. Holding such a meeting is a major logistical and financial effort that we have decided to undertake with the concern of building a horizontal international leadership not, as is the case with other international currents, an International dominated by one single national organization. While online meetings are a valuable addition to face to face meetings they do not make possible the same quality of exchange, both formally and informally, as physical meetings. In addition, the constraints of meeting across time zones, severely limiting the time available, rule out work in commissions or smaller groups. Thus the annual physical IC meeting remains a priority.

Its composition in attendance at its annual meetings can be subject to change as national organizations have the right to replace temporarily or permanently the elected members (with the agreement of the elected member concerned). This can make it difficult even in normal times (leaving aside the pandemic which means we did not have a physical meeting between February 2019 and October 2023) to create a collective team of the IC as a whole or in commissions emanating essentially from IC members.

In the composition of the International Committee the general rule is that where there are two or more members from one organization there should be parity (women/men) not be two men and that the composition of the body as a whole should strive to meet this the target of parity. This is the responsibility of the Nominations Commission in discussion with the organizations about their nominations, and of the national organizations if they replace their members for individual meetings or permanently.

The minutes of the International Committee are sent to national organizations to give information not only

on decisions taken but also who was present, the level of participation in different discussions etc. The transmission of the content of discussions, leading or not to decisions, is one of the roles of the site through the publication of texts, but also in the ways appropriate to each organization through report backs from IC members.

**The Bureau is an executive body elected from within the IC.** Its composition is based on the major sections of the International and includes the comrades that take on major ongoing tasks of the International notably in relation to our external publications and our educational work. Comrades elected to the Bureau have the agreement and support of their national leaderships, they are not isolated individuals.

Since 2010 we have made the effort to have regular Bureau meetings (two or three per year) with the presence of the comrades from all continents, even if the western European component remains predominant. The development of online meetings during the pandemic allowed us to have more frequent meetings and leads us to envisage continuing with fewer physical meetings for reasons of cost and time and combining them with online ones.

To strengthen the relationship between the Bureau's activity and the sections we have started the practice of sending a circular after Bureau meetings to explain the discussions that took place and any decisions.

Since 2018 we have also had a **broader Bureau secretariat** also benefiting from the possibility of online meetings and have more recently been able to integrate comrades from Latin America. The secretariat deals with all questions as they arise either directly or in relaying them to the appropriate bodies. It prepares the Bureau and to a large extent the IC meetings and ensures that decisions are implemented.

However collective leadership functioning both for the Bureau and its secretariat remains weak because between meetings it is not always possible to have rapid and collective reactions, and few comrades have been able to take

on ongoing responsibilities or commit to tasks over and above attendance at meetings. Very few of our national organizations themselves have full-timers and thus the vast majority of comrades taking on responsibilities at international level are already combining this with national leadership tasks as well as paid work - when they are not already retired.

We must examine the possibility of sustaining further staff costs to make it possible for other comrades to be party professionals on a full or part time basis, as well as the resources that our sections are able to contribute...

The question of the renewal - rejuvenating, feminizing - of our leadership bodies has to be a preoccupation at every level. This is a particularly difficult challenge for the international leadership where all the factors that play against the full participation of younger comrades, women comrades, and others, are particularly strong. In addition, for the countries that do not use one of the three working languages of the International there is the barrier of the need for a good level of fluency in a foreign language.

The effort to ensure simultaneous translation in our leadership meetings is therefore politically important. This is a major organizational task that then requires a number of comrades do this work on a volunteer basis. This difficulty is a barrier to organizing more regular meetings of leadership bodies, commissions and so on. It would be increased by adding any further working languages and any proposals to do so must be taken in charge by the organizations that would be concerned.

## D/ Regional coordination

Strong regional coordination is a strengthening of the International as a whole, allowing a broader network of comrades to have the opportunity to discuss in an internationalist framework, and our organizations to mutually aid each other within their regions in their political activity through specific campaigns, exchange of speakers for public or internal events thus strengthening

ning our own organizations... Such activity should also contribute to developing relations with other organizations in the region. The ability of the International to attract organizations coming from other traditions is a vital part in building the open yet revolutionary Marxist International that is our goal. We have made important gains in this respect, notably but not only in Asia, and it is a perspective with which we must continue.

Our continental email lists are a forum for exchange between sections. We should also encourage our organizations to have one (or more) comrades assigned to following these lists both to send appropriate material and to share as appropriate material received.

Regional meetings are a crucial step in building this regional coordination. Online meetings are useful but as for all other levels physical meetings are irreplaceable in building the political and human links that develop internationalist understanding among our comrades.

Within the context of these meetings, it is important to encourage the presence of women comrades (and younger comrades as well). Delegations should be mixed (parity) and specific women's commissions or caucuses organized linked to these meetings. The goal should be to build regional women's commissions to extend and strengthen our women's work and the International Commission, as the Asian women comrades are starting to do.

In the past we had specific European and Latin American PBs meetings - and the Manila school for Asia region. We have developed the practice of regional meetings in IC which in particular have replaced European PBs meetings, while some Latin American meetings have been held and the Asia region school continued until 2019. A new session of the Asia school is proposed for 2024.

Two problems have been indicated:

- a) there is not enough time in regional meetings during the IC
- b) does not allow for development of other comrades as internationalist cadre at this level (only in a sectoral framework, through commissions)

The leadership for regional coordination must come from the national organizations themselves but it must also be a specific and ongoing task of the comrades from the different regions in the Bureau to facilitate regional coordinating committees.

## **E/ Thematic commissions**

Our thematic commissions should play a crucial role in developing our thinking on programmatic questions as well as outlining the general lines of our organizations' activity on the different questions. The international leadership draws on their contributions to enrich its resolution or to propose specific resolutions.

We are in a contradiction between wanting to build stable bodies that undertake this political elaboration in an ongoing way and wanting to continually integrate new comrades and maintain an organic relationship to the leadership bodies. Some commissions (Ecology, LGBTI) are elected on the proposal of national organisations, the women's commission is the meeting of women comrades of the IC which then designate working groups for the organization of the biannual seminar. The Anti-racist commission launched during the pandemic has not really got off the ground. Other proposed commissions such as for the Education sector or (as a revival) the economy commission are similarly stalled.

For each commission we must examine the best option for its composition and functioning.

The annual meeting of the women's commission during the IC is a very important moment. However it needs to be complemented by further meetings during the year - online or hybrid.

It must be a specific and ongoing task of comrades from the Bureau to ensure that these commissions function, in collaboration with other comrades from the IC and section leaderships responsible for the areas of work concerned.

We can hold rich and productive

seminars but there is too little written production in the form of articles and other means of expression articulating our opinions. We leave too much to individual comrades' motivations and prioritization – our commissions should plan, assign comrades and encourage production in a collective manner.

We must find ways of making more of our archive material, not just written resolutions but articles, posters, videos - available to comrades.

## **F/ Educational activity**

Our educational activity is organized primarily through the Amsterdam Institute with the Manila Institute and the Islamabad Institute. The proposal to also create an IIRE in Latin America (Brazil) is an important project.

The foundation of our educational institutes was to fulfil two goals: providing international educational experiences for our own comrades over and above what could be provided at national level, and to be a platform to develop our presence as a current of thought in the general Marxist left sphere through open seminars, publications...

The holding of international physical educational meetings is a valuable resource to train cadres with an internationalist outlook; the experience of living and discussing over several weeks with comrades from across the world is often a defining point in the acquiring of a deep commitment to revolutionary internationalism. Sections should see the international schools as opportunities to not only build themselves but also the FI on an international level.

