

*Workers of the World, Unite!*

# Unity & Struggle

Journal of the  
International Conference of  
Marxist-Leninist Parties  
and Organizations



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# Unity & Struggle

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## Political Defeat of the Awami League in the 2024 Elections

The Awami League and its favour-seeking allied organisations have 'won' all the seats in the National Parliament by maintaining full control over the bureaucracy, the police, the armed forces, the courts and the Election Commission in the January 7, 2024 elections. In this new parliament, there is not a single member against the government party, the Awami League! Besides, another surprising thing happened. The Awami League has conducted this election under its own government by referring to the 15th amendment of the constitution. But they held this election without revoking the previous national parliament according to the constitutional rules. Such unprecedented events have not been seen in Bangladesh or even in any other country in the world. Within a short time after coming to power in 2009, they realised that they could not win the next election because of widespread theft, corruption, looting and torture. But despite these chances of defeat they were determined to stay in power. That is why, they themselves repealed the law that they passed in the parliament in 1996 for the caretaker government during the election and in 2011, brought back the system of elections under the existing government. It was a highly immoral act politically. The number of members of the National Parliament in the constitution is three hundred. But because the previous national parliament was not revoked, this number now stands at six hundred!

Since coming to power in 2009, through theft, corruption, looting and torture, they created a situation in the country in which there was no chance of their victory in the next elections. Therefore, according to their planned agenda, they took all necessary steps so that in the 2014 elections, no party other than the Awami League had candidates in 153 seats and the Awami League was entitled to form the government according to the 'parliamentary' law by occupying seats before the election. It was also an

unprecedented phenomenon of the 'parliamentary' election system in the whole world.

Several parties including the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) participated in the 2018 elections. But during those elections the opposition parties were suppressed and the Awami League regained power through reckless and unprecedented rigging of the elections, with complete control over the police and the Election Commission. Convinced by the effectiveness of their electoral strategy, they organized elections in 2024 as per the constitution.

After the 2018 elections, there was a major change in the situation in the country. Since 2009, there have been theft, corruption and looting during the Awami League government, but this time it was more reckless than before. The Awami League leaders at the top level started stealing and looting; the condition of the people of the country became very miserable. On the one hand, the prices of daily necessities continued to rise irresistibly, and on the other hand attacks on the people exceeded all previous records. As a result, the people's anger and opposition against the Awami League government started increasing rapidly. In this situation, the people desire to resist spread widely.

In 2014 and 2018, the BNP was in a bad shape politically due to its many mistakes. But after the 2018 elections, they became somewhat active. The BNP turned around organisationally despite Khaleda Zia's illness and the false case against her that sent her to jail. They started taking various initiatives to use the people's opposition and urge to resist organisationally and politically. As a result, within 2020, they emerged again as a political force. People continued to support the BNP as their means of resistance. As it gained this support, the BNP started organising meetings, processions and agitations to demand a non-partisan neutral caretaker government instead of elections under the existing government. People started rallying behind their movement. By 2022, by accumulating strength in this way, they emerged as electoral rivals of the Awami League.

In this situation, the Awami League government gradually increased its attacks on the BNP. As more and more people continued to gather at BNP's meetings and rallies, the Awami League used the police and the goons of Chhatra League (Students' League) and Jubo League (Youth League) against the BNP as well

as other opposition parties. They were forced to do this because of their rapid isolation from the people.

Politically, the BNP turned around when people's anger towards the Awami League was accumulating. Whatever the state of the BNP is, Mirza Fakhrul Islam is well known as an honest and competent politician. Mainly under his leadership, the BNP quickly overcame its weak position politically and organisationally, rallied the people who were angry at the Awami League and gained popularity. One after another they started organising meetings and processions all over the country, including in Dhaka. On December 10, 2023, despite much opposition from the government, they held a large rally in Dhaka. In the face of this situation, the Awami League government continued to increase its attacks on the BNP. But in spite of this, the BNP started to organise a movement in the entire country in 2023 demanding elections under a caretaker government and the resignation of the Awami League government. Along with this, they announced their election boycott under the Awami League government.

Ahead of the 2024 elections and after the elections, some said that boycotting the elections was a big mistake by the BNP. As their political and organisational status weakened due to the boycott of elections, it became possible for Awami League to hold one-party elections. This thinking is completely wrong. The BNP took the right political step by boycotting the elections, because it was proved in 2018 that there was no possibility of neutral and fair elections under the Awami League. They had made all preparations to use bureaucrats, police, courts and Election Commission to plan the 2024 elections in the same manner as in the previous two elections. Moreover, the other important thing that needs to be noted in this case is that it was a stupid, ridiculous thing to continue agitation for a neutral caretaker government and participating in the elections at the same time. because the decision to participate in the elections would have turned the movement for the caretaker government into a farce. So the decision to boycott the election while agitating for the caretaker government was one hundred per cent correct. The reason why the BNP's organisational conditions were weakening before the elections was not because of their decision to boycott the elections. That weakness was caused by the all-out attack of the Awami League government against the BNP. The BNP was

organisationally weakened as a result of the extreme fascist attacks that the Awami League carried out on the BNP and other opposition parties by establishing complete control over the bureaucrats, police, courts and the Election Commission.

On October 28, the BNP held a huge rally in Dhaka. Countless people attended that rally. During that rally, the Awami League government launched an all-out attack on them with the police and dispersed the rally. Also, after the 28th they started arresting BNP leaders and workers recklessly. They started arresting thousands of BNP people using false cases or even without any case. They arrested the BNP's top leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam and other leaders on false charges and sent them to jail. They arrested over 23,000 BNP leaders and workers until the 7th January elections.

They attacked not only the BNP, but all other opposition political parties alike and created a situation where it was impossible for anyone except the Awami League and a few other small parties allied to them to be candidates in the elections. Therefore, people had no chance to vote for anyone other than the Awami League as there was no other candidate in the election.

But despite creating this situation, the Awami League was in another danger. They realised that even if the election was held, other influential leaders of their party would contest their nominees as rebel candidates. Being afraid of this, they decided to recognise the rebellious Awami candidates as independent or free candidates of the Awami League without expelling them according to the rules! It was a violation of election rules and ethics. Such a strange thing had never been seen before in the elections of Bangladesh or any other country in the world. By this action, the Awami League not only violated the election rules and regulations, but it proved that there was a breakdown in the Awami League organisation. As a matter of fact, the internal unity of the Awami League was largely destroyed due to the conflict of mutual interests owing to the widespread corruption in the Awami League organisation. In this situation, the Awami League was completely isolated from the people politically. This happened because Sheikh Hasina was consolidating her power by controlling the bureaucrats, police and courts instead of her party. In this situation, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina almost completely ignored the Awami League organisation, and the crisis of disunity within the Awami League as an organisation intensified.



In the fifteen years from 2009, the leaders of the Awami League acquired enormous wealth through uncontrolled and unprecedented theft, corruption and looting. Especially from the 2018 elections to 2023, their looting and stealing was widespread and completely reckless. As a result, almost all Awami League leaders turned into thieves, corrupt people and looters.

By completing many mega projects in the country, Sheikh Hasina claims to have made a revolution in the infrastructure of the country and proudly says that she will bring a flood of development into the country. But these mega projects have become a major avenue for theft and looting. It can be seen that the initial cost of each mega project increased two to three or four times by the time the project was completed. Most of this increase was looted and increased the wealth of the Awami League leaders. Before the election, the Awami League nominees declared their wealth to the Election Commission. It can be seen that they increased their wealth significantly since 2009, especially after the 2018 election. The wealth of many of them has increased one hundred, two hundred times or more at this stage! All this happened through stealing, corruption and looting. As a result, there are no honest people but thieves, corrupt people and looters among the Awami League candidates as well as some minor party candidates related to them. That is why this election of 2024 can be called nothing but the election of thieves.

Numerous reports have been published against these in almost all the newspapers of Bangladesh. Several strongly critical reports and articles have been published in major newspapers in the United States, Britain, Canada, the European Union, Australia, and even in India. But the ruling Awami League government has implemented their electoral agenda without taking these into account.

Since one hundred percent of the candidates in the election were from the Awami League and their associate organisations, they won this election. But this victory has been achieved through corruption. Since there were no opposition candidates in the election, there was no political competition, so people had no enthusiasm to participate in it. Forty-two percent of voters cast their votes, as per Election Commission calculations. But this is an extreme instance of rigging. Because even though the fake voting started from the beginning, by 3 pm only 27 percent had voted as

per their announcement. But in the last hour from 3 pm to 4 pm the number of voters stood at 42 percent. Any honest and unbiased person had no difficulty in realising that in the last hour there was blatant rigging. According to the previous plan, the Awami League government introduced the thugs of Chhatra League and Jubo League into the polling stations and cast lots of ballot papers into the ballot boxes. As a result, 27 percent of the votes were counted in seven hours, but in the absence of voters at the end, the vote was 42 percent!

The Awami League spent crores of taka to gather voters. They increased the number of voters by giving money to poor voters, bringing them to polling stations in buses and rickshaws and feeding them biryani. It seems that not more than 10 to 15 percent of the votes were actually cast. Newspaper reports and photographs show that numerous polling stations in the plains and hilly areas were completely empty. No one voted.

The people of the country and the international community have rejected this election as a rigged election. Many reports and strong criticisms have been published against it in the newspapers of Bangladesh as well. Some international organisations rejected the election and called for new elections under a neutral caretaker government.

India, China and Russia congratulated Sheikh Hasina for winning the election, terming this election as neutral for their own imperialist interest. But the United States, Britain, Canada, the European Union, Australia etc. have rejected this election. The United States and the world's worst imperialist countries are playing this role in the Bangladesh elections because of the deterioration of their relations with the Bangladesh government. The main reason for the deterioration of relations with the US imperialism is due to the day-to-day growth of Bangladesh's relations with China. But despite this position of the United States of America, the role they have taken in the election of Bangladesh has made the situation in Bangladesh public throughout the world. The above countries and their leading newspapers have revealed the true nature of the Bangladesh elections and informed the people of the world.

Since coming to power in 2009, Sheikh Hasina has been engaged in trying to bring all powers into her own hands. Now after winning the 2024 elections, state power is concentrated in her

hands. Her government and party ministers and leaders are nothing but her subordinates. This concentration of state power in one hand in complete isolation from the people is not indicative of strength of the state and the ruling government and party. Rabindranath said in the context of a discussion, 'If all the blood of the body accumulates in the face, it cannot be called health.'

In this election of 2024, the Awami League has won absolute authority of the state. But in view of the fact that the people of the whole country and the international community rejected this election, despite winning the election, the Awami League was defeated politically. Judging from this aspect, the Awami League government is now thrown into a big crisis. Most of the elected members of the parliament are business owners. The way these business owners will manage the governance of the country for their own business interests will increase this crisis instead of reducing it. Inflation is now a big problem facing this government. The price of goods will increase instead of decreasing. The theft, corruption and looting in the country will become more serious than in the past. It will be impossible for the Awami League government to deal with these problems.

Despite the election victory of the Awami League, the people of the country are extremely angry at the Awami League today. It would have been difficult for the Awami League to win even ten seats out of 300 if the elections were neutral. In this situation, the people also want a new election under an impartial caretaker government. In this regard, despite the election victory of the Awami League, the political situation of the country is hot now. In this situation, if the opposition political parties including the BNP are not discouraged and start a new movement for new elections, then the political situation will turn around. The situation of the country will change rapidly if the opposition political parties, including the BNP, come forward strongly in the movement and become active on the issue of inflation, uncontrolled increase in prices of goods, theft and corruption of Awami League people and the deterioration of international relations with Bangladesh. If the opposition does not use this opportunity, it will be an act of great political folly. Shakespeare wrote, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." A favourable situation has now been created before the people of Bangladesh and the opposition political parties. Taking advantage

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of this situation, they have to enter the political arena of Bangladesh actively and strongly. As a result, the Awami League government will face a deep crisis. Conditions will be created for the resignation and fall of their government.

January 14, 2024

Translated from the Bengali by Mueenuddin Ahmad

## **The Failure of the Fascist Coup in Brazil**

For 21 years (1964-1985), Brazil lived under far-right terrorism. In that period, no citizen had the right to vote for president of the Republic, governors or mayors; political parties were banned; people were appointed to watch over the unions, and student leaders were imprisoned and tortured. The High Command of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force) decided who would be the general president of the Republic. Artists were imprisoned, tortured and exiled, the police invaded theaters and residences, books and songs were censored. Even priests and bishops who defended the rights of the people were persecuted and killed, such as Father Henrique in 1969 in the city of Recife.

In 1985, after many demonstrations, workers' strikes and rallies, the military government was overthrown. However, those responsible for the crimes of the military dictatorship remained unpunished, and they continued to conspire in the barracks.

The newspaper *A Verdade* has repeatedly denounced the former captain Jair Bolsonaro, the reactionary parties and generals, who planned a fascist coup to establish a military dictatorship in the country. The computer found by the Federal Police at the home of Lieutenant-Colonel Mauro Cid, Bolsonaro's former aide, showed a video of a meeting held at the Planalto Palace three months before the presidential election.

### **Chronology of the Fascist Plan**

On July 5, 2022, Bolsonaro summoned his ministers for a meeting at the seat of government and stated that he had certain information that he would lose the elections and that Lula would be elected. The former captain said at the meeting: "Does anyone doubt what is going to happen on October 2 (the day of the first round of the elections), what will be the photo shown at 10 p.m. on television? We will have to file an appeal with the Supreme Court. The situation is shitty, what are we waiting for? We are going to be screwed."

General Augusto Heleno, chief minister of the Institutional Security Cabinet (GSI) and of Abin (Brazilian Intelligence Agency), then spoke: “It’s time to make a change, before the elections; otherwise it will be too late.”

The general also claimed that he had infiltrated agents into election campaigns and political parties. The data obtained from Abin’s computers showed that a total of 30,000 people were spied on, including parliamentarians, popular leaders, governors and Supreme Court judges. The information was collected using the *FirstMile* software and the data was stored in Israel, a country ruled by the dictator Netanyahu. At the meeting, Defense Minister Gen. Paulo Sergio Nogueira also expressed support for Bolsonaro and stated that he was going to meet with the military commanders to discuss what should be done regarding the elections. According to the Federal Police report, the coup plotters created six nuclei with the aim of “using violence to abolish the democratic rule of law”:

1. Center for disinformation and attacks on the electoral system.
2. Center in charge of inciting the military to join the coup d’état.
3. Legal center.
4. Operational center to support coup actions.
5. Parallel Intelligence Center.
6. Center for high-ranking officers with influence and support in other centers.

The core of high-ranking officers consisted of Generals Walter Braga Netto, Mario Fernandes, Estevam Theophilo Gaspar de Oliveira, Laércio Vergílio and Paulo Sergio Nogueira and the Admiral Almir Garnier.

### **July 18**

Bolsonaro gathers ambassadors from 40 countries at the Planalto Palace, attacks the elections and calls for international support for the coup.

### **July 24**

General Braga Netto, chosen to be vice president, attends a meeting with business owners at the Firjan headquarters in Rio de Janeiro and declares: “There will be no elections in Brazil if the votes are not audited.”

### **September 7, 2022**

The fascists expected millions of people to take to the streets on that day to demand military intervention. But the people's discontent with the former captain's government was already enormous: more than 700,000 people had died because Bolsonaro and General Pazuello did not buy the Covid-19 vaccine. Not only that, but 30 million Brazilians were hungry and 13 million workers were unemployed. Only a handful of billionaires, bankers, and large landowners and cattle owners were satisfied with the government. Therefore, they could not carry out the coup before the elections.

However, the fascists went ahead with their plan by attacking the elections and spreading lies (fake news) about the electronic ballot boxes. A hacker, Walter Delgatti, was hired at a high cost by members of the Liberal Party, the party of Waldemar da Costa Neto and Bolsonaro, to hack into the computers of the CNJ (National Council of Justice) and the TSE (Superior Electoral Court). This same hacker held numerous meetings with the Minister of Defense, General Paulo Sergio Nogueira.

### **Defeat in the elections and encampments in barracks**

The first round of the elections took place on October 2, with Lula, the PT [Workers' Party] candidate, winning by approximately 6 million votes. The second round was Bolsonaro's third defeat, despite several attempts made to prevent the opposition's victory. One of them was the operation commanded by the director of the Federal Highway Police (PRF), Silvinei Vasques, who ordered operations to be carried out on highways in several states of the Northeast region to prevent people from voting. For that crime, Vasques has been imprisoned since last August.

Desperate, the defeated organized a road block, set fire to tires and prevented trucks from traveling on highways, with the aim of creating an atmosphere of chaos and justifying the intervention of the Army.

On November 15, 2022, the fascists changed their tactics. They set up encampments in front of the army barracks. The commanders of the Armed Forces released a public statement welcoming the anti-democratic demonstrations.

### **November 19, 2022**

Brazil already had a new president-elect, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, with his inauguration scheduled for December 12. The

fascists began to draw up a decree to annul the elections, arrest the president of the TSE and establish the dictatorship.

**December 7, 2022**

Bolsonaro presented the military with the coup decree to annul the elections. The meeting was attended by Defense Minister Paulo Sérgio Nogueira, Army Commander Marco Antonio Freire Gomes and Navy Commander Almir Gamier. Two days later, Lieutenant-Colonel Mauro Cid sent the following message to Army Commander General Freire Gomes: “What did he (Bolsonaro) do in the morning? He removed things from the decree, didn’t he? Those things you saw... And he made a more concise decree.”

**December 9, 2022**

21 days before the inauguration of the president-elect, with the decree in hand, Bolsonaro met in the Planalto Palace with General Estevan Theophilo Gaspar de Oliveira, head of the Army’s Land Operations Command (Coter). General Estevan Theophilo was chosen to command the military operations, including the arrests that were to be carried out. This meeting was recounted by Lieutenant Colonel Mauro Cid to Colonel Romão: “He (General Theophilo) wants to do it... As long as the PR [President of the Republic] signs it.”

**January 8 and flight to the United States**

The invasion of the Planalto Palace, the Congress and the Supreme Court on January 8 was also part of the coup plot. Army Special Forces Major Rafael Martins de Oliveira negotiated with Colonel Mauro Cid, then the former captain’s aide-de-camp, to pay for the military to go to Brasilia. Mauro Cid asked: “Is R\$ 100,000 enough?” Commander Rafael said yes. On November 15, there was a new message from the major to Colonel Cid asking where the demonstrators should go when they reached Brasília and whether the Armed Forces would guarantee their stay there. The colonel and Bolsonaro’s aide-de-camp responded: “Cn (Congress) and STF [Federal Supreme Court]. They will do it.”

In a new statement to the Federal Police, Lieutenant Colonel Mauro Cid (Jair Bolsonaro’s aide-de-camp) said that thousands of people linked to the CAC (Collectors, Shooters and Hunters) had also mobilized for January 8. According to Army data, 904,000 people had obtained firearm registrations under the Bolsonaro government, 450,000 of them in 2022.



To avoid being held responsible for the Jan. 8 attacks, Bolsonaro fled to the U.S. and took jewelry belonging to the country. On December 27, the former captain sent 800,000 reais to an account he had opened in the United States, as shown in the Federal Police report: “Some of those investigated (Bolsonaro and his family) fled the country, practically withdrawing their funds invested in national financial institutions and transferring them to the U.S., in order to protect themselves against any criminal proceedings that might be launched to investigate the illegal activities.”

For the Federal Police, General Braga Netto, former Minister of Defense and Bolsonaro’s candidate for vice president, was one of the main organizers of the terrorist acts of January 8, as seen by the exchange of messages that took place on December 27, 2022 (three days before Lula’s inauguration) between the general and Bolsonaro’s advisor Sergio Rocha Cordeiro, who asked where she could leave a woman’s resume. Braga Netto responded: “Cordeiro, if we continue, you can send it to the General Secretariat. Other than that, it’s going to be a bitch” (*Folha de São Paulo*, February 21, 2024).

What’s more, according to the international news agency Reuters, General Braga Netto was also responsible for drawing up and financing the plan to deploy soldiers from the Army’s Special Forces (the so-called Black Kids) in the coup d’état of January 8 and lead the invasion of the Planalto Palace, the National Congress and the Supreme Court. (*Reuters*, March 26, 2024)

On February 22, 2024, the former captain appeared at the Federal Police headquarters in Brasilia to give a statement. The mastermind and biggest beneficiary of the coup<sup>1</sup> did not answer any of the questions. No doubt he remembered his words at the September 7 demonstration: “It’s over, damn it!” Also silent before the Federal Police were: General Braga Netto, General Augusto Heleno, General Paulo Sergio Nogueira and Admiral Almir Garnier.

On February 25, at an event on Paulista Avenue financed by the Church of the Devil’s Shepherd and the government of São Paulo, the former captain confessed: “What is a coup? It is a tank

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<sup>1</sup> In recent years, the Bolsonaro family has made 107 real estate transactions and bought 51 pieces real estate (*Seu universo online*, September 9, 2022)

on the street, a gun, a conspiracy. Is it a draft of a state decree of defense? A coup using the Constitution?” (*Folha de São Paulo*, February 26, 2024)

### **The Armed Forces Cannot Silence the People**

There are many analysts, however, who insist that the decisive factor in stopping the coup was the U.S. government. For them, the huge demonstrations calling for Bolsonaro’s impeachment, the youth marches against fascism and the workers’ strikes were of little consequence. What was definitive, as the ICL (Knowledge Sets You Free Institute), a YouTube channel of the petty bourgeoisie, said, was that the US Secretary of Defense, General Lloyd Austin III, declared at the 15th Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas, held on July 27, 2022 in Brasilia, that “The Armed Forces of the countries of the Americas must be under firm civilian control.”

No, these gentlemen are not unaware that after that Conference, the Brazilian Minister of Defense and the military commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force continued their preparations for the coup d’état. They simply don’t want to recognize the strength and struggle of the Brazilian people, so they can continue to say that a revolution in Brazil is not possible. But by underestimating the role of the people, they are exalting those responsible for Latin America’s bloody military dictatorships: the U.S. government.



This is the truth: even if the Armed Forces have weapons, tanks, fighter jets, drones, ships, sophisticated means of espionage, more than 900,000 armed men, hundreds of military installations, they cannot shackle the Brazilian people, as the manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR) said on *March 25, 2021*, a year and four months before the coup meeting on July 7:

“36 years after the end of the military regime, the fascists, with new faces and names, are conspiring to re-establish a military regime in Brazil. Indeed, former captain Bolsonaro, elected president of the Republic against the will of 89 million voters and after benefiting from the invalidation of the candidate who was leading in the polls, wants to re-establish fascist terrorism in Brazil. His authoritarian plan has the support of a network of corrupt business owners and a dozen generals who enjoy sizeable public salaries and the perks of being ministers and presidents of state-owned enterprises. This tyrant wants the army, which he considers his private property, to carry out a military coup and establish a fascist regime. He believes that his militias and a dozen generals are more powerful than a united people, than millions of workers determined to build a sovereign, independent and free homeland. This is deception! They will be defeated again.” (*RCP Manifesto, March 25, 2021*)

With the coup plotters demoralized, the High Command of the Armed Forces now claims that the military officers who participated in the coup attempt are of low rank and that they acted “on their own.” With all due respect, this institution is truly a disaster. Brazil spends R\$ 126 billion a year on the maintenance of the Armed Forces and each officer acts as he pleases, there is not a single general who gives orders to the colonels and the High Command, despite its pompous name, does not know how to explain to the officers their constitutional duties. All they can say is that they study Bakunin’s works at the Agulhas Negras Military School (AMAN) and the War College (ESG).

The involvement of various ranks of the Armed Forces in the coup attempt is such an indisputable fact that the current commander of the Army, General Tomas Paiva, declared to the press: “Those who did it will have to be held accountable, but we have to separate the individuals from the institution” (*G1, February 14, 2024*).

Yes, individuals must be separated from the institution. But why didn't they think of that when they declared their unconditional support for Bolsonaro and took him campaigning in the barracks? When did they appoint more than 6,000 officials to the government, 10 ministers, and the presidency of Petrobras and the Post Office?<sup>2</sup>

Let us look at what the political scientist Roberto Amaral wrote: "The Brazilian military, to whom the nation owes other services, has never stood out for defending democracy. In the republic, coups d'état have been carried out repeatedly, from the military dictatorships of Deodoro da Fonseca (1889-1891) and Floriano Peixoto (1891-1894) to the present day. Look at the coup of 1937, masterminded by Góes Monteiro and carried out by Eurico Dutra; the 1954 coup, carried out by the three Armed Forces and led by General Juárez Távora; the attempted coup against the 1955 elections, led by General Conrobert Pereira da Costa and Brigadier Eduardo Gomes; the 1961 coup, led by the three military ministers and the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Cordeiro de Farias; and the coup of 1964, which left us with 20 years of dictatorship...." (*Roberto Amaral. The Military and the Authoritarian Temptation, Carta Capita*. Republished by A Verdade, issue 238, May 2021)

### **Fascism and the Bourgeoisie**

Despite these facts, some left-wing parties continue to claim that democracy is possible under a capitalist system. They ignore the fact that the principle of the bourgeoisie is not democracy, but profit, and that for the capitalists the best type of government is that which guarantees an increase in their wealth and greater exploitation of the working class. But there is a stumbling block in the path of the capitalist class: the working class has begun to fight more decisively for higher wages, shorter working hours and against neoliberal reforms. The big bourgeoisie wants to stop this advance at all costs and keep power in its hands, hence its frequent defense of a militarized state. Clearly, the bourgeoisie knows that fascism reenforces the power of capital over the workers.