In recent years, we have noticed an increasing unevenness in the theoretical background of comrades who attend the schools: some might have decades-long experience in Marxist reading and discussions, whilst others are new to our current and might lack an understanding of basic Marxist concepts. This has pushed our educational activities to try to provide a general introduction to our ideas and strategy, with the challenge of being useful for comrades with different backgrounds.

# Role and tasks

Questions that have been raised:

- Should our seminars and schools should be more open to people who are not members of our organizations. The experience of youth camps shows that people who get to know the 4th International in real life activities have a better understanding of who we are and what we want. "The 4th International" as a name is pretty enigmatic for new generations. Real contact helps solve this.

- Should we organize more specific educationals and spaces for debate and discussion for our cadres. These should not focus on introductory political education but on current debates and strategies. For example: the women's seminar.

- While interpretation in 3 languages has been a key factor of our internationalism, we need not to fetishize it and should be aware of its problems (quality of interpretation and availability of interpreters) and not limit ourselves to activities at which we can have interpretation.

- How can we make more extensive use of online possibilities (videos, online seminar and education courses), in order to provide resources and opportunities for the permanent education of our cadres across the International and increase the visibility and reach of our ideas?

- We have had some success in including younger and more women comrades in our pool of potential lecturers for IIRE Amsterdam. We should continue to diversify the pool of lecturers, as far as possible given restrictions such as geographical location. National sections should suggest potential lecturers. The schools are also very educational for our lecturers, giving them a chance to interact with international comrades and frequently being confronted with new questions and issues.

## G/ Youth work

"Youth must be the motor force of our revolution" (Che Guevara)

The importance of youth work for recruiting young people, for continually pushing for a readjustment of

our programme and activity to meet the needs of a changing world has been continually stressed in our party-building resolutions. The pace of change in the world today makes this all the more pertinent at national and international level.

The youth camp has been for forty years a precious experience for our European sections in attracting young comrades and in developing new internationalist leading cadre for our organizations. It has been during this time the major public activity of the Fourth International, and an exceptional experience as a self-organized internationalist experience for young people. The European sections must engage in a serious discussion in how to ensure this initiative remains a useful tool.

The possibilities of expanding coordination of youth work and campaigns beyond the European organizations should be examined and developed, towards creating other regional coordinations and an international youth coordination.

At both national and international level, the youth work, the youth initiatives, must be prioritized as training ground for our new international leading cadre.

## G/ Campaigns

The necessity for the FI to be involved in active international campaigns comes from both for objective reasons of the necessity of the campaigns themselves but also to demonstrate its existence and usefulness as an international current.

We initiate international solidarity campaigns through ESSF, or directly through our international websites, or relaying a campaign started by one of our sections. We also encourage all our organizations to support certain broad-based campaigns. Proposals for campaigns can come from our national organizations, thematic commissions, regional coordinating committees or from within the Bureau or IC.

Nevertheless, we face the difficulty for initiating campaigns in our own name combining international

and national organizations of the wide variety of organizational configurations of our national organizations. In a number of countries our comrades are not active publicly in their own name as a section of the Fourth International.

We can only overcome this problem by a coherent and well-coordinated promotion of campaigns and themes of activity through all our public means of expression (which reinforces the points made in section A). Our profile as an open campaigning International, promoting the presence and activity of our comrades in different countries, is a valuable tool in recruitment.

A possible theme for an international propaganda campaign that is relevant throughout the world is around the question of reproductive rights.

## H/ Our parties

For our parties to be effective they have to be able to recruit, to train, and to keep comrades, especially those who are victims of specific oppression but also all those for who suffer from social inequality.

As Ernest Mandel said, living in bourgeois society cannot be a school for how to be a proletarian revolutionary, that is to absorb and assimilate into our own consciousness a different way of behaving. We need counter-tendencies, counterweights to the prevailing division of labour and power relationships. We outlined this in our 1991 resolution Positive action and partybuilding among women. Obviously, there are no precise remedies that are going to be applicable in all places, at all times, and in all different forms of organizations.

We reiterate that the women-only meetings are an important and necessary tool for women comrades - and others suffering patriarchal oppression - to understand, articulate and combat all forms of this oppression by their action within the collective framework of the party.

Our goal is not simply to recruit women or to achieve specific goals or targets in the number of women members or of women's presence in our

leadership bodies. It is also to ensure that the political work of our women comrades is fully recognized and that they are valued as central leaders of our organizations.

Our 2003 statutes are very limited in their indications of how to deal with question of sexist and sexual violence although they include the proviso that the International Appeals Commission should be able to meet as an all-women body. Our different national organizations are at different stages in their discussions and experiences on how to deal with these. We have many discussions and contributions notably in our women's seminars and schools that would help us to develop our common framework on this question while not imposing specific procedures on our organizations.

We consider as basic principles that our first response is that we believe women who say they are victims of violence and we ensure that they feel comfortable in continuing to be active; the procedures and protocols that we put into place are clear and transparent - those accused are informed of the accusation and victims can express themselves freely; the overriding principle is to be true to our commitment to fight oppressions leaving aside concerns about the "party's reputation"; the outcome of our procedures is that women and all comrades victims of specific oppressions feel comfortable in our parties and that there is an ongoing education process for all comrades.

The extent to which we are able to counter the social dynamic of exclusion of women, younger people, those with a lesser level of formal education, from political activity and leadership, and to ensure that they feel at ease in our organizations, will be crucial in our goal of building organizations that can have a real weight in the class struggle in its broadest sense, the struggle against all forms of exploitation and oppression. ■

# The international situation, our tasks and our slogans

Submitted by Mathilde and Gaël, IC members, France

**Text rejected by the IC by 4 in favour, 33 against, 8 abstentions, 0 NPPV.**

The international situation continues to be marked by tensions between imperialist powers, in particular between the oldest advanced capitalist countries, led by the United States, and emerging powers with different strategic positions.

While the war in Ukraine continues, the last few months have been marked by the unrestrained war waged by the Israeli state against the Palestinians in Gaza and on the West Bank.

Against this backdrop of increasing warlike confrontation and reactionary, authoritarian and militaristic policies, our side, that of the oppressed and exploited, is not remaining passive.

This was shown, for example, by the general strike in Argentina on 24 January against the far-right government of Javier Milei. Faced with its frontal attacks on workers' rights, price regulations, public services, the environment and social struggles, the trade union organizations were forced by pressure from the street and the world of work to call for mobilization.

The role of revolutionary organizations is first and foremost to be present at the heart of all mobilizations, to take initiatives to build and amplify them, and thus to offer our whole class prospects for self-organization, independence and the overthrow of this society.

It is these perspectives that we want to present through our analysis of the situation in Ukraine, and of the disagreements we have with the majority of the International Committee, and in Palestine, with the broad movement that is being expressed throughout the world.

**Faced with genocide in Gaza, the world responds: "Resistance!"  
A recent unprecedented international mobilization**

Faced with an unprecedented tragedy and danger, the international mobilization is also on a scale not seen for years.

While some governments wanted to ban demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian people the day after 7 October (in France, Germany, Hungary, etc.), they did not succeed in silencing international solidarity.

In France, it was the pressure of numbers and the initiatives taken by organizations such as the NPA (its branch resulting from the Fifth Congress), including legal action, that made it possible to impose the right to demonstrate in support of Gaza.

The demonstrations that took place on every continent, in the major cities of many countries, took on a scale not seen since the 2003 movement against the war in Iraq. In London, for example, several hundred thousand people took part on several occasions. In New York, demonstrations and occupations organized by the Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) movement demonstrated the rejection of the unconditional support of imperialist governments for the Israeli state. In Tunisia, the mobilization on 18 October reached a scale comparable to that of the demonstrations in January 2011, before the fall of Ben Ali. In Egypt, popular pressure enabled the government, which wanted to muzzle any expression of solidarity, to back down.

### The expression of class solidarity

Although reactionary governments claiming to be Islamic, as in Turkey and Iran, are seeking to exploit the solidarity movement, and although religious political currents and sometimes even the Muslim clergy in certain countries, as in Egypt, are seeking to direct and largely structure some of these mobilizations, the fact remains that the international solidarity being expressed goes well beyond religious affiliations.

The Israeli state represents a leading edge of Western imperialism in the

Middle East, and the fate of the Palestinian people symbolizes, in the eyes of many dominated peoples and workers around the world, the fate of all exploited people.

At the beginning of November, the Barcelona Port Workers' Organization (OPEB) announced its refusal to serve ships carrying war material bound for the State of Israel. In the United States, workers blocked the military supply ship Cape Orlando for several hours in the ports of Oakland (California) and Tacoma (Washington State), as they did in Italy at the port of Salerno. In Denmark, the Søborg factory of the arms company Terma, which manufactures equipment for F-16 and F-35 fighter jets for the Israeli army, was blocked, as was the road leading to the headquarters of Elbit Systems in Bristol, UK, which manufactures parts for Israeli drones. In Belgium, several airport staff unions called for a refusal to handle shipments of military equipment destined for the Israeli state. In Greece, demonstrations blocked Athens airport...

In France, workers' collectives such as the "Healthworkers for Gaza", in which comrades from the NPA are taking part, are present at every demonstration.

These workers are of different origins, languages and religious beliefs. But what unites them is much stronger than any divisions: it's the fact that they belong to the same social class that makes them identify with the Palestinians massacred in their homes, hospitals, streets and schools, with the complicity of the governments that oppress and exploit us in each of our countries.

**Our anti-capitalist and revolutionary perspectives: for the right of peoples to self-determination and for the political independence of our class**

The complaint lodged by South Africa with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has aroused a great deal of sympathy and



even hope within the solidarity movement with the people of Gaza. But while the ICJ judgement found in favour of South Africa, considering that there was indeed a "risk of genocide in Gaza" and calling on the Israeli government to allow humanitarian aid in, the court did not demand a ceasefire!

This judgment clearly illustrates the impasse represented by international institutions. These emanations of the capitalist states can never represent any kind of recourse for our side.

Its salvation will only come from itself, from its struggles and from direct solidarity between the exploited of the whole world.

This perspective is the opposite of those proposed by the Palestinian nationalist leadership, starting with Hamas. The party in power in Gaza since the 2006 elections is a reactionary and obscurantist movement, which claims to organize those who have suffered the oppression of the Zionist state for more than 75 years on the sole basis of their religion. Its leaders, who depend on rents from Qatar to support their small state apparatus, have nothing to envy other bourgeois governments in terms of austerity policies and the repression of social mobilization. Like all bourgeois nationalist movements, Hamas' only aim is to replace the current oppressive power with its own, and in no way to put an end to exploitation. The Palestinian Authority, headed by Fatah, co-manages the occupation of the West Bank. Fatah, which was the symbol of armed struggle in Palestine, by refusing to confront the reactionary Arab regimes and by choosing conciliation with imperialism, by refusing to address the Palestinian workers outside the borders of the Palestinian territories, has ended up demonstrating through the failure of the Oslo Agreement to what extent any bourgeois nationalist policy, even secular, is incapable of offering a perspective of liberation to the Palestinian masses and the region.

Even more than anywhere else, this perspective is doomed to failure. The nationalist movements of the past were able to drive out the colonialist forces - the United Kingdom in India and Pakistan, France in Vietnam and Algeria - and send the settlers home. But where to send the Israeli settlers, when their metropolis is itself made up of territories stolen from the Palestinians?

The so-called "two-state solutions" are

now widely recognized as unworkable, since they all involve the unjust confiscation of land, the ban on the return of 7 million refugees and the creation of a state in two separate parts, Gaza and the West Bank, whose communications would always be dependent on Israel's goodwill.

However implausible it may seem today, the creation of a single political entity is the only viable option. It would mean abandoning the Zionist project of a predominantly Jewish state. It would therefore require a break between the majority of the Israeli population - which is also made up of exploited workers, many of them poor - and the ideology of its bourgeoisie. It would also imply a rupture between the majority of the Palestinian population and its bourgeois nationalist leadership.

In the past, the proletariats of the colonialist metropolises have already stopped supporting the policies of their states. These ruptures followed the struggles of the colonized peoples and the excessive number of victims caused by colonial or imperialist wars, as in Algeria and Vietnam.

This is why our support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and resistance is unconditional.

But this policy would not be complete if the national resistance movement did not seek to address the proletariat of the whole Middle East region, that of the neighbouring Arab countries where the majority of the Palestinian population lives, but also, and even primarily, the Israeli proletariat.

We do not pretend to know in advance the course of a victorious movement and the form that the power resulting from this movement would take. But, in Palestine as elsewhere, our perspective remains the union of the proletarians of all countries to destroy the bourgeois states and replace them with their own power, in order to build a communist society.

Finally, because of the special role played by the Israeli state as a relay for the interests of the Western imperialist countries in the Middle East, the prospect of its demise cannot be achieved without a broad international movement to combat the criminal complicity of other governments. Denouncing the imperialist countries is the first of our tasks in demonstrations, particularly for those who live and work there.

This is the policy that we address, pedagogically and on the basis of our support for the Palestinians, to those we meet in the demonstrations.

## Ukraine: the role of struggles in the face of war and governments

On the resolution on the situation and the characterization of the war in Ukraine

The resolution on the international situation devotes a fairly short chapter to the question of the war in Ukraine, especially if we compare it with the place occupied by this question in a good number of articles written by comrades in the majority.

The essence of the writers' position is concentrated in the two paragraphs reaffirming the defence of "*the right of the Ukrainian people to determine their own future in their own interests and in respecting the rights of all minorities; their right to determine this future independent of the interests of the oligarchy or the current neoliberal capitalist regime, the conditions of the IMF or the EU, with full cancellation of their debt; and the right of all refugees and displaced persons to return with full security*", followed by the reminder: "*The only lasting solution to this war can be through an end to bombing of civilian populations and energy supplies, the complete withdrawal of Russian troops. All negotiations must be public in front of the Ukrainian people. We fight for the dismantling of all military blocs - NATO, CSTO, AUKUS - and we also continue to fight for global disarmament - especially in terms of nuclear and chemical weapons.*" ("For an analysis of the world situation (draft)", October 2023)

It should be noted that, cautiously, the resolution does not say anything about the nature of the conflict: it certainly refers to "new inter-imperialist conflicts", but it does not say whether the war taking place on Ukrainian soil is one of them. As for the qualification "war of national liberation", used in virtually every article on the subject in Inprecor, it has simply disappeared.

Yet this is an essential issue, because it determines a whole series of other questions. For example, the demand for arms deliveries to the Ukrainian army, which has been hammered home in articles since the start of the war, has also simply

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disappeared. And no assessment is made of this political position, even though all the red lines that had been set by Western leaders for these deliveries have been crossed: defensive weapons, offensive weapons, heavy weapons, cluster munitions, and now even F16 fighter jets... And yet such an assessment would be necessary, firstly from a democratic point of view, because then on what mandate are the comrades who continue to write endlessly in *Inprecor* about the "war of national liberation" of the Ukrainian people expressing themselves? But above all from a political point of view, at a time when the Ukrainian "counter-offensive" has been definitively buried, to the extent that certain American leaders are beginning to talk about possible negotiations with Russia, that the Republicans are openly questioning military aid to Ukraine, and that in Europe itself, conflicts are multiplying between Ukraine and its allied neighbours, notably Poland, which has announced that it is stopping its arms deliveries.