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<sup>2</sup> *A Militarização da Administração Pública (The Militarization of Public Administration)*, by Willian Nazaki.

Moreover, in the last decade several churches controlled by corrupt pastors have become an important base of support for the far right, while popular parties and organizations led by opportunists have abandoned the mass struggle in search of class collaboration. For these reasons, it is a mistake to consider that the anti-fascist struggle is over. We must continue to mobilize for the arrest of Bolsonaro, the fascist generals and the agribusiness billionaires, owners of banks and large commercial networks that financed the coup demonstrations and the banditry of January 8.

### **The Anti-Fascist Struggle and the Struggle for Socialism**

But that is not all! We must go further and explain to workers what capitalist exploitation is and why there are rich and poor in our country. To clarify that in this society in which we live, only a small group of people, the rich class, owns the industries, the land, the banks and increases their wealth by exploiting the workers through low wages, high food prices and the interest they are charged on credit cards. In fact, while more than 70 million Brazilians live in food insecurity and 21 million go hungry, 25 billionaires have a fortune of R\$ 10.7 trillion.

Therefore, it will not be possible to end poverty and unemployment in the country without ending this injustice. Therefore, our political agitation must try to explain what socialism is and show the direct relationship between fascism and capitalism.

**Central Committee**  
**Revolutionary Communist Party – PCR- BRAZIL**  
*April 15, 2024*

### **Putschism and Revolution**

In recent years, in the context of the crisis of the neo-colonial system in Africa, we have witnessed the resurgence of military coups, allowing the military wing of the sections of the reactionary bourgeoisie to take political power to serve the interests of clans allied with the imperialist powers. Since 2012, there have been 14 coups d'état on the African continent, including 4 in West Africa: Mali (2012, 2020 and 2021); Egypt (2013); Central African Republic (2013); Burkina Faso (2015, January 2022, September 2022); Chad (2021); Guinea-Bissau (2012); Sudan (2019, 2021); Zimbabwe (2017); Guinea-Conakry (2021).

These military coups d'état are taking place in the context of the bankruptcy and multifaceted crisis of the neocolonial system in Africa. At the same time, the putschists, with the help of opportunists and revisionists to justify their seizure of power, spread pseudo-revolutionary and confusing conceptions.

It is therefore necessary to refute the revisionist and confusing conceptions that aim to show these military coups as a “victory of the democratic and revolutionary forces”, “the utmost stage of their popular struggles”, etc. It makes a theory out of putschism, presented as a means to achieve the revolution and scientific socialism. In reality, this phenomenon is not new, because in some African countries other putschists have tried to make these rotten theories a reality. This is the case of Didier Ratsiraka in Madagascar, Denis Sassou Nguesso in Congo-Brazzaville, Mathieu Kerekou in Benin, Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia where these reactionary officers aided by revisionists established a fascistic state capitalism while using pseudo-revolutionary language. These revisionist theories and conceptions are in flagrant contradiction with the scientific doctrine of Marxism-Leninism and aim to combat the latter, to ideologically disarm the working class and people in order to better defend capitalism and neocolonialism. It is therefore the duty of our party (the Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta) to refute them in order to enlighten the working class and people about the way to achieve revolution

and scientific socialism. For this, it is important to examine the experience of the military coups in Africa and Upper Volta, known as Burkina Faso, in the light of Marxism-Leninism.

### **1). The historical experience of military coups in Africa and in Upper Volta, known as Burkina Faso**

In the aftermath of formal independence and during the decade 1960-1970, a new phenomenon appeared in the neo-colonies of Africa, military putschism. Military coups propelled the neo-colonial armies and paramilitary forces to the forefront of the African political scene, which would play an important role in maintaining and strengthening the neo-colonial system and in the repression of the working class and people. Thus the army (created, trained, and financed by the imperialist powers, especially the French), presented as the force for the “defense of the nation and its sovereignty”, came out of the barracks to play its role as the centerpiece of the political chessboard and the strategy of international imperialism, especially French imperialism in the neo-colonies of Africa, especially in the current period of crisis of the world revisionist capitalist system. This militarization of political regimes in Africa confirms Lenin’s views that: “A bourgeoisie armed against the proletariat is one of the biggest fundamental and cardinal facts of modern capitalist society.” (“The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution,” Chapter II.).

But what are the causes and objectives of military coups in Africa?

Generally speaking, military coups are essentially neocolonial and aim to strengthen capitalism even when they differ in their motivations and tactical objectives depending on the case. Historical experience allows us to classify military coups in Africa as follows:

- a) When imperialism, especially French imperialism, and the reactionary forces become aware of the rise and development of the popular and revolutionary movement, they foment military putsches to prevent these movements from overcoming neo-colonial powers: the military putsch is in this case a means in the hands of the imperialists and their local allies to bar the road to the democratic and revolutionary movement.

In fact, on January 3, 1966 in Upper Volta, the popular movement, faced with ] the abuses of the reactionary power of Maurice Yaméogo, was the culmination of a process of discontent and indignation of the working masses against the anti-social and anti-people policies of the First Republic. A revolutionary situation was thus created in which the bourgeoisie of Volta and French imperialism, seized with panic, had to resort to the military coup. This brought General Sangoulé Lamizana to the forefront of the political scene, to put an end to the popular vitality and to continue the defense of the interests of the reactionary bourgeois classes and their imperialist allies.

On November 25, 1980, the coup d'état by the Military Committee for National Recovery and Progress (CMRPN), which overthrew the government of the Third Republic, also had as its essential objective the liquidation of the revolutionary democratic movement, in particular the Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta (PCRV), whose growing influence and combativity were beginning to seriously worry the ruling classes. The entire anti-social and fascistic policy of the CMRPN attests to this: prohibition of the right to strike, arbitrary search and deportation, hunting down all those suspected of belonging to the PCRV, etc.

- b) The experience of military coups in Africa also reveals that they are a means for the imperialist powers to extend their sphere of influence and domination in the context of the rivals that oppose them for world hegemony. After the division of the world among the





main imperialist powers, their present struggle for the redivision of the world (in view of the law of the uneven development of capitalism and the fact that imperialism inevitably tends towards hegemony) leads one rival imperialism to rely on a section of the local bourgeoisie (generally the section not in power) in an attempt to oust, by force, the imperialism that had been dominant until then. This depends on the strategic interest of the country or area concerned. Thus, taking advantage of the revolutionary situation created in Ethiopia in 1974, Soviet social-imperialism helped Mengistu Haile Mariam to seize power through a military putsch in order to oust US imperialism, which supported Emperor Haile Selassie. This putsch allowed social-imperialism to occupy Ethiopia and gain a firm foothold in the Horn of Africa, thus gaining important strategic positions in its rivalry with US imperialism for world hegemony.

In the context of the aggravation of the crisis of the imperialist world system, French imperialism in decline is facing the rivalries of other imperialist powers (Russia, China, USA, Turkey, Brazil, India) in its former colonies in Africa, which considered until then its backyard. It is increasingly threatened by Russian imperialism, which is taking advantage of the regimes that emerged from military coups in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger to establish itself.

This rivalry only confirms the views of Lenin, who already stressed that “The whole of social life is now being militarized. Imperialism is a fierce struggle of the Great Powers for the division and redivision of the world. It is therefore bound to lead to further militarization in all countries.” (Ibid.).

- c) The imperialist powers and their local allies also foment coups d'état to overthrow powers that seem progressive in their eyes and that do not give them the opportunity to carry out their policies of exploitation, plunder and oppression. This is the significance of the coup d'état of Sergeant Joseph Mobutu who overthrew the government of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo-Leopoldville. The same was true of the coup d'état that overthrew Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana in

1966. Both of these coups were the work of the CIA.
- d) Finally, to rid themselves of monarchies threatened by the popular movement and incapable of carrying out the necessary reforms, the imperialist powers have favored military coups aimed at establishing a bourgeois democratic republic while suppressing the revolutionary movement. This is for the simple reason that, as Lenin points out, “A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has gained possession of this very best shell... it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that no change, either of persons, of institutions, or of parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic, can shake it.” (“The State and Revolution,” FLP Peking, 1970, pp. 15-16). It was in this context that Nasser and the “Free Officers” were able to overthrow King Farouk in Egypt on July 25, 1952; that Gaddafi was able to overthrow King Idriss in 1970 in Libya and that Mengistu Haile Mariam and others were able to come to power in Ethiopia without at first incurring the wrath of the imperialist powers.

In the light of this historical experience, what lessons can be drawn from the military coups? What should be the principled attitude of the Party of the proletariat, of the true revolutionaries and patriots, towards these putsches? What is the difference between a military putsch and the social revolution?

**2) Military coups are incapable of solving the fundamental problems of the working class and people.**

The lessons that can be drawn from the military coups d'état in Africa, and in particular in Upper Volta, known as Burkina Faso, are numerous and are of great importance for the mobilization, organization and leadership of the popular masses by the party of the proletariat on the road to revolution and socialism. In the context of this article, we must remember the following main lessons:

- e) The military putsches and the strengthening of the role of the neo-colonial army in political life in Africa also reflect the economic and political weakness of the local bourgeoisies and their reactionary political

parties. Indeed, all the countries of Africa are neo-colonial societies that follow the path of capitalist development. The anti-national bourgeoisies allied with the imperialist powers are in power. These bourgeoisies manage a neo-colonial state apparatus that allows them to carry out an anti-people policy in order to defend their reactionary class interests and those of their imperialist masters, a policy of exploitation and oppression of the working class and people. The centerpiece of this state apparatus is the neocolonial army, whose main objective is to crush the resistance of the working class and people, to stifle and bloodily suppress any popular and revolutionary movement that challenges the existing capitalist social system. However, experience has shown that the bourgeoisies in power have often been overwhelmed by the development of the social struggles given their weakness, which continues to worry the imperialist powers for three essential reasons:

- the awakening of the political consciousness of the popular masses and the birth of revolutionary organizations of struggle, especially Marxist-Leninist parties;
- the exacerbation of inter-imperialist contradictions which are reflected within the local bourgeoisies and which is a factor of political instability;
- the context of the crisis of the world imperialist and revisionist capitalist system, which has strong repercussions in the neo-colonies; This has created the objective bases for the discontent of the masses of the people, for the development of their struggles
- and for social explosions. Indeed, the local bourgeoisie and its imperialist allies are working in a thousand ways to place the crisis on the backs of the working class and people.

Thus, favorable conditions are in place for the strengthening of the role of the military wing of the politico-bureaucratic bourgeoisie (BPB) because, in view of the inability of the political bourgeoisie to curb the crisis and prevent social explosions, the upper layer of the army (the military wing of the BPB) presents itself as

the section capable of establishing a “strong power” and moving towards fascisation, following the example of the military juntas of South America.

In short, military coups d'état and their frequency in African neo-colonies testify to the fragility of the powers that be. Above all, they reflect the fact that in the present situation of the economic, political, ideological, social and military crisis of capitalism and revisionism, the bourgeoisie, as a decadent class, has chosen to march towards the fascisation of the neocolonial powers.

While promoting the advent of military regimes, the imperialist powers resort to military interventions and the establishment of bases and troops for the defense of their geostrategic and economic interests, in particular the plundering of the immense mineral resources that abound in the countries of Africa.

This is all the more important since the neocolonial army, which plays a role in the administration of neocolonial powers, is, in the exercise of political power, undermined by important contradictions that are a source of chronic political instability. This is the case in Burkina Faso where the corrupt neocolonial army is made up of multiple putschist clans that overthrow one another in turn for the seizure of power. Hence the military coups of January and September 2022 by the Patriotic Movement for Safeguard and Restoration (MPSR) were fomented by putschist clans in the army.

All these experiences show the deep nature of military coups and their objectives. They are not orchestrated to bring about a fundamental change in favor of the masses: they have never challenged the neocolonial capitalist social order but instead aim to strengthen it while fighting for the liquidation of the revolutionary movement. This is true even when, at first, the putschists often used demagogic language to deceive the working class and people. For example, the military regimes in power in the Sahel Sahara countries of West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger) are escalating their discourses on “national sovereignty”, “pan-Africanism” and “independence” while renewing the links of vassalisation with the IMF and World Bank, and multiplying the largesse to Russian imperialism.

All in all, these coups d'état do not touch the fundamentals of the domination of the bourgeois class in power. They do not lead to qualitative changes in the economic and social (neo-colonial

capitalist) regime. They only overthrow certain individuals from power and replace them with others, who also represent the same ruling class, but express more forcefully the particular interests of that class. This is why the putsches are fundamentally different from the revolution and cannot put an end to the exploitation of man by man, contrary to what the opportunists, revisionists and creators of confusion of all kinds claim. The revolution is the work of the masses under the leadership of the proletariat guided by its party (the Communist Party) which, by means of revolutionary violence, destroys the capitalist system and breaks the neo-colonial bourgeois state apparatus and replaces it with a system of dictatorship of the proletariat. Without destroying capitalism, scientific socialism cannot be brought about, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie cannot be replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is why Lenin, our great educator, teaches us that “The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with *this* and precisely this view of violent revolution lies at the root of *all* the teachings of Marx and Engels.... The supersession of the bourgeois state by the proletarian state is impossible without a violent revolution.” (“The State and Revolution,” p. 25).

The genuine party of the proletariat must therefore have a firm position of principle regarding military coups d'état, which are essentially reactionary and do not call into question the capitalist social system: this is indispensable [to understand] in order to equip oneself with a revolutionary strategy for the seizure of power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the party of the proletariat must also know how to adopt a flexible tactic regarding the various coups d'état in view of the historical conditions in which they are carried out, the situations they create, the possible changes they can bring about in the form of the bourgeois state, that is to say in the form of oppression of the working class and people. This is indispensable in order to unmask the putschists, to make the working class and people aware of the bourgeois class character of the new power and the necessity of destroying it by means of revolutionary struggle under the hegemonic leadership of the party of the proletariat through appropriate forms of struggle and organization.

This means that the revolutionary Party of the proletariat must never harbor illusions either within itself or among the working class and people; otherwise it will abandon Marxist-Leninist

positions and sink into revisionism and class collaboration. It must in all circumstances raise its own banner high, stick to its revolutionary strategy and tactics for seizing power in order to carry out its own revolutionary program. It must link its revolutionary work within the bourgeois army for its disintegration, as Lenin points out, with the preparation of the armed popular insurrection to destroy capitalism and smash the bourgeois state apparatus in order to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The frequency of military coups reflects to a certain degree the lag of subjective conditions behind the objective conditions of the revolution in Africa and in Burkina Faso in particular. The temporary weakness of the Marxist-Leninist parties where they exist and their non-existence in most cases do not allow the proletariat and the people to carry out their struggles victoriously when revolutionary situations arise. Thus, the popular insurrection of October 30 and 31, 2014 in Burkina Faso showed the limits and insufficiencies, in particular the lack of leadership of the ML Party. Our Party (the PCRV) has drawn valuable lessons from this for the internal strengthening of the party at all levels and the struggle for the building of the popular unity of the people for revolutionary change through the Armed General Insurrection. The only way for the working class and people to achieve their salvation is to organize and make the revolution under the leadership of the PCRV, the party of revolutionary action.

**Central Committee**  
**Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta**  
*April of 2024*

### **Intensify the Political Struggle, a Task of the First Order**

Almost two years after the ascension of “progressivism” to the government of Colombia, there have been many points of view about the continuities, discontinuities and ruptures of the current power structures, as well as the economic model of the country. It is no secret that we are seeing a period of great political confrontation as a result of the exhaustion of neoliberal policies, the growth of the debt, the crisis that plagues the institutions and governability of the bourgeoisie in the country, the great problems of corruption, the growth of poverty, the greater power of criminal gangs, the assassination of hundreds of social and political leaders, the general deepening of the social and armed conflict in the country, among the many problems to be noted. All of the above are within an international framework of economic decrease in growth and stagflation, greater dependence of countries, extension of wars and greater disputes of the imperialists for hegemony, control of markets and resources on the planet.

In this context, **the discussion on the leadership, ability and strength of the different political forces** between those that want change and tend to develop an agenda in defense of sovereignty, democracy, peace, labor and social justice, and the traditional and conservative political parties and forces, who are fighting to take back the government, defend their economic and political privileges, and keep things as they are at all costs as much as possible, stands out in the tense Colombian political panorama.

Without ignoring the media war that the oligarchy and imperialism is fiercely promoting, through the mainstream media and many of their social networks, the truth is that there is a political debate that accounts for the conflicting interests with innumerable battles, political strategies and tactics at stake that demand an orderly, responsible and critical follow-up.

Seeking to contribute to a better understanding of the national political reality, on this occasion we will pause a little to

examine various aspects of the social and political confrontation that is taking place today in Colombia.

### **The Arrival of Progressivism in Colombia's Government**

In the first place, we consider it important to point out that Gustavo Petro's victory was not something accidental; it responds to very specific historical and political circumstances. It is important not to forget this and to highlight, on the one hand, the discrediting of some elites in power who for many years have stolen public money, surrendered the sovereignty of the country and its resources, trampled on the rights and freedoms of the people and bathed the history and development of the country in blood.

On the other hand, the left, the different democratic and progressive sectors of the country, the workers and people, organized in numerous social and political organizations over years of struggle, developed an important experience and levels of unity that allowed them to present a presidential candidate and a government program for the 2022 elections as a response to the dark panorama of violence, poverty and inequality in the country.

Despite the criticisms that may be made of the program raised in the campaign, the truth is that it includes important democratic reforms that reflect the sentiment and aspiration for a better life for the workers and the people. Promote a productive economy; democratizing the countryside; bringing food, health, education and housing to the popular sectors; and eliminating the cycle of violence by guaranteeing full respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, as well as truth, justice and reparation for all the victims of the country's internal armed conflict, comprised the main aspects of the government program that allowed Gustavo Petro to win the presidency of the republic.

**The winning of the government by the popular and left-wing sectors was an important historic milestone**, of course, which accompanied the effort made in the parliamentary elections, in which an important representation had also been achieved. To recall, the Historic Pact as a democratic coalition achieved a representation of 16 senators and 25 representatives in these elections.

Gustavo Petro, spokesperson for progressivism in Colombia, leader of the Colombia Humana party and member of the Historic Pact, won popular support and obtained 11,281,013 votes that allowed him to win the 2022 presidential elections.



## **The Proposals of Progressivism and its Influence on the New Government**

Secondly, it should also be pointed out that the current president of Colombia has had an important political career, with many ups and downs, close to some banners of the left and has been an open defender of resolute reforms to the country's economic and political model, especially to those policies related to economic regulation, taxes and the social representation of Colombians.

His work as a political leader, public official, mayor, congressional representative and now president of the Republic qualifies him as a social-democratic leader, a defender of civil rights, supporter of the legalization of drugs, staunch critic of paramilitarism and corruption, defender of the Constitution of 1991, reconciliation and national agreement, as well as a negotiated political solution to the armed conflict. As a social-democratic leader, leader and spokesperson for progressivism in Colombia and Latin America, he admits to the defense of capitalism, private property, social peace and the State according to liberal parameters. In recent times, he has been a great advocate for the UN's 2030 agenda and the fight against climate change, [for] sexual freedom, euthanasia and environmentalism.

Without ignoring the nuances and even the contradictory positions within the progressive movement, it is worth noting that some consider themselves left-wing, others proclaim themselves members of the democratic left, and others consider themselves reformists and defenders of capitalism. Many of them defend the



so-called social market economy and support a redistribution of wealth. It is in this political sub-spectrum that we find Gustavo Petro.

Among the most recognized leaders of international progressivism are Gabriel Boric, president of Chile, Manuel López Obrador, president of Mexico, Pedro Sánchez, president of Spain, and Olaf Scholz, president of Germany. They identify their proposal to work for a “much fairer and more humane capitalism”. The humanization of capitalism, according to them, will make it possible to overcome crises, injustices and inequalities by democratic participation. These are the main lines of progressive, inclusive and reformist thought that strives to reestablish capitalism as a democratic system.

In this pluralist horizon, full of colors and goals, without confusion and seeking to recognize each one’s due, our party recognizes the important influence of progressivism in Colombia and the majority support that Gustavo Petro received as the new president of the republic.

### **Gustavo Petro’s Progressive Agenda**

Now, it is fair to recognize that Gustavo Petro, since he became president of the republic on August 7, 2022, many tensions and struggles have arisen in the country due to the progressive agenda of the government and that stands out as a challenge: to implement a national agreement or pact for the macroeconomic stability and peace of the country.

Among the great tensions are the campaign promises included in the government program that facilitated the unity of action of numerous political forces and social organizations of the popular camp, and especially the Historic Pact as organizational support for the presidential and congressional campaigns. The government’s program was widely publicized and its proposals were supported by important sectors of the population. Now that the presidency has been won, the Petro government’s conviction is that it is impossible to carry it out without a pact with the elites and traditional parties that have led the country for all these years. After 20 months and almost halfway through his presidential term, the government’s promises are still to be seen and await an agreement with the traditional parties.

Another tension involves the formation of the government, that is, the appointment of cabinet ministers and directors of administrative departments who head the central administration, the formulation and implementation of government policies. It is understandable that this is a fundamental political issue for any government, given the importance that it has for the policies to be carried out. For President Gustavo Petro, the ministerial cabinet in charge of the government must represent the alliance of the parties that support the government and agree with the government program to be carried out. However, the tension underlies the appointment of people with a clear neoliberal position, who held ministerial positions in past governments and who represent rather than commitment, opposition to the policies of a government committed to the people. President Petro is accused of mistakes and naivety for handing over key government positions to false and corrupt leaders of the traditional parties.

As for the results, it should be mentioned that in the midst of such evident tensions, the government was approved by Congress – with a majority of the traditional parties in opposition – as was the National Development Plan and the first tax reform. At the moment, the health, labor and pension reform bills formulated with the help of the traditional parties are being discussed in Congress, with major modifications. As far as new policies are concerned: economic, foreign, security and defense policies, they maintain continuity and they receive the support of the IMF and the US government.

In this way, the government's economic policy does not cease to arouse controversies, disagreement and obvious rejections from the left and social organizations. With the aim of advancing the recovery of the national economy, the Petro government's economic policy declares its compliance with the fiscal rule and the payment of the debt. Among its main lines are the transformation of the energy grid (that is, the dismantling of the hydrocarbon industry and the transition to renewable energies), the renewal of the Fuel Stabilization Fund<sup>1</sup>, the promotion and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.portafolio.co/economia/finanzas/fepc-deficit-historico-del-fondo-de-los-combustibles-seria-de-103-9-billones-al-final-de-2023-592025>.

diversification of domestic consumption and the recovery of the countryside.

In social matters, labor, pension, education, and health reforms are currently before Congress; the discussion that is taking place on each of them confronts [bourgeois] interests and creates fights in which it is hard to reach consensus. In the specific case of Congress, it must be said that the governing coalition no longer has the majority. Although in the House of Representatives 102 of the 187 representatives (55%) belong to the governing coalition, in the Senate the ratio is reversed: 48 of the 106 senators are with the government, barely 45%. It is no secret that 2024 is definitive for the reforms proposed by the government.

A great tension in which the numerous national problems are up for discussion is that about “total peace,” a move by the government, based on the proposal of a national agreement, that seeks to negotiate with as many armed groups as possible in the hope of achieving peace and putting an end to the armed conflicts in Colombia.

In the midst of all the tensions created by modifying the agenda and the path on which the country has moved in recent years, the contradictions are increasingly acute and evident. In this sense, there are sectors that decisively support the government and others that waste no time in fighting it. This does not mean that public opinion has been polarized and divided into two extreme poles. On the contrary, the interests and opinions are manifold, showing an intense political struggle in which the proletariat and its organizations are also participants and protagonists.

It is true that there are many interests at stake and therefore several challenges that create much greater debate and political confrontation. In this sense, we would like to point out that, just as there are irreconcilable positions in which there is no possibility of agreement, there are also efforts by many forces and organizations to reach broader consensus among their constituents that

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According to the government, the historical **deficit** of the **Fuel Price Stabilization Fund (FEPC)** at the end of 2023 would be **\$103.9 billion**, while the data for 2023 would be \$21.4 billion. According to estimates by the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, if no adjustments are made to the price of the ACPM (Engine Fuel Oil), **the FEPC would have a deficit in 2024 for this fuel of \$10.5 billion.**

would allow them to maintain and win positions in the midst of the political struggle.