Generally speaking, this paragraph says absolutely nothing about how this war is to be brought to an end, and how Russian troops are to be completely withdrawn. Is it through a military victory by the Ukrainian army? Or through the intervention of independent social forces, starting with the working class, a word that does not appear once in the text?

For our part, we reaffirm, on the basis of Lenin's analytical grid, what we have said from the outset: *"For the Marxist, the important thing is to know the purpose of the present war, in the course of which either one or the other army may be victorious"* (Lenin, *About the Ukrainian Army*). *"The 'basis' of these 'genuinely' national wars was a 'long process of mass national movements, of a struggle against absolutism and feudalism, the overthrow of national oppression'..."* (Lenin, *A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*). This is by no means the case in Ukraine. Yes, we support the Ukrainian people's right to self-determination, but the dominant character remains more than ever that of inter-imperialist confrontation. The Ukrainian army is not a people's liberation army; it is a bourgeois army armed from top to toe by NATO and Western imperialism. The recent scandal involving Ukrainian military officials and company directors who allegedly embezzled 40 million dollars in an arms deal in the midst

of the war with Russia is a stark reminder of this reality. To support arms supplies is to support one side against the other, to make people believe that the future of the working class can depend on the victory of this or that imperialist bloc.

Like Lenin, we recall the *"the necessity of subordinating the struggle for this demand, as well as for all the fundamental demands of political democracy, to the immediate revolutionary mass struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeois governments and for the achievement of socialism."* (The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination). This means that we are fighting for total working-class political independence from Zelensky and all bourgeois nationalists. We do not seek to advise him, we fight him. We support the demonstrations by Ukrainian women demanding the return of the men from the front. We support the return of strikes in the health sector, among railway workers, among young students... These are the only forces that can put an end to the current barbarity.

Just as, on the other side of the border, the women who, defying Putin's regime, dare to demonstrate for the return of the men who have been mobilized, represent considerable hope. Contrary to what is portrayed in the Western capitalist press, Russian society is far from monolithic. It too is divided into classes with antagonistic interests. Proof of this can be seen in the new large-scale demonstrations in Bashkortostan to demand the release of Fail Alsynov, an environmental activist sentenced to four years in prison for "racial hatred" after denouncing a mining project. Fail Alsynov had also denounced the mobilization campaign launched by Putin, which particularly targets national minorities, in this case the Bashkirs. These demonstrations echo the protests against this mobilization that broke out in September 2022, notably in Dagestan.

All this leads us to recall what we wrote in March 2022: *"The first task of Marxist-revolutionaries in the period which sees the multiplication of military confrontations and the growing risk of a generalized conflict, is the construction of an international movement against war and for the right of peoples to self-determination. (...) The watchwords which revolutionary communists must defend in such an anti-war movement are the following:*

*- no to the imperialist war in Ukraine, immediate withdrawal of Russian troops!*

*- Solidarity with the anti-war demonstrations in Russia! Against their repression, demand the release of all imprisoned demonstrators!*

*- against imperialist interference in Ukraine! Withdraw NATO troops from Eastern Europe and the rest of the world! No to military and economic escalation!*

*- No to national unity behind our own imperialism or bourgeoisie!*

*- Not one penny, not one soldier, not one weapon for the war in Ukraine. Against all intervention by our own imperialisms!*

*- open borders and welcome all refugees, whatever their country of origin! No to racist sorting between "good" and "bad" migrants! ■*

## Our involvement in social movements

Submitted by Mathilde and Gaël, IC members, France

**Text rejected by the IC by 4 in favour, 33 against, 8 abstentions, 0 NPPV.**

**B**uilding an international and national sections is a priority task, addressed by the resolutions on «the role and tasks of the Fourth International».

An essential part of our time and energy as revolutionary activists is devoted to intervention in mass movements beyond our own ranks. What are our objectives in all these social movements, given the diversity of our national situations and the social movements in question?

### 1- We intervene primarily within the working class

Consequently, the social movement in which we intervene as a matter of priority is the workers' movement.

The working class plays a central role not only because of its role in production, but also because of its ability to organize struggle collectively and democratically, and its capacity to fight not just on its own behalf, but also for objectives that concern society as a whole, integrating the concerns of other oppressed strata and groups. And thus to potentially rally all the exploited and oppressed around it, by giving it a collective form and an objective.

Our aim is to make the organized workers' movement the fighting force that unites all the oppressed. The guiding idea is to strive to converge the struggles of all oppressed strata around the goal of workers taking power: this is the perspective described by Lenin in *What is to be done?*: «Working-class consciousness cannot be genuine political conscious-

ness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases of tyranny, oppression, violence, and abuse, no matter what class is affected — unless they are trained, moreover, to respond from a Social-Democratic point of view and no other. The consciousness of the working masses cannot be genuine class-consciousness, unless the workers learn, from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events to observe every other social class in all the manifestations of its intellectual, ethical, and political life”.

This is what Marx also suggested when he spoke of the «universal class».

This doesn't rule out intervening in movements like the peasant movement, or in some cases in social movements that encompass diverse social forces like the *Gilets Jaunes* [Yellow Vests]. However, our strategic aim is to ensure that it is the working class that stands at the head of all the exploited and oppressed. It is this goal that determines our political and organizational priorities.

### 2- We combine our own political intervention, particularly in the workplace, with intervention in mass movements and organizations.

Intervention in mass organizations is one of the fundamental aspects of our activism, indispensable for linking up with circles broader than the most conscious militants.

However, it is essential to constantly combine our own political intervention with mass intervention. The expression of our organization's political viewpoint and proposals for action within the circles and movements in which we intervene is an essential task: not only does it make our orientation known, but it also enables us to give a collective form to the intervention of militants who intervene in the same milieu.

In the workplace, we strive not only to be present in the unions, but also to build them up and try to convince them of our policy. We bring together activists from the same sector or company in basic cells of our organizations, and publish a political party press to defend our own point of view, independent of that of reformist leaders.

In every social movement and in every environment, we combine

- our own appearance, coordinating the intervention of our militants, which must be discussed not only at local level but also in the directorates in order to guide and help comrades and not leave them adrift. Discussion in the cells, in intermediate and national managements of the intervention of comrades, in particular

- involvement of our comrades in movement-building tasks, and taking on responsibilities in movements and organizations commensurate with our degree of influence within them. We don't shirk our responsibilities when our militant work enables us to exert influence beyond our own ranks, but we don't take on positions on a scale cut off from the level of support and real involvement of the militant collectives of workers we effectively organize around us. If we're part of a team, of a collective force, it's this force, that of the workers, that seizes a lever of influence. But if we lack this influence and artificially gain access to a position of leadership, it's the position that captures us rather than us capturing it!

### 3- Trade unions are the most important mass organizations

Their durability and mass character compared to other organizations and social movements, and the possibilities they offer to intervene in a «generalist» way on a wide range of political issues (women, racism, ecology, war, etc.) make them absolutely essential forces in our

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intervention.

All our members, without exception, must be unionized.

If the unions take on board the need to fight on the issues that are essential to us, this will be an essential lever for mobilization.

## **4- We intervene on as many political issues as possible, with no restrictions other than those imposed by the extent of our own strength.**

We don't limit ourselves to intervening on «economic» issues, or those that directly affect salaried workers. We intervene on all injustices and global political issues, regardless of the class or classes affected.

We seek first and foremost to rally the mass organizations of the workers' movement, including parties, unions and associations. But we don't make our involvement conditional on the support given to any particular stage by the leaderships of the mass organizations of the workers' movement or the social movements concerned.

The fight to preserve the environment, the fight for LGBT rights, etc... we are stubbornly fighting to ensure that the workers' movement and the revolutionary movement make these struggles their own.

The solidarity movement with Palestine is an illustration of this principle: the NPA's policy in France of taking the initiative in calling for demonstrations immediately after October 7, when the state was systematically banning them, while challenging these bans in the courts and calling on all the organizations of the workers' movement to act in concert, maintaining calls for street demonstrations in coalition with other forces (Euro-palestine) even when the traditional leaderships are giving up... here's a recent example of offensive intervention on an overall political issue by our own forces, while at the same time seeking to involve others.

## **5- A united front policy: unity of organizations and unity of the exploited**

On every question crucial to the class struggle, we seek to unite as many organized and unorganized forces as possible.

The aim here is to unite the maximum number of forces from our own class and, secondarily, from other exploited classes. Organizational unity must be a lever, not a brake, in building this unity of our camp, of our social class.

This united front approach is always combined with an effort to fertilize the unity of struggle with an anti-capitalist, revolutionary program - in other words, a transitional program. In struggles against lay-offs, for example, we seek to unite as many companies as possible, and to invite all trade unions, political organizations and others to join the fight. But we also propose a ban on lay-offs as a unifying, anti-capitalist slogan, illustrating this by explaining, for example, that the recent auto strike in the USA led to the cancellation of plant closures and the re-hiring of laid-off workers. Beyond the various slogans and coalitions of organized and unorganized forces that we manage to get to work together, it's the self-activity of our class that we seek to stimulate through our united front approach.

## **6- Class independence: a fundamental compass**

*"viii) In different contexts, movements are faced with the situation where local or even national governments are controlled by parties that stand on policies advocated by the movements themselves. Leading activists from the movements may even join those governments. This can be experienced as a contradiction between defending and promoting the independent action of the movement and pushing those governmental structures to provide resources and implement their policies.*

*ix) While our methods of organization within social movements attempt to be as close to the base as possible and for political independence from the state, we are also not opposed in certain situations*

*to putting energy into – or even creating – non-governmental organisations. The judgement is whether the rules which govern them and the access to funding gained on balance enhance the political objectives or restrict them."*

(Our orientation and tasks in social movements, October 2023)

In contrast to the wording of the texts submitted by the Bureau for discussion, which opens up the possibility of participating in bourgeois governments and which, surprisingly, does not seem to raise any objection in principle to the financing of mass organizations by the opposing class and the state, we intervene while constantly bearing in mind the need to preserve total independence from the capitalist class and its state.

The two most important guarantees (never absolute, of course) are the program adopted by these movements, and their self-organization (see next paragraph). The adoption of objectives of struggle to confront the bourgeoisie, based on the needs felt by the masses, is the foundation of class independence.

We are hostile to any participation in a bourgeois government: the thousand ties that bind such governments to respect for private property and the state make such participation contradictory to the pursuit to the end of the goals of workers' struggles and social movements.

## **7- The struggle for self-organization**

Workers and the oppressed themselves taking charge of their own struggle is not only a democratic guarantee, but above all the element that links the dynamism of today's struggle to our class's confidence in taking power.

We are fighting for daily general assemblies and elected strike committees. We fight for similar forms of self-organization in the struggles of the exploited and oppressed in all fields.

# The climate emergency or the topicality of the slogan «Communism or barbarism»

Presented by Mathilde and Gaël, CI members, France

**Text rejected by the IC by 2 for, 38 against, 5 abstentions 1 and NPPV.**

## **1. A climate crisis that threatens the planet, but whose consequences primarily affect the poor and working classes**

After decades of denying the obvious, even international capitalist institutions are sounding the alarm about the scale of the climate crisis and the risks to the planet's survival.

In 2018, a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, a group of scientists attached to the United Nations) hit the headlines. This institution announced that since the second half of the 19th century, the planet's temperature had risen by an average of 1 to 1.5°C. Exceeding the 1.5°C threshold, which will soon be reached, would lead to an increase in the number of meteorological disasters. The IPCC indicated that at the current rate of production, which is generating far too many greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, in the worst-case scenario we could reach 5.5°C by 2100. The meteorological consequences of such an increase would make it impossible for the human race to survive.

Global warming is the result of an accumulation in the atmosphere of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide and methane, among others), which trap solar energy. Although global warming threatens the survival of all humankind, the current consequences are primarily affecting the oppressed and exploited.

Today, two-thirds of the world's population may be exposed to dangerous or even fatal heat for vulnerable

people such as the elderly, the homeless and the sick.

In India in 2019, 600 million people were left without running water due to drought. In Chennai, India's sixth largest city (population 6 million), the heat reached 50°C and there was a water shortage for more than 30 days. Demonstrations took place in front of the prefecture, sometimes turning into riots and the looting of private water tankers. This is not the first time that the poor people of this region have faced this problem. In 2015, a similar heatwave killed more than 2,000 people in India.

Climate change is not just about more heatwaves. Ocean regulation is also being severely disrupted. Since the 1980s, the North Pole has lost 30% of its total ice pack. At this rate, sea levels will rise by more than a metre by 2100. An increase of 65 cm would be enough to flood cities such as Sydney, London and New York.

The ocean absorbs a quarter of the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions linked to the combustion of fossil fuels. This leads to acidification, and therefore the death of certain underwater species (plankton, coral, etc.). Their disappearance, far from being insignificant, has an impact on the food chain and leads to the rarefaction of certain fish species, whose fishing is the main resource of certain communities, as well as a source of jobs and profits in industrial fishing regions.

In 2015, scientists watched with great concern as El Niño, the warm current in the eastern Pacific, deregulated. Heatwaves and cold snaps occurred simultaneously at unexpected times in different parts of the world, disrupting food production and lifestyles. With one in seven of the world's population already facing chronic hunger, the unpredictability of agricultural production is having a negative impact on the flow and price of food, increasing the number of victims of undernutrition.

Global warming is having a myriad of knock-on effects, each more catastrophic than the last for our ecosystem and the living conditions of the world's workers, who are suffering the violent social consequences of cyclones, fires, floods and other disasters. The ecological crisis undoubtedly has social consequences, deepening inequalities between classes. It is one of the many aspects of the oppression experienced by the working masses under the reign of capitalism.

## **2. The cause of the crisis: the capitalist mode of production**

Capitalist climate experts agree that human activity is responsible for the crisis. They are all trying to hide the real culprit in the destruction of our eco-system: the capitalist mode of production.

For several millennia, human activities have not endangered nature or the survival of species. It was in the 19th century that the first climatic crises were documented, with the industrialisation of Western Europe, when the capitalist mode of production developed, whose objective is not the satisfaction of human needs, but the pursuit of profit and the accumulation of capital by the social class that now owns the means of production: the bourgeoisie. It is the very operation of this system that is leading to such brutal disruption. The capitalist system inexorably leads all owners of capital to produce according to what brings them the most profit. If they do not comply with this rule, they simply go bankrupt. It is this way of producing that leads to totally irrational production, taking no account of the satisfaction of humanity's needs or the long-term preservation of natural resources. The capitalist mode of production inexorably leads to anarchic production, guided by the quest for immediate profits, without

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any long-term planning, periodically resulting in crises of overproduction and famine, intensive farming that is a source of pollution and animal welfare, deforestation, soil and ocean pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, heat waves, rising seas, etc.

Today, one hundred capitalist companies are responsible for 75% of greenhouse gas emissions, even though we know that the release of these gases into the atmosphere is the main cause of global warming, which poses a real risk to the survival of species on Earth.