In the case of the government, it should be noted that if it does not differentiate itself from previous governments and continues to cling to a progressive reformist policy, Gustavo Petro's government runs the risk of confining itself to structural reforms to the existing economic and political system, and more precisely becoming a defender of the free market and IMF policies. Without fear of error, we could say that its progressive agenda makes it a continuation of the neoliberal government that has as its main task the economic and fiscal recovery of the country without taking into account the growing demands and social needs.

### **Petro's Proposal for a Constituent Assembly**

In the midst of the country's heated political landscape, President Gustavo Petro has recently proposed convening a Constituent National Assembly if his economic and social reforms are not approved by Congress.

Having clarified his proposal to the media, President Petro has shown that his interest is not to modify or repeal the 1991 Constitution. In this sense, he has said that there are eight points that he would include in his call: (i) implementation of the peace agreement with the demobilized FARC guerrillas, especially having to do with agrarian reform; (ii) improvement of living conditions for Colombians in terms of health; (iii) access to water and a basic income, especially for the older population; (iv) returning to the objectives of the 1991 Constitution, prioritizing public education and agrarian reform; (v) combating the climate crisis and decarbonizing the economy; (vi) guaranteeing the monetary policy while maintaining the independence of the central bank and prioritizing employment and production; (vii) a territorial reorganization for the inclusion of historically excluded regions, and separating politics from private financing and (viii) reform of the judicial system.

On several occasions President Petro has called on the people, in his capacity as first citizen, to exercise their constituent power, to meet in popular councils and assemblies, and define without fear the proposals for the convocation and immediate election of the new constituent assembly.

Obviously, the criticisms have not been long in coming; on the one hand, there are the defenders of the establishment who

emphasize that article 376 of the 1991 Constitution establishes the rules for convening a National Constituent Assembly:

*Article 376. "By a law approved by a majority of the members of both chambers, Congress may order that the people, by popular vote, decide whether to convene a Constituent Assembly with the authority, period and composition determined by the same law. It shall be understood that the people may convene the assembly, if at least one third of the members of the electoral roll so approve. The assembly must be elected by the direct vote of the citizens, in an electoral act that cannot coincide with another. Starting with the election, the ordinary power of Congress to amend the Constitution will be suspended during the period indicated for the assembly to fulfill its functions. The assembly shall adopt its own rules of procedure."*

They also point out that the last electoral census established that 40,292,068 people in Colombia are eligible to vote. To approve the holding of a National Constituent Assembly, at least one-third of those voters would have to vote yes at the polls.

On the other hand, we find an important range of sectors that do not oppose President Petro's proposal, but consider it of little relevance or usefulness in the conditions from which the country is suffering. The proponents of this thesis prefer a broad national agreement with the different political sectors to carry out the economic and social reforms proposed by the government.

For our party, the proposal to convene a National Constituent Assembly is welcome and greatly raises the national political debate. In the first place, because its call must be as broad as possible, so that it attracts and opens participation to all the vital forces of the nation, without excluding any Colombian or organization.

Second, because its debate should not only include the reforms proposed by the government, but all the regulations that have been established in the country and that maintain the barbarism, super-exploitation and social and political exclusion that the people of Colombia have endured throughout history. The national majorities demand political freedom, full and unfettered economic and social rights, sovereignty, work and well-being. They have the opportunity to discuss the removal of neoliberalism from the political charter; expanding guarantees for individual, economic and social rights; eliminating treaties and agreements that violate our sovereignty and deepen our dependence; to

restore to the people their status as primary constituents; to establish universal suffrage and to institute accountability and the revocation of the mandate of all public authorities; free elections; freedom and political recognition of all parties and organizations in the country; harmony and equity of all regions in the building of the new country.

Our party supports and proposes to the country a true democratic opening that reshapes the republic and makes possible the broadest participation of the people in the orientation of the destiny of the nation. Our proposal in this regard is the living and real convocation of a NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF A BROAD DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR SPECTRUM.

### **The Opposition to Petro's Government**

Certainly, the loss of the government by the oligarchy and the traditional parties represented a fairly strong blow, which does not mean that they have lost the leadership and control of the state, the management of economic resources, the media or even the ideological and political control over the population. It is true that the ruling classes lost the government but not the power, besides showing setbacks in their governability of the country, a very deep crisis of legitimacy, in which their parties ceased to be instruments of social representation to become electoral and business machines.

The question is mitigated by the fact that the progressivism which formed the government does not represent a danger to the institutions, bourgeois power and imperialism, since, as its efforts show well, it is committed to the defense of a much more humane and democratic capitalism. In the context of crisis, progressive reformism is thus a means that allows imperialism to contain the processes of social and political change underway in our countries, to favor governance by re-legitimizing the power and classes that maintain it.

Some bourgeois and monopoly sectors, understanding the character and objectives of progressivism, have decided to go along with it and lend it their collaboration, even with the government. Santism [the movement around the ideas of former president Santos], the advanced ecologists, various feminist, LGBTIQ+ and black sectors, sharing their purposes, have seen in progressivism an important instrument to preserve spaces and positions of

power, currently in danger due to the monopoly push of a few transnationals and banks, or by the approach of democratic sectors to certain lines of power.

In the specific case of Uribism, the declaration of total war against the government and the progressive agenda is manifest. Thus, in Congress, in the courts and tribunals, the prosecutor's office, from the agencies of control, as well as the territorial entities, the effort to maintain the strings of power and the leadership of the State is unmatched and seeks to defeat and/or reduce the ability of progressivism and its representatives to maneuver. The media, church, and universities all collaborate for this purpose.

Conspiracies and plots are something that permanently exist, seeking the fall, the mistake and the withdrawal of progressivism from the government as soon as possible. Several media outlets denounce the way various sectors of drug trafficking, paramilitarism and organized crime, hard hit by this government, are conspiring against it, seeking gains and better positions in the midst of the activity that they are developing.

The regional elections held in October 2023 showed the progress of the opposition forces who are maintaining their coordination in order to reclaim the government.

### **The Challenges of the People's Movement**

The strengths and weaknesses of the popular movement in Colombia can be seen. The 2022 elections that brought Gustavo Petro to the presidency of the republic; the 2023 elections in which regional authorities were elected; the various mobilizing actions that have been carried out in this period in defense of democratic reforms; peasant mobilizations in defense of agrarian reform; the movement of victims who will not rest in their demands for truth, justice and reparations. The widespread rejection of the Uribe conspiracy and the assassination of social leaders<sup>2</sup> show

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<sup>2</sup> <https://indepaz.org.co/violencia-en-colombia-informe-anual-2023/>. According to the 2023 report from *Indepaz*, in 2022 187 social leaders were assassinated, in 2023 the figure rose to 188. A recent report by this same human rights organization shows that there have been **11 massacres in 2024, with 21 victims as of February 6, 2024. 93 massacres in 2023, with 300 victims by December 22, 2023. 94 massacres in 2022, with 300 victims by December 31, 2022. For anyone,**



that the popular movement is not inactive in the midst of the social and political confrontation that is unfolding in Colombia.

**The rise of the participation in the social struggle fills all the forces committed to democratic transformations with optimism and shows the importance of drawing together and uniting greater forces towards the winning of a government, without gangs, one that is really democratic and popular, which would make it possible to convene a popular constituent assembly in which a democratic order is approved.**

To this the challenge and main objective of our party, the democratic forces and the social organizations committed to the true change of the country will continue to bet by committing all our forces to the achievement of a new republic.

Obviously, we have to move forward in overcoming the weaknesses that deprive the popular movement of strength, delaying the changes that are a requirement at a given moment.

**It has been 20 months since the victory of the new government and the waiting period cannot be eternal. The popular movement has to take a leap by demanding from the government, in addition to the fulfillment of its program that was supported by the majority in the 2022 elections, the convening of a broad national political debate on the proposals for a new republic and reshaping of the country.**

Dispersion is not helpful, it must be overcome by returning to meetings and assemblies to resume the single path, carrying out the corresponding political control and polishing up the proposals. Restoring the Historic Pact and moving towards the formation of a broad, social and democratic Front is one of the most important tasks of this period.

Autonomy and independence regarding the government is a value to be strengthened, enabling the rejection of all manipulation and, in general, of all messianic and sectarian voices that reduce the popular movement to the object of orders and proclamations. Energizing the coordinators, expanding the denunciations and solidarity are tasks that cannot be postponed in these times.

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**these figures are terrifying and show the hatred and climate of violence that exists in our communities.**

Recovering the leading role of the trade union movement implies strengthening the trade union organizations, in their internal democracy, functioning and social and political participation. The assemblies and all the democratic events that can be carried out in this period will unequivocally contribute to a greater awareness of the indispensable changes to be achieved in an increasingly precarious and cheap labor market.

The peasantry and its struggle for agrarian reform<sup>3</sup> has certainly been energized during these days, given the recognition and benefits granted by the Petro government; nevertheless, we must expand the meetings with the peasant communities, maintain the levels of organization and connection of the processes in the countryside, opposing the turnover of the lands to foreigners, demanding technical assistance, pest control, irrigation systems and machinery for the field.

**The workers, students and women in the countryside and the cities, all the popular sectors have the great challenge of intensifying the political struggle without renouncing one iota of their rights and freedoms. This is a task of the first order and with it we must expand the levels of organization and advance in the**

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<sup>3</sup> <https://blog.croper.com/las-cifras-de-hectareas-de-tierra-entregadas-por-el-gobierno-de-gustavo-petro/>. The government of Gustavo Petro, in line with the agrarian reform, has made significant efforts in the handing over of land deeds to communities. As of January 5, deeds for 1,059,114 hectares have been handed over.

#### **Breakdown of Hectares Handed Over**

Of the hectares handed over, 118,645 are by purchase, and 807,233 by formalization. In addition, 3,398 hectares have been handed over by donation.

#### **Beneficiaries of Land Deeds**

In the formalization of lands, the indigenous people have been the ones who have received the most land, with 572,743 hectares. They are followed by the peasants, with 184,209 hectares, and the black communities with 38,421 hectares.

#### **Reparations for Victims of the Armed Conflict**

With regard to the processes of reparation for victims of the armed conflict who are following the processes of restitution, 9,242 hectares have been handed over to this affected population.

Taken from: [agronegocios.co](http://agronegocios.co)

**coordination of a powerful mass political movement for the government and the popular constituent assembly.**

In this sense, the class forces must advance and assume the great historical responsibility of guiding and leading the organization and struggle of the masses for the transformation of the country and the achievement of an authentically democratic and sovereign homeland. Let us get to work!

*Communist Party of Colombia Marxist-Leninist  
Central Committee*

*April 2024*

### **Popular Electoral Proposal of the Left**

#### **To begin a new political era in the country.**

The Communist Party of Labor is participating through the Frente Amplio [Broad Front] in the electoral process that will culminate on May 19 of this year with the elections to the presidency of the Republic and the National Congress; with its own candidacies at the presidential level, with comrade María Teresa Cabrera presidential candidate, and 152 candidates for Deputies. The objectives of this participation are clear: 1. To establish a left-wing political leader in the imagination of the people; 2. To promote ideas that are a reference point for the workers and the people; and 3. To lay the minimum organizational foundations in the country's municipalities; all to build a popular, democratic and left-wing electoral force in the medium term.

Because, although it has participated in many electoral processes for the presidency of the Republic, this is the first time that the PCT has promoted its own candidacy. Most of the time, we supported the candidacies of other left-wing and progressive groups, even though the electoral ballot was our own.)

#### **Presentation**

The patriots of June 14, 1959, proposed a program to begin a new political era in the country. That is why a guerrilla war was planned that day and year to overthrow the dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, who ruled from 1930 to 1961.

They paid with their lives for that effort.

Generations of patriots, democrats and people on the left continued that struggle in search of achieving the program proposed by those heroes. This had to be achieved after the fall of the Trujillo dictatorship on May 30, 1961. But it did not happen then either. That event began a democratic transition that did not substantially alter the old social and political conditions in which the people lived poorly.

In 1978 it was possible to achieve a minimal but important, part, and that was the winning of a space of public freedoms and democratic rights.

Later, progress was made in the partial winning of an electoral democracy. Partial because, although there are several parties recognized by the Central Electoral Board and elections are held every four years, the system that governs competition between these parties is neither fair nor equitable, as in different ways it favors two or three parties controlling almost everything.