### 3. Against the dead-end of green capitalism

Capitalists began to take an interest in the climate crisis and ecology, not out of concern for the planet, but because some of their profits were beginning to be affected by climate change. As with every crisis, capitalists seek to adapt in order to maintain their profits. The first thing they saw in the climate crisis was the opportunity to open up new markets. They understood the growing interest in the issue and invested in communication and a series of projects, labels and summits that enabled them to appear as 'eco-responsible'. Ecological interest has become a market where money is invested to deceive consumers instead of being used to actually change production.

The «dieselgate» scandal in 2015 revealed these methods to a wide audience. Some time after funding an exhibition on global warming, Volkswagen found itself at the centre of a scandal revealed by investigative journalists. The company had rigged its diesel engines to cheat on carbon footprint tests, so that its CO2 emissions were lower than they actually were. This cheating enabled it to benefit from an «eco-responsible» label and to sell its vehicles at a higher price. Virtually all European car companies have used this trick. Of the one hundred companies responsible for three quarters of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, twenty-five emit half. All of them belong to the fossil fuel sector, and all of them are making huge profits. Many of them excel in the art of greenwashing. Such is the case with Total, the world's 17th biggest polluter, whose advertising

campaign praises its development of low-carbon and renewable energies, as well as its environmental initiatives (solar energy, CO2 storage, reforestation, etc.). As a patron of museums and historical monuments, the company was invited to Climate Financial Day in 2018, another summit of this green-painted bourgeoisie. Total's investments in «sustainable development» represent only 5% of its €9.2 billion in investments in 2018. Most of its capital is invested in discovering new oil fields, which means new sources of pollution. This «eco-responsible» company alone accounts for 1% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions! That's equivalent to 311 million tonnes of CO2 per year.

Capitalism, even when painted green, has only one objective: the pursuit of profit. We can harbour no illusions about the possibility of a reasoned capitalism that puts the preservation of the environment and the needs of humanity above profits.

This is clearly the assessment of the various climate COPs that have met, adopting objectives that no country will meet until we have overturned this system as a whole.

To disguise their inaction, the capitalists and the bosses of the most polluting companies are trying to shift the blame for the crisis onto the workers. They sing the praises of small, everyday individual gestures that could supposedly change the climate, while blaming poor working men and women who cannot afford to switch to an electric car or buy organic food.

In reaction to this anarchic and destructive capitalist production, we are witnessing the emergence of mainstream «degrowth» currents.

The most «orthodox» supporters of this movement criticise industrial society itself and advocate a return to a simpler way of life, with artisanal production, thus denying the undeniable progress that industrialisation has represented as a means of meeting everyone's needs and considerably improving living conditions. Mainstream degrowth thinking advocates a radical change in consumption, pointing the finger at those who buy products that generate pollution as being responsible for global warming. Today, 15% of the world's inhabitants still have no access to electricity; more than a billion people live in shanty

towns, while around 1.5 billion farmers struggle to produce enough food to feed themselves. On the other hand, 26 people hold as much wealth as 50% of the world's population, or 3.6 billion people.

The ecological crisis is not the result of technical progress, nor is it the result of the privatisation of control over the means of production to a minority of capitalists who produce in an anarchic and uncontrolled way, not to meet the vital needs of the majority of the world's population, but solely to increase their profits. It is up to the working classes and oppressed to decide themselves on their needs, to overturn productivism and capitalism, to redirect production and readjust its level, in order to respond to the self-determined needs of all peoples, which abandoning method and products that destroy the planet.

### 4. To save the planet: overthrow capitalism, impose socialist planning and workers' control

The urgency of the climate crisis makes the need for socialist revolution all the more pressing. «Socialism or barbarism» is not just a slogan. Overthrowing the capitalist mode of production, wresting control of the means of production from the hands of the bourgeoisie and putting them under workers' control, is an urgent necessity for the survival of the planet.

We must oppose this anarchic and destructive production with production planning under workers' control.

Just by taking control of some of the hundred most polluting companies, it would be possible to achieve the reduction in greenhouse gases recommended by the IPCC. Without workers taking back the means of production, without the expropriation, at the very least, of key sectors of the economy, such as energy, without an economy organised to meet the needs of humanity rather than governed by the «law of the market», no serious objective will be achieved.

### 5. Intervene and develop climate mobilisations by developing a class

## **struggle orientation and placing them under the leadership of workers**

The working classes are often the first victims of the climate crisis. All over the world, the dividing line between social and ecological mobilisations is becoming increasingly blurred. More and more often, environmental demands are merging with wage demands.

The working class, as the social force capable of overthrowing capitalism, is the class best placed to halt the climate crisis.

Revolutionary Marxists must take part in ecological mobilisations, seeking to apply the same methods as those used by the workers' movement: strikes, self-organisation of struggles, control of production, natural resources, living spaces, etc.

As in every struggle, we seek to make them independent of the bourgeoisie and to place these struggles under the control of the workers. ■

# Role and tasks of the Fourth International: no revolution without a revolutionary party, building an international for revolution and communism!

Submitted by Mathilde and Gaël, IC members, France

**Text rejected by the IC by 4 in favour, 40 against, 1 abstention, 0 NPPV.**

Preamble: We believe that the next World Congress must not turn its back on the debate on the type of party and international we want to build. If we are to put an end to capitalism and the criminal impasse it represents, we must tackle this crucial and above all urgent discussion head-on. We cannot, therefore, simply address organizational questions, but must return to the type of party and international we want to build.

To launch the discussion and arrive at a final text at the next IC, we propose to start from the text: «Seizing opportunities, building an international for revolution and communism» submitted by the TIR (Tendency for a Revolutionary International) to the vote of the last World Congress.

We therefore propose to start from the part of this text which deals with the role and tasks of the FI. We see this as a starting point for discussion. The section on the transition programme for the 21st century will obviously need to be amended and updated. We are not rejecting all the organizational proposals put forward by the majority of the FI; we will also be making some, particularly on the democratic front. But the priority for us is to start from our strategic objective and the party we need to achieve it.

## A- Building vanguard

### revolutionary parties: the topicality of Leninism

This is how Lenin, in “Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder”, defined party discipline, how a party of cadres is forged for the revolution, in contrast to the caricatured vision of the Stalinists:

«The first questions to arise are: how is the discipline of the proletariat’s revolutionary party maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and—if you wish—merge, in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people—primarily with the proletariat, but also with the non-proletarian masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, from their own experience, that they are correct. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, all attempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end up in phrasemongering and clowning. On the other hand, these conditions cannot emerge at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated by a correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final

shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement.»

«No revolution without a revolutionary party.» This means that beyond the diversity of tactics that revolutionaries may adopt in building their parties according to countries and situations, building revolutionary parties, parties for the seizure of power and communism remains the strategic objective.

In order to build revolutionary organizations that do more than simply proclaim principles, we have set ourselves the objective of building a party of cadres capable of giving life to these programmatic principles, which means seeking to give all our activists the means to acquire the highest possible level of training so that they can play a role in destroying capitalism and building another society. But this training must be consistent with our militant practice. To be able to put an end to the system that generates exploitation and oppression, we need to minimize the separation between the private and political spheres. This separation is the product of the capitalist system in which we live. Against this logic of «separation», we consciously give ourselves over to the prospect of revolution and make it consistent with our choices and lifestyles. This is the exact opposite of the frustration of each individual; on the contrary, it is emancipation and association, freely consented and against the current of the dominant ideology conveyed by the State, the school and the family, to come together to achieve a common goal: the destruction of the capitalist system, made up of exploitation and oppression, to build another society, a communist society.



The search for a foothold in the working class and in the oppressed sectors is decisive and must be the subject of systematic discussion and its own tools. The actuality of the insurrectional general strike as the main «strategic hypothesis» in a majority of regions of the world, and our analysis of the central role of the working class must therefore have practical consequences from the outset, in our sections and on an international scale. What do we mean by this? It means that we have a proactive policy of establishing ourselves in the key sectors of the capitalist economy. That an effort must be made in each section in this direction, but also that the international level helps to achieve this objective and participates in the effort. Through theoretical input, but also by centralising information. It also means that we systematically develop independent political intervention in the direction of our class.