And it is also only an electoral democracy, because it lacks social justice, citizen security, general well-being, and possibilities for direct participation and control of the people in public affairs. It does not even provide trade union freedom.

Elections have been held in the country since 1962, and for better or worse, the Dominican people have gone to the polls, each time electing governments that have essentially kept the political system at the service of oligarchic groups, a privileged minority, while the majority, the workers and people in general, remain under conditions that range from bad to ordinary never good. For more than 60 years in a row, the Dominican economy has grown. With their work, the people have contributed to increasing the national wealth. However, the workers and people in general have been kept in deplorable conditions.

All this has been possible because, despite the fall of the Trujillo dictatorship, and the fact that public freedoms and democratic rights have been achieved, the general life of the country are based on two main foundations: the concentration of wealth in a few hands, and the centralization of political power in those same hands.

This is the essence of the national problem, which must be overcome immediately.

As a consequence of this reality, social marginalization has grown; unemployment persists and citizen insecurity is growing.

That is why, in order for economic growth and wealth in general to also reach the workers and the people, there must be a process of democratization of the total life of the country. There must be democracy in the field of economics as well as in the field of politics. Democracy in economics and politics; so that workers and people should receive the benefits of economic growth; so that they could live in peace and quiet with their families and

neighbors. In addition, they could truly elect and be elected, participate effectively in how public policies are defined and for which ones. This is what the Frente Amplio defines in its purpose of “Governing to begin a new political era in the country.”

### **GENERAL PERSPECTIVE...**

Beginning a new political era in the country means governing with the people and for the people: creating a government with gender equality. Decentralizing political power, taking power away from the presidency of the Republic; promoting a single-chamber Congress and giving it real power of control and limiting the power of the executive; establishing the Citizen Power, the guarantor of the people’s control over public management and the revocation of mandates from electoral processes; guaranteeing trade union freedom, the free association of workers in trade unions; developing municipal power and turning it into a factor for democracy and local development; promoting the democratization of the economy and economic property, as a material basis for the democratization of the political system.

A new political era implies a political and governmental system focused on equality, that can formulate and develop public policies that, while reflecting the desire of the people and the workers, are created and carried out in such a way that they can confront labor and political discrimination against women and youth. modifying in a positive way their exposure and vulnerability perspectives that limit their development as people, while replacing the arguments and practices that undervalue them and take away their rights as human beings. To this end, a new form of governance must be developed that is participatory, decentralized, efficient and effective, without cronyism or aims of profit-making, that is transparent and with a sense of social responsibility.

A new political era implies a commitment to the development of a government that respects the secular character of the State which, while not taking a definite religious position, respects freedom of worship in which each person has the right to believe in what seems best to him; and at the same time, opposes any form of religious discrimination.

It also implies promoting and implementing public policies aimed at combating xenophobia and any form of racial discrimination.

**THE PROPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FRENTE AMPLIO SHOULD BE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:**

I. Promoting a political reform through a Constituent Assembly elected by popular vote, which aims at the democratization of the political system, of the economy and economic property; in which the supremacy of the State over the government is clear, as it is the highest form of political organization of the nation. This is a basic condition for the people to have mechanisms for direct participation in all areas of public management, and for a real independence from all public authorities.

This reform should express the proposal of the renowned Juan Pablo Duarte, who assured the place of the Municipality among the powers of the State, and return to it the powers that were eliminated after the military intervention of the United States of America in 1916-1924.

II. Developing an economic model centered on national production that harmonizes various forms of property: public, private, mixed (public-private); associative-cooperative and public-community, which fosters an increase in the production of wealth, decent



employment, income and purchasing power of the workers and families.

- II-1. Making agribusiness the main axis of the national economy, and to ensure that the other sectors of the economy have links to it; creating jobs with wages that cover the basic necessities of a family in all regions of the country, in order to contribute to the creation of national supply and demand.
- II-2. Achieving a just redistribution of the wealth produced through a general increase in wages, as well as a greater and significant public investment in health, education, social security, culture, sports, popular housing, among other things.
- II-3. Promoting a fiscal reform for economic and social development, which will guarantee the general well-being of the majority; with a progressive tax system in which those who have wealth and greater economic possibilities pay more taxes; reduce ITBIS [Value-Added Tax on imported industrial goods] for goods and services for popular consumption.
- II-4. Recovering the goods, resources and public services that will promote the return to the State of the companies that were privatized, integrating them in a renewed way into national development, through management with social control and direct participation of the workers in their administration.
- II-5. Guaranteeing the care and development of natural resources and the environment, as components of national sovereignty, development and well-being. Thus, the legal regulations that create the bases to guarantee the protection and use of natural resources and the enjoyment of a healthy environment will be implemented.
- II- 6. Restoring the main watersheds, especially the upper and middle levels of the rivers that have been devastated by deforestation, erosion and depredation by business owners and the various governments that had managed the public goods. This includes a true agrarian reform that supports small and medium-sized agricultural producers as main players in the



national project that we are promoting.

- III. Promoting a reform of education aimed at sustaining social, scientific and technological development and the growth of the national productive forces; promoting critical thinking, the values of secular and humanistic education; tolerance of what is different, from a perspective of full inclusion; that aims at dismantle male chauvinist culture, promoting gender equality and providing a curriculum that brings back philosophy and includes the arts and comprehensive sex education.
- III-2. Promoting real programs of comprehensive physical education, which, in addition to promoting sports, educates about food, hygiene, health, with a pedagogical sense of play and promoting democratic values.
- IV. Promoting the practice of mass sports, based on the educational system, from primary to secondary school, so that this is a way of socializing people, and young people in particular, with the slogan of “a sound mind in a sound body”. To this end, amateur practice will be promoted, through the federated movement, without denying professionalism, developing policies aimed at linking athletes to sports at the local, regional and national levels.
- V. Promoting a comprehensive health system that replaces the commoditization of health that has taken place and changes the focus from welfare to one of rights, which promotes and protects health as well as treating disease.
- VI. A public social security system, paid by the national budget, financed in part by taxes on employers.
- VI-1. Developing a model of guaranteeing social protection for families confronting the risks that society causes, both to their living conditions and to their financial stability, so that the law that created the Dominican social security system is reformulated in order to effectively protect families.
- VII. Integrating the communities abroad into the process of national development and the construction of democracy. To this end, establishing the relevant

institutional mechanisms that will make their direct participation in the country's public affairs effective; and likewise, creating the necessary public policies so that remittances become a factor of development in the localities where the families receiving them reside.

VIII. Developing a foreign policy of good relations, respect and mutual benefit with all countries respectful of human dignity, public freedoms and democratic rights, based on the right to self-determination of the Dominican people, and their cultural and material enrichment.

*March of 2024*

## **New Political Scenario After the Referendum of April 2024**

The political crisis has characterized Ecuador for several months, and despite the efforts made by the economic elites to overcome it completely, it persists. The country is experiencing a situation that goes beyond the difficulties that commonly arise in the exercise of power, either because of the resistance of the workers to the anti-popular measures of the governments in office, or because of the contradictions that also manifest themselves between some sectors of the ruling classes and others. The depth, extent and nature of the problems that arise in the political life of the country show that we are facing a crisis of the entire bourgeois institutions.

When we talk about something like this, we establish that the circumstantial is surpassed by the structural, the problems that surface in the organs and functions of the state show the essence and nature of the existing capitalist state. We are facing a situation that shows that corruption, drug trafficking and the criminal mafias have penetrated the highest levels of the various functions and organs of the State, they are in the police and army high commands, in the legislative seats, in the organs of justice, in the executive branch, in the sectional governments, in the mainstream media.

### **A high point of the crisis and the search for governability**

The worsening of the political crisis forced the advance of the presidential and legislative elections to the second half of 2023, with two years still to go before Guillermo Lasso and the assembly members finished the term for which they were elected. Due to the seriousness of the existing situation, described as a “crisis of governability”, the former president executed the constitutional recourse known as “cross death”, which involves the dissolution of the National Congress, the end of the presidential mandate and the obligation to immediately call elections. The impression of

former President Lasso, as well as well as of the National Assembly, had fallen to historically low levels. The slogan raised by the popular movement, Out with Lasso NOW!, spread throughout the country and was the slogan of the Indigenous-Popular Uprising of June 2022. The fight against the government's neoliberal policy and the corruption within it was manifested throughout its administration. At the same time as the confrontation of the workers and people with the government intensified, the inter-bourgeois contradictions also deepened, which had their highest expression in the impeachment trial of the president; this was taking place in the National Assembly when he decreed its dissolution. All this created a scenario of great political instability: if the "cross death" had not occurred, Lasso would have fallen due to the action of the masses in the streets.

The 2023 electoral process<sup>1</sup> fulfilled the bourgeoisie's purpose of reducing political tensions, despite the fact that the assassination of candidate Fernando Villavicencio took place during that period. An atmosphere of expectation was created among the population regarding the new government; an agreement was established among the main bourgeois factions to guarantee an atmosphere of détente and political stability, expressed in the formation of a parliamentary alliance with a majority made up of pro-Correa forces, the Social Christian Party and National Democratic Action, ADN, President Noboa's party. This legislative bloc voted for and guaranteed the approval of all the anti-popular laws presented by the President of the Republic during the first four months of his administration.

Daniel Noboa's victory in the second round of elections was a unexpected event. No one, not even his campaign team, thought he would win the presidency.<sup>2</sup> The assassination of candidate Fernando Villavicencio in the course of the first round of elections caused an abrupt and unusual change in the order of the candidates, which moved Noboa from the bloc of candidates with the

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<sup>1</sup> The first round of elections was held in August 2023 and the second round on October 15, in which the current president, Daniel Noboa, was the winner.

<sup>2</sup> When the results of the second round became known, Noboa's mother, Anabella Azín, told the press that they did not plan for this victory, which was projected for 2025.

least chance to move to the second round and then win the presidency.

### **A New Face of the Old Politics**

Daniel Noboa (36 years old) took advantage of his youth to present himself as a representative of a new generation that would take the reins of the country; in reality, he is a new face of the old politics, of the oligarchy that has run Ecuador. His father, Álvaro Noboa, is the head of one of the largest economic groups in the country, which incorporates industrial, agro-industrial, export, and insurance companies. It is estimated that the assets of the Noboa group exceed US \$1.35 billion, not counting its assets in tax havens. His aunt, Isabel Noboa, is at the helm of the NOBIS group, whose assets exceed US \$1.1 billion.

Noboa ran on a right-wing economic-political program, but in the second round he took up electoral proposals of concern to the masses, such as: confronting organized crime and guaranteeing security to the population, raising retirement pensions to the level of the minimum wage, guaranteeing all young people access to higher education, opposition to labor reforms that implied taking back of rights, among other positions. Immediately after his electoral victory, he issued a message of what would be the main lines of his administration: he traveled to the United States and Europe to meet with representatives of investment banks, officials of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to all of whom he raised the urgency of obtaining economic resources because, among other things, he intended to be reelected in next year's elections. Thus, he made it clear that, for him, Ecuador's main problems could not be solved here, but in the offices of those who manage big capital. He showed his interest in opening the country's doors for the entry of foreign capital, either through private investment or through loans with international organizations. This leads to the increase in foreign dependency.

In the five months that he has been in office, Noboa has not departed from these main lines, to which is added one more, implicit in the nature of this policy and its class character: the absolute benefit to the country's large business groups. Claiming that he was confronting the serious economic crisis, he began to carry out his plan with a "tax reform" under the name of the Law for Tax Efficiency and the Creation of Employment, which forgave

part of the debts that large business owners have with the State. The amount of this “tax amnesty” is around US \$2.9 billion, of which more than US \$80 million correspond to debts of the Noboa economic group of his father. The law also created some “tax incentives” for companies that create jobs for young people<sup>3</sup> and free trade zones were established (which replaced the Special Development Zones created during the government of Rafael Correa), in which investors have a 0% Income Tax rate for the first 5 years and 15% for the rest of the period, which is 30 years and under which precarious forms of labor hiring are established.

The tax reform was approved on December 19, 2023 and, less than a month later, on January 11, 2024, an urgent economic bill was sent to increase the Value Added Tax, VAT, from 12% to 15%, a measure that mainly affects the lower income sectors. The pretext used was the “urgent need for resources to confront the uncontrolled crime wave.”

### **“State of War” to Implement Neoliberalism**

Indeed, Ecuador is experiencing a critical situation due to the action of criminal groups and drug trafficking mafias. The violence unleashed by them, which in two years has claimed the lives of nearly ten thousand people, has made the country one of the most insecure in the Americas; two cities on the Coast are at the top of the lists of the most dangerous cities in the world.