All revolutionaries need to think about how to fight back against both austerity and the capitalist system. The only way to defend our social rights and win new ones is always through the mobilization of the working class and youth. Every social gain has been achieved through mobilization. The history of the 20th century demonstrates this. Workers' and women's rights were not won in elections but through strikes and mobilization. In this sense, our main task is to rebuild class consciousness. The most effective way of doing this is by confronting the interests of the working class with those of the bourgeoisie. Struggles, demonstrations, occupations, assemblies and strikes are the best tools for raising the level of consciousness of the oppressed. We certainly cannot ignore elections, but they must be subordinated to mobilizations. In our strategy, elections are not an end in themselves, but a means of strengthening the mobilization of our class, with the aim of raising its consciousness; workers and youth must lead the struggle against all oppressions and link them to the struggle for class emancipation. It is therefore necessary for the mass organizations of the workers' movement to include in their platforms elements such as «equal pay for equal work», respect for LGBT rights and the socialization of the work of social reproduction.

The strategic hypothesis we defend

for ending capitalism is an uninterrupted series of mobilizations that make the working class aware of the need to take power in order to build socialism. We do not fetishize strikes, but they are an essential means of raising workers' confidence in their own strength. Strikes are schools of combat because they are moments in which the working class can self-organize and they are a means of conflict.

We revolutionaries cannot ignore today's struggles, however small they may be. On the contrary, we must take part in them.

A revolutionary international that does not make youth its priority is an international doomed to disappear. Youth always plays a tactical vanguard role. This theory developed by Ernest Mandel is still relevant today, whether we look at the Arab revolutions or the mobilizations in Latin America, in Mexico and Chile, but also in France at the time of the CPE, and probably soon in the USA with the anti-Trump mobilizations. Its role in struggles is always crucial, and recruiting young people is quite simply vital for any revolutionary organization. To be consistent with this assertion means not abandoning several of our current's theoretical and interventional achievements. We defend the autonomy of youth, an autonomy subordinate to the proletariat and its historical interests, but with forms of organization which are not independent but autonomous from the organizations of the workers' movement and the parties which we are building. We therefore set ourselves the objective, wherever possible, of building revolutionary youth organizations. The youth sectors in our parties are a means of achieving this goal. We also need to have a specific focus on young people in education. This is a sector of youth that plays an active role in revolutionary upheavals. The international youth camp therefore plays a fundamental role in this policy. But it must not become an exclusionary link for voices of dissent to the leadership of the FI. The refusal to allow the youth sector of the NPA to take part in the last camp shows a worrying theoretical and militant weakness. Just like the refusal to allow four comrades from IZAR to simply come in and hold a workshop at the camp, forcing them, some of whom have been building up the FI for fifteen years, to hold their workshop

in the car park with over 70 young people who wanted to understand, debate and exchange ideas. These episodes are symptomatic of a sclerotic and fearful sectarianism that in fact forms young people who get used to these practices under the pretext of ideological purity and the fight against «factionalism».

There is no Chinese wall between what we defend as a project for society, communism, and the party we are trying to build. There must be coherence between these two terms. Our party will not be an island of communism because it lives and develops within the framework of social relations determined by the capitalist system and patriarchy. But we must get as close as possible to this. This of course concerns militant relations, which must respect democratic principles and not contradict our programme to fight against all forms of oppression. But beyond that, it's the freely consented association of men and women who are fighting for communism and who are governed by relationships that cannot contradict these principles of emancipation. It fights against any form of «separation» produced by capital between intellectual and manual labour, between men and women, between nationals and foreigners, between the private and political spheres... It refuses any form of taboo within the organization, but instead builds, through debate and verification through practice, a programmatic and interventional unity of all its members.

## **B- Defending a transition programme for the 21st century**

The FI should defend a set of key measures, a transitional approach: starting with everyday demands, linking them to the question of power and the aspiration for a different society. In short, to link the current struggles to the questioning of the pillars of the capitalist system.

One of the first axes of this programme is the expropriation of key sectors of the economy. The banking crisis and the rescue plans have opened up a new opportunity to explain in a popular way the need to requisition the banks. Company bankruptcies, mass redundancies and the struggles they provoke also give us

# Role and tasks - minority

the opportunity to revive the struggle for workers' control and to explain the need to requisition the major means of production, communication and exchange. A transitional approach would mean, for example, linking the ban on redundancies with workers' control of hiring.

Fossil and mineral resources are not infinite. Peak extraction will be reached in the next few years. The structural logic of capitalism is to consume ever more raw materials and energy. The aim of capitalism is to produce more and more and make more and more profit. Capitalism cannot be 'green'. Capitalism is destroying our environment and its species. It is destroying our planet. But here again, there can be no consistent ecology without a consistent struggle against capitalism and without the understanding that the only subject that can put an end to capitalism and the ecological disaster it engenders is the working class. If we share this analysis, we must draw the consequences in terms of implementation, intervention and orientation. In the face of ecological disaster, it is the working class, allied with other sectors, which is capable of imposing a programme of anti-capitalist ecological transition, based on the questioning of fossil and nuclear energies and on the need for economic planning on an international scale.

The capitalist world remains structured and organized by imperialism, whose interests are never bound by any commitment to any people, even if they may occasionally choose to support a particular struggle with their own methods and objectives.

Anti-imperialism must constitute a central axis of our propaganda and our activity: we take a stand against all imperialist interventions and for the withdrawal of imperialist troops. But this means that showing solidarity with the Kurdish people, for example, does not mean shirking imperialism's central responsibility for the development of reactionary currents like the EI. And the situation in which the peoples of the region find themselves. Without, however, denying that these reactionary currents also have their own logic and autonomy. We should and must therefore take part in demonstrations in defence of the Kurdish people, while linking this unconditional

defence with our unambiguous rejection of imperialist intervention. This is why we do not sign calls to demonstrate that ask our government to supply arms to the Kurds. We do not give the illusion that our bourgeoisie could defend the peoples of the region.

Faced with our own imperialism, it is not up to us to create illusions on the theme of arms, not bombs. And that is exactly what happened to the MPs of the Red and Green Alliance, including members of the QI, who voted in parliament for war credits on the pretext that this would make it possible to send arms, but very quickly found themselves faced with the second stage, the only one that was really important for the Danish government as for the others: the sending of Danish F-16s which are today bombing Iraq alongside the United States and France.

The working classes who rise up will have to confront both «their own» national state apparatus and imperialist international institutions like the EU. «The main enemy is at home» also means that we must fight simultaneously against the international imperialist coalitions in which our own bourgeoisies participate. While firmly opposed to any nationalist capitalist alternative, we know that an anti-capitalist policy is incompatible with the EU.

We know that the fight against imperialism, racism, austerity and capitalist domination cannot be waged at the level of a single country. Nor can it be waged without breaking with the policies of the capitalists, the EU and the ECB, the Europe of finance. Attacking the power of our national bourgeoisies means breaking with the institutions of the European Union.

Against the Europe of the Troika, we defend international solidarity for a socialist Europe of workers and peoples.

The imposition of austerity on a global scale is inseparable from the corresponding rise in imperialist wars and interventions. We are almost daily witnesses to wars, massive bombings, mass murder by privatized or mercenary armies, drone strikes, embargoes or sanctions, and quasi-secret wars, waged by the United

States, the world's only superpower, with its historical imperialist congeners in Europe. This is the case with the US African Command, which is recolonising and plundering Africa. French imperialism too, like other former European colonial powers, is increasingly intervening in Africa and elsewhere to maintain and expand its interests.

There are no «humanitarian wars» waged by the imperialist beast. There never have been. The term itself is unacceptable to revolutionaries, whose *raison d'être* is to oppose all imperialist wars and interventions. Unconditional support for the right of oppressed peoples and nations to self-determination is a fundamental revolutionary socialist principle. The FI must unconditionally reject all appeals to imperialism to help defeat local tyrants and dictators. Such «aid» inevitably has consequences, deadly consequences that are more like a noose around the neck than any kind of «benign» or «democratic» assistance.

The liberation of the oppressed can only be achieved by their own independent mass organizations and by the building, when the time comes and however difficult the circumstances, of revolutionary socialist parties of the Leninist type. The rejection of imperialist intervention in all its forms is the prerequisite for victorious national liberation struggles, and for any other victory. Freed from the yoke of imperialism, oppressed nations are best able to determine their own future and effectively challenge their own bourgeoisies.

In the face of the incessant imperialist wars of conquest, the central demands of the FI should centre around two watchwords: «immediate repatriation of troops!» and «the right to self-determination for all oppressed nations!»

We defend the right of peoples to self-determination. But we do not place ourselves under the leadership of any national bourgeoisie, even if it comes from an oppressed nation. In oppressed nations, we defend a balance between the democratic struggle for the right to self-determination and the struggle for a classless society. This means that, according to our strategy, the struggle for national emancipation can be useful for the emancipa-

tion of the working class, only when the working class leads the struggle. Thus, we must maintain class independence from the bourgeoisie of oppressed nations. For example, the struggle for the right to self-determination of the nations oppressed by the Spanish state can be a springboard in the struggle against capitalism if our class plays a leading role in it.

This programme is not an electoral platform or a government programme. We explain that it can only be imposed by an overall mobilization of the working class and the oppressed, which brings to power a workers' government that destroys the bourgeois state by relying on the organs of self-organization born of the mobilization of our class allied with the oppressed.

## C- Building a revolutionary international

We insist that we must set ourselves the objective of building a militant international, an organization capable of conducting coordinated campaigns on an international scale. Even with modest forces, an organization established in several countries and acting in a coordinated way can multiply the effectiveness of its intervention.

Our international must put the discussion of a revolutionary communist programme that confronts the realities of 21st century capitalism back on the agenda, instead of theoretical discussions that are unrelated and divorced from practice.

We cannot embody the revolutionary communist international on our own. We must seek to bring together revolutionaries from different traditions, based on an agreement on the situation and the tasks. It is through common practice that political discussions can lead to regroupments. Bringing revolutionaries together on an international scale should be one of the objectives under discussion in the FI. Building a revolutionary international capable of exerting a significant influence will not only involve strengthening our organization: the FI could propose to other national or international revolutionary groups that they begin discussions on

the responses to be given to the crisis of capitalism, on the common campaigns to be led and on the type of organization to be built.

We know that this policy of seeking discussion with other traditions will not lead to rapid rapprochement in the short term, given the conviction of the Trotskyist leaderships of the various internationals of the correctness of their programmatic and tactical positions. Moreover, the conviction that we must build around our own group is the rule in all the internationals. However, we must be aware that we will not build an international for revolution and communism by a slow accumulation of forces around us. We still have things to learn from the different Trotskyist revolutionary traditions and even beyond. There are valuable experiences and activists in many currents and organizations. It is through theoretical and programmatic debate in tension with intervention in the field of class struggle that explosions, regroupments and recomposition at national and international level will take place. ■



[fourth.international](http://fourth.international)



[inprecor.fr](http://inprecor.fr)



[internationalviewpoint.org](http://internationalviewpoint.org)



[puntodevistainternacional.org](http://puntodevistainternacional.org)

# Motion on the preparation of the 18th World Congress in 2025

## Date and place

1. The World Congress will take place from 22nd February to 28th February 2025 in the same place as the preceding World Congress.

## Agenda

2. The agenda for the congress will be
- report discussion and vote on the Manifesto for the Fourth International
  - report discussion and vote on the resolution on orientation and tasks in the social movements
  - report discussion and vote on a resolution on the role and party-building tasks of the Fourth International;
  - report discussion and vote on the report on the international situation;
  - report and discussion in regional meetings on Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, Middle East;
  - report from the Mandates Commission and other organizational commissions;
  - report on finances;
  - election of the leadership (IC, Appeals Commission).

## Texts

3. The resolutions for voting must not exceed 40,000 characters. All counts are made for the English editions.

4. The draft Manifesto will not exceed 80000 characters. Any specific modalities for the discussion and publication will be decided by the Bureau on the proposal of the working group.

5. The discussion will be opened by the publication of the documents adopted at the 24-28 February 2024 IC meeting which will be sent to the national organizations by 30 March.

## Discussion Bulletin

6. A discussion bulletin will then be opened and continue for the period leading up to the world congress. Resolutions for voting must be submitted at the latest by 15 November 2024. Discussion contributions must be submitted by 31 December 2024.

7. Contributions must not exceed 15000 characters. The total of the articles for the discussion bulletin will not exceed 600,000 characters.

8. Submissions can be made from the sections and national organizations, sympathizing groups, permanent observers and nuclei linked to the Fourth International, on the basis of the list established by the Mandates Commission at the 2018 Congress or recognized by the IC since then. Contributions must be submitted by the organization's leadership or by individual members of the IC.

9. The Discussion Bulletin will be produced in 3 languages English, Castilian/Spanish, French. The Bureau is charged with producing the bulletin on condition that the national organizations contribute to the translation.

10. The Bureau will send the discussion bulletin contents by e-mail to the national organizations, which are responsible for publishing and circulating them. National organizations should inform the secretariat if they are publishing the bulletin in

languages that are used by other organizations.

11. It is the obligation of all FI organizations to make all contributions available to the membership in appropriate internal bulletins and to provide democratic internal mechanisms for the rank and file to participate in the WC discussion.

12. National organizations and the Bureau can use the draft documents adopted to initiate discussions with political forces with which they have political relations.

## Delegation

13. For the delegates votes to be validated at the World Congress the national organizations must have paid dues for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

14. The delegates to the conference will be elected, in the modalities that each organization considers appropriate, on the following ratio:

- each organization of members of the Fourth International has of right 1 full delegate;
- one additional delegate is accorded for each hundred comrades or remainder of 50+ starting from the first hundred (e.g 1-50 members 1 delegate, 51-150 members 1+1 delegate, 151-250 members 1+2 delegates, and so on).

## The Congress

15. Members of the outgoing IC and Appeals Commission will be seated at the Congress with voice and consultative vote.

16. Representatives of recognized sympathizing organizations and Permanent Observers will be seated at the Congress with voice and indicative vote.

17. The IC mandates the Bureau to decide on invitations to the Congress in collaboration with the section leaderships. The Bureau will ensure that the overall number of participants is adapted to the size of the Congress venue.

## Finances

18. The IC mandates the Bureau to find the means to finance the World Congress through:

- ensuring that all organizations are up to date with their dues payments;
- organising a suitable World Congress levy for each organization in collaboration with the organization leaderships including sympathizing organizations and Permanent Observers on the basis of 1€/1US\$ per member for organizations in the Global South, 10€/10US\$ per member for organizations in the Global North;
- organising a special fund drive of 30 000 euros, focusing on the travel costs for delegates from the Global South.
- if necessary use of the financial reserves, not to exceed one-third of the sum available.

19. The sum available for travel aid will be 50 000 euros.

20. The IC mandates the Bureau to find administrative technical resources for the preparation of the World Congress, the costs to be borne by the general budget.