During the first two months of the government’s administration, no action was taken to address this issue. However, the belated knowledge of the escape of Fito (alias of the leader of the gang known as Los Choneros) from Regional Prison No. 4 led to the declaration of a state of emergency (on Monday, January 8), which provoked a wave of criminal actions in several cities of the country. In the midst of this Colón Pico (leader of the Los Lobos gang) and around 40 prisoners escaped from a prison in Ribamba. Pico had only been in prison for three days.

On Tuesday, January 9, twenty of the twenty-four provinces recorded the highest levels of criminal violence: burning of

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<sup>3</sup> According to official data, unemployment grew in the first quarter of 2024. Between January and April of this year, the number of layoff agreements exceeded the number of new employment contracts signed by more than 67,000.

vehicles, detonation of bombs, kidnapping of members of the police, detention of prison guards, attempted looting and, the event that had the greatest significance, the seizure of the facilities of TC Television in Guayaquil. An intense campaign of information, photos, videos and *fake news* on social networks magnified these events, creating a state of terror among the population and the feeling that the situation was out of control. The government's response was the issuance of Decree 111, which declared the existence of a "nationwide armed conflict" and ordered the military forces to combat criminal groups, which were given the status of terrorist groups. Twenty-seven groups were listed as such.

All the bourgeois political forces expressed their support for the government in the name of "national unity and the defense of the country". At the international level, several countries offered help to deal with the situation; the U.S. government, of course, did not miss the opportunity to proclaim "its willingness to collaborate," behind which is its purpose of making Ecuador an instrument of its security policy. Shortly before Lasso left the presidency, he signed an agreement with that country, so that U.S. troops can act on our territory in circumstances of a serious conflict. In the midst of this critical situation, this agreement was approved by the Constitutional Court.

The declaration of "the existence of an armed conflict in the country" and the order for the Armed Forces and the Police to use



Palm oil workers in assembly discussing the class position towards the referendum

lethal weapons changed the population's perception of the government's actions. A panicked population easily assumes the policies that place the use of force, military violence, and the "trigger-happy" policy in the forefront as correct. The most reactionary political organizations in the country have always been in favor of this type of measure, applauding it and increasing their call for tougher criminal sanctions.

Our Party warned of the existence of a plan to move state action further to the right, which corresponds to a policy defined by the U.S. embassy, worked out in coordination with the governments of Lenin Moreno, Guillermo Lasso and, today, of Daniel Noboa. This policy would be condensed into what they call "Plan Ecuador".

This serious period in our country, the shock into which the population was plunged, was taken advantage of by the neoliberal bourgeoisie to talk of the need to take urgent economic measures such as raising the VAT to 15%, increasing the price of fuel (through the elimination of the current subsidy) and the privatization of some companies. These measures have been proposed for several years by the business groups, but their implementation has been prevented by the struggle and resistance of the workers and people.

Opinion polls conducted at the time showed that between 80% and 84% of the population supported the president's administration, particularly in the fight against crime. Political calculations led the government to think that it was the best time to consolidate Noboa's image ahead of next year's presidential elections, and to carry out the neoliberal content of his economic-political program. During the election campaign, Noboa said he would call for a referendum on issues that would give greater powers to the Army and Police to fight crime. According to his calculations, this would allow the introduction of other topics desired by the business groups.

### **Popular Referendum: A Miscalculation**

After some legal variations, eleven questions were submitted to the referendum. Seven of them were directly related to the action of the Army and Police in the fight against crime, one introduced a slight reform in the judicial system, another established a constitutional reform to allow the extradition of Ecuadorians –



wanted by other countries – linked to transnational organized crime<sup>4</sup>, and two that, from the point of view of our Party and other left-wing political organizations and the popular movement, were the ones that were of greatest interest to the big bourgeoisie, the international monopolies and organizations such as the IMF.<sup>5</sup> These questions involved direct constitutional reforms and sought to: introduce the hourly hiring of labor and fixed-term work; and the recognition of international arbitration in matters of foreign investment and international trade.

In these two questions, the class interests of the owners of big local and international capital were directly at stake. If they were approved it would have meant a harsh blow to the rights of the workers and people and a serious effect on the sovereignty of the country. The Party focused all its efforts to denounce the purposes behind the two questions and prevent their approval; we called for a NO vote on the questions in boxes D and E.<sup>6</sup>

We began a discussion that, while unmasking the hidden interests of the big business owners and Noboa's re-election attempt, dealt with the following points, among other aspects:

- The referendum is informal, it does not solve the main problems of the workers and people.
- We agree that security should be guaranteed; we demand decent work and the defense of the country's sovereignty.
- Hourly contract = entrepreneurs making more profits.
- International arbitration = foreign companies with their own judges.
- We show that the government's policy is in favor of entrepreneurs (debt forgiveness, tax benefits) and how it affects the people (VAT increase, budget cuts, no

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<sup>4</sup> "Extradition shall not be granted for political and related offences, with the exclusion of terrorism, crimes against humanity and others set out in international conventions," the amendment specified.

<sup>5</sup> As part of the Ecuadorian government's "commitments" to the IMF, the introduction of regressive labor reforms and the recognition of international arbitration in matters of foreign investment and international trade were included.

<sup>6</sup> Question D on international arbitration, Question E on hourly labor.

investment in public works, thousands of young people without access to higher education, crisis in the Social Security Institute, etc.)

- What measures should be taken to deal with the economic crisis and solve the material problems of the people.

Noboa, the big business owners and the right-wing believed that, by putting out the call to “vote to guarantee security” at the center of their discourse and censuring those who were in favor of the NO as supporters of the drug trafficking groups, they would be able to win them over to vote YES on all the questions. They were defeated: the NO won on questions D and E. The people voted for the government to guarantee security, but they did not support the questions that corresponded to its neoliberal program.

Before, the workers and people were shown that the government’s discourse about the supposed construction of “A New Ecuador” was one thing, and the reality in which they live was another. Unemployment and underemployment, salaries that do not cover basic needs, the high cost of living (skyrocketing before the increase in VAT to 15% came into force), the thousands of children and young people on the margins of education, among other aspects, contrasted with the official message. The government’s image and popular support were declining, and by the beginning of March it had fallen between 20 and 25 points. Our Party and its forces contributed to this fall by confronting its policies, demanding its attention to popular demands, and spreading a slogan that sums up the government’s conduct: “Noboa does not comply, Noboa lies.”

In the context of the decline in popular support for the government and the knowledge of the polls that warned of the possible triumph of the NO on questions D and E, on April 5 there was a police invasion of the Embassy of Mexico in Ecuador. Our Party immediately condemned this event, pointing out that even though it is true that the former vice president, Jorge Glas, who was hidden in that diplomatic compound, should be imprisoned for acts of corruption, nothing justifies the violation of Mexican sovereignty. The right-wing, mainstream media, together with the government, orchestrated an offensive to justify the action.

Noboa sought to pull off a coup d'état: to imprison Jorge Glas and project the image of a government willing to do anything to fight corruption. What was his aim? To recover his personal image in the face of the April 21 referendum and the 2025 elections, regardless of the serious economic and political consequences that this would cause.<sup>7</sup>

However, such a despicable political maneuver did not reverse the trend in favor of the NO on questions D and E, which finally won 65% and 70% of the vote, respectively.

### **A Political Victory of the Workers and People**

The results of the referendum constitute a transcendent victory of the people, of the democratic and left-wing tendency. Our Party and its forces, Popular Unity, the Popular Front and its member organizations contributed significantly to these results. It should be noted that these were the only organizations that expressly called for a NO vote on the two aforementioned questions, other organizations such as CONAIE, Pachakutik and the pro-Correa forces campaigned for a NO on the eleven questions.

Noboa, the business groups, the mainstream media, the right, and the IMF policy suffered a heavy defeat. The government was slow to react to the results; now it is trying to present itself as the winner because on nine of the eleven questions the YES won, but on the fundamental ones it was defeated. It makes sense that the people voted for the questions that referred to the action of the Army and Police to confront organized crime, we ourselves stated that we are for security, now we are demanding that the government guarantee peace and tranquility. It has no excuse not to do so.

These results show that there is an important sector of the population that rejects neoliberal policies, identifying them as detrimental for the people and the country and beneficial for big business. The workers did not fall into the trap; they understood that the struggle for security is one thing and allowing anti-popular policies, attacks on the sovereignty of the country and neoliberal

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<sup>7</sup> The Mexican government broke off international relations with Ecuador and filed a request for sanctions with the International Court of Justice, which includes the suspension of Ecuador as a member of the UN.

measures longed for by the ruling classes is another, very different thing.

The success of our policy in this important battle is due to the correct interpretation we made of the political scenario, the purposes of the government and the business groups; we tuned in to the mood of the masses, we took correct measures for prepare for and promote this political battle; we took the political initiative and played the role of vanguard.

After this referendum, a new political scenario has been created in the country; there is a new balance of social and political forces: The image of Noboa and his government is affected; he cannot say that he has the full support of the population; the political strength of the sectors that are opposed to neoliberal policies is clear; the left-wing political forces, such as Popular Unity, and popular organizations such as the UNE, UGTE and Popular Front, are better viewed by the population. Confidence is growing among the workers and people to confront the government's anti-popular policy; the "Glas case and the Mexican Embassy" forced the pro-Correa forces to abandon the ruling bloc and declare their opposition to the government, which means the loss of its parliamentary majority. The inter-bourgeois contradictions are also sharpening; Noboa's re-election project does not have a "free run", as they thought before the referendum.

### **The Mass Struggle Must Continue**

The criminal action is continuing, the serious problems related to the living conditions of the workers and people have not been resolved, the ground for the government's political maneuvering has shrunk. To all this must be added a very complex problem: the economic crisis.

The IMF, in its latest update of the outlook for economic growth, has established that Ecuador will have growth of 0.1% in 2024; the budget will have a deficit of about ten billion dollars; the IMF has offered a loan of four billion dollars (conditional on measures such as privatizations, increases in fuel prices, reforms to Social Security), 80% of which will be used to pay interest on the foreign debt; poverty and unemployment are growing. The government's inability has not made it possible to deal with the problems that are known to cause crises, such as the energy crisis. Discontent is growing.

The political battle won in the referendum is very important, but new actions and new struggles lie ahead. The government and big capital will not abandon their neoliberal economic-political program. No one lowers their banners. Such is the class struggle. We have said: we have won; the struggle continues.

***Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador***

*Ecuador, May 2024*

## **The rise of reaction, fascisation and the fight for a revolutionary rupture with the imperialist capitalist system**

In the working class and the popular strata, among the youth, many are worried about the continuing strengthening of the police state, the increasingly repressive nature of institutions, the growing militarisation of society and the electoral advance of the far-right, election after election!

We need to analyse these phenomena as objectively as possible and understand what drives them.

The tendency towards ever greater reaction is one of the characteristics of the capitalist system at the stage of imperialism: it is a tendency which is accelerating and which affects both its economic base – with a strengthening of the position of the most aggressive monopolies – and its superstructure, i.e. the state institutions, the political formations and the reactionary ideas which are spreading.

This trend towards reaction in all areas, accompanied by a rise in far-right parties, is affecting all Western “democracies”: in the Americas, with Trump, Bolsonaro, Javier Milei, etc., but also within the European Union.

In this article, we focus on the key features of this process in France. We refer to it as “fascisation”, while being careful not to confuse “fascisation” with “fascism”.

To understand this process, two major elements need to be taken into account: the difficulties of French imperialism, which wants to place the weight of its crisis on the backs of the working class and the popular masses, and a radicalisation of the various struggles of the working class and other layers of the popular masses.

### **Nostalgia for the “Greatness of France”**

Because of its structural weaknesses, French imperialism is less able to withstand the general crisis of the imperialist capitalist system and is falling behind other competing imperialist powers.

Its anchorage in the European Union is an important means of enabling it to stay in the race, but its weight within this imperialist construction is diminished.

**In Africa**, French imperialism has suffered bitter political and military setbacks. In Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, etc., it has come up against the appetites of other imperialists, **but above all against the anger of the peoples who reject its economic domination and the presence of its army.**

The peoples of the French colonies and neo-colonies (<sup>1</sup>) were increasingly rising up against the oppression to which they were subjected. The colonial crisis is sharpening in New Caledonia-Kanaky, Martinique and Guadeloupe, Mayotte, etc.

This relative but very real decline is reflected ideologically and politically, particularly in the nationalist and ultra-reactionary discourse of the far-right, which seeks to blame immigrants and, more specifically, Muslims. But that is not all.

### **Macron's Calls for "Regeneration" and "National Cohesion"**

The strong references to "rearmament" in Macron's discourse are not accidental. It is first and foremost a rearmament in the literal sense, accompanied by an ever-increasing militarisation of society and the economy. But this type of discourse, which has been a leitmotif since the beginning of the year, also has a strong ideological dimension. Macron speaks of the need to "rearm civic youth", with an omnipresent reference to the "values of the Republic" and a constant exaltation of "order" and "authority".

This is the framework for the reform of the secondary school, which is part of a conservative and backward-looking vision of schooling, and the generalisation of Universal National Service, which will become compulsory for the entire 15-16 age group, i.e. 800,000 young people every year! The aim is not to return to conscription and compulsory military service, which were abolished when Chirac professionalised the army at the end of the 1990s, but to use it as a breeding ground to enrol a certain number of young people and, more broadly, to prepare minds for "high-intensity conflicts" (such as the inter-imperialist war in Ukraine), by

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<sup>1</sup> Martinique, Guadeloupe, New Caledonia-Kanaky, Reunion, Mayotte, French Guiana, French Polynesia, etc.

developing the reactionary values of the army and the imperialist “nation”.

### **Fear of the “Dangerous Classes”**

The unrest of June 2023, which set working-class neighbourhoods ablaze after the death of a young man killed during a police check, are treated by the government as pure acts of vandalism for which no social excuse should be sought, despite the fact that these young people came from neighbourhoods that had been abandoned. The only response is police, military and judicial handling of these revolts.

One of the responses to the “Gilets Jaunes” [Yellow Vests] movement was the 2019 anti-breakers law.

Trade unionists who took part in the mobilisations against pension reform in 2023 are being prosecuted on the grounds that they committed illegal actions such as, for example, cutting electricity targeting businesses.

Recently, demonstrations and meetings were banned in order to counter the popular movement of solidarity with the Palestinian people. The general secretary of the CGT Nord departmental union was arrested at his home on 23 October 2023, placed in police custody and prosecuted for “apology for terrorism” and “incitement to racial hatred” following a press release condemning Israel’s military intervention in Gaza.

Police and judicial harassment are also being exercised against environmental or peasant activists and their associations that are opposed to large-scale costly and environmentally destructive projects, whose only beneficiaries are the building and public works monopolies or agribusiness.

Organizations defending democratic freedoms, trade unions and associations are being criminalised and financially and legally “stifled”.

It is in this context of the sharpening of the class struggle, of wanting to break down the resistance of the workers and people, and of strengthening the police state, that the proliferation of security laws attacking public and individual freedoms is taking place.



### **Security Laws and Mass Surveillance**

The law of 30 October 2017 “on internal security and the fight against terrorism” incorporated into ordinary law provisions previously reserved for states of emergency: the possibility of setting up protective perimeters, administratively closing places of worship, introducing surveillance measures against any person who may pose a serious threat to security and public order, restricting their movements, banning them from demonstrations, etc. It was supplemented in 2021 by a law aimed at strengthening the means of monitoring and surveillance of digital communications and connections.

The Covid 19 epidemic, the reality of which there is no denying, has been the occasion for extensive social and police control over a long period. It was accompanied by the development of an entire technological surveillance system based on cameras, sensors and electronic surveillance. With the organisation of the Olympic Games, this mass surveillance, under the guise of security, will take on an even greater dimension, accompanied by the possibility of channelling crowds. This major trend is strengthening the economic clout and power of influence and manipulation of the monopolies that produce and control the electronic resources used.

### **The Discrediting of Bourgeois Parliamentary Democracy**

The electoral progression of the far-right is undeniable, but it is, above all, abstention that is the dominant phenomenon among the working class and popular youth.

The gap between the representative institutions of bourgeois democracy and the people is widening all the time. This discredit also affects all the political forces that aspire to manage affairs within the framework of these institutions, which appear increasingly undemocratic.

To push through its austerity budgets and profoundly anti-worker and anti-grassroots laws, the government has stepped up its use of totally undemocratic procedures, permitted by the institutions themselves, notably article 49.3 of the constitution. This was particularly the case with the reform of the pension system which, in 2023, brought millions of demonstrators onto the streets for nearly 6 months.

There is a growing awareness among sectors of the working class and young people that this is not just a problem of political choices, but of a system that needs to be radically changed from top to bottom.

### **The Constitution of the 5th Republic**

The 1958 Constitution established a quasi-presidential regime. Over the years, its reactionary character has been reinforced, both in practice and through various constitutional reforms. This is not a linear phenomenon, but a trend that has run through all periods, including years when the parliamentary majority was left-wing, notably during the presidency of François Mitterrand. Sarkozy went even further, and Hollande, who wanted to be a “normal president”, has not reversed this trend.

#### The “Normalisation” of the Far-Right Parties

From this point of view, France is no different from other countries.

The traditional bourgeois parties, both right-wing and social-democratic, worn down by years of managing the interests of the bourgeoisie and the monopolies to the detriment of the interests of the workers and people, are seeing part of their electoral base move towards the far-right parties. The latter have modified their rhetoric, giving it a more “social” character, although their main theme remains the traditional one of immigration, presented as a threat of invasion, a source of violence and insecurity for the population (2).

Marine le Pen’s National Rally has 88 elected members in the National Assembly. Far from challenging the mechanisms of bourgeois and parliamentary democracy, it is using them to demonstrate its ability to manage the affairs of capital within the framework of bourgeois democracy. This is what it calls its “de-demonisation”.

While officially disavowing them, these parties are drawing in their wake other formations that are more radical in their discourse (such as the party of Zemmour and Marion Maréchal-Le Pen), including neo-fascist or neo-Nazi groups that attack migrants, young people and certain categories of people such as homosexuals, and may also attack trade union activists or associations.

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<sup>2</sup> Their virulently anti-Muslim racism has largely supplanted anti-Semitism, which has deep historical roots in all these parties: some are now frantic supporters of Israeli policy in its “war on Islamist terrorism”.

Very active on social networks, these various extreme right-wing groups are also widely covered by the mainstream media. Television channels such as *Cnews*, radio stations such as *Europe 1* and weeklies such as *Le journal du dimanche* have become quasi-official mouthpieces for the far-right.

### **The Monopolies' Stranglehold on the Media**

The print, broadcast and digital media are all, without exception, controlled by major monopolies: Martin Bouygues, at the head of his building and public works group, has his hands on the *TF1* television group; Bernard Arnaud, head of the LVMH luxury goods group, owns the daily *Le Parisien* and several business newspapers such as *Les Echos*. Rodolphe Saadé of Compagnie Générale Maritime (CMA CGM) has just acquired the all-news channel *BFM TV*, the radio station *RMC* and the daily newspaper *Libération*. *Cnews*, *Europe 1* and *Le Journal du Dimanche* are all owned by Bolloré, who puts people who openly claim to be from the far-right at the head of the editorial teams.

### **Why Do We Distinguish Between “Fascisation” and “Fascism”?**

At the VIIth Congress of the Communist International, G. Dimitrov warned of the fascist danger in these terms: “The



”The response to the coup of article 49.3 is a still more decisive ‘No’.” Demonstration in Paris after the use of this article of the Constitution to force the approval of the pension reform

imperialist circles are trying to shift the whole weight of the crisis onto the shoulders of the workers. *That is why they need fascism*” [Dimitrov’s emphasis]. He specified that “the coming to power of fascism is not just the ordinary substitution of one bourgeois government for another, but the replacement of one state form of the class domination of the bourgeoisie – bourgeois democracy – by another form of domination, the open terrorist dictatorship.” At the same time, he insisted on the danger of “underestimating the importance for the establishment of the fascist dictatorship of the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie, which are being aggravated today in the countries of bourgeois democracy, and which crush the democratic freedoms of the workers, falsify and erode the rights of Parliament, and accentuate the repression against the revolutionary movement”.

It is this process, which develops within bourgeois democracies, that we call “fascisation”. It is important not to confuse it with its outcome – fascism. Maintaining confusion on this point, or suggesting that we are on the eve of an open terrorist dictatorship, obscures an important element: the resistance of the workers and people. It also feeds illusions about the “ramparts” that might be represented by the liberal, social-liberal or so-called “republican” right-wing parties.

**The real barrier to reaction is that erected by the working class, the popular masses and the peoples**

The rhetoric instilled by the far-right is taken up by the right and the government – as we saw with the Immigration Act, which Marine le Pen’s party hailed as an “ideological victory” for its camp. They are spreading in certain sectors of society, but they are far from having won over society as a whole. Workers in the health and care sectors, those in education, the retail and food industries, metalworkers, those in small and large companies, railway workers, lorry drivers, some farmers, etc., are not talking about the “lost greatness of France”. They are demanding better living and working conditions, better wages to cope with the rising cost of living and necessary expenses. Many young people are mobilising against far-right ideas and groups. It is in all these struggles that class consciousness is forged, solidarity between the exploited is built and awareness of the need for a total break with the system emerges.

The tendency towards ever greater reaction is inherent in the capitalist-imperialist system, which is why the fight against fascisation, just as the fight against war or the fight against exploitation, must be linked to the fight against the capitalist-imperialist system. In all the mobilizations – trade unions, democratic, anti-imperialist, etc. – our party is working to raise awareness of the need and possibility of breaking with this system that crushes lives and destroys humanity and the planet! In this race with reaction, it is vital to strengthen the party of the working class and progressive mass organizations, to strengthen the unity between the working class and the other strata of the popular masses and to develop solidarity with the workers and peoples who are fighting for their emancipation.

***Communist Party of the Workers of France***

***www.pcof.net***

***March of 2024***

## **The Struggle against German Imperialism Today**

As inter-imperialist contradictions have intensified, Germany has increased its involvement in conflicts around the world in recent years: the war in Ukraine is particularly important in this respect, with Germany providing the most military support after the USA. Germany is also trying to expand its influence economically and politically. In the context of this development, it is becoming increasingly important for progressive, anti-imperialist forces to take a clear stance against German imperialism – but this requires clarity in the analysis of the imperialist world system and, above all, the right political consequences. In the following, the situation of German imperialism and its role in current conflicts will be outlined as well as the state of the struggle against imperialist war in Germany and our position in it.

### **Development of German imperialism**

First, a few observations on the history of German imperialism. The development of German imperialism after the Second World War and especially in recent decades is based on a number of pillars that are particularly important for the German economy. The “export champion of the world “ Germany profits in particular from cheap labor, the exploitation of which was made even easier at the turn of the millennium by the labor market reform “Agenda 2010”. This reform created in Germany the largest low-wage sector in Europe, in which both domestic and, in particular, foreign workers are exploited, especially from other EU countries. The EU is another important pillar of German imperialism, whose monopolies benefit not only from cheap labor, but also from the oppression and plundering of economically weaker countries and the European Single Market, through which more than half of German exports are sold. Another important pillar of the German economy and industry in particular was cheap energy, especially gas, largely imported from Russia. Under all these conditions, the economy was able to grow relatively peacefully and steadily for many decades.

In the light of this history, we must evaluate the phase in which German imperialism finds itself today. The world situation has presented German imperialism with various challenges in recent years. The crisis has hit the German economy particularly hard, with growth initially plummeting the most among the advanced imperialist countries. The recession continues to this day, with research institutes forecasting growth of just 0.1% for the year 2024 in March. The war in Ukraine and the sanctions against Russia, which have also cut off gas supplies from which German industry benefited greatly, have also contributed to weakening the economy. And the intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions, in which two blocs are developing, are also challenging Germany to define its role more distinctly.

All these developments have made Germany weaker against its competitors. It needs “partners” such as the USA, as it is not strong enough on its own. It is therefore fighting against and sometimes in cooperation with competitors such as France for a leading role in Europe. It is precisely this struggle for its own strength that makes Germany dangerous. The increasing confrontation between the USA and China is also threatening German imperialism’s path to greater strength. China is a key trading partner for German capital. An escalating conflict would further weaken German capital. It is therefore trying to go its own way in accordance with its economic interests. This shows the contradictory situation of German imperialism, which is constantly seeking to expand its own strength politically, economically and militarily, while at the same time being dependent on “partners” and fiercely competing with them. Emphasizing only one of the two sides – dependence or independence – leads to the wrong conclusions. For example, parts of the peace movement and social democratic forces repeatedly emphasize the dependence on the USA, which has become increasingly clear with the war in Ukraine and the cancellation of North Stream 2. However, overemphasizing these factors would create a false image, because from day to day German imperialism is trying to use the situation independently to make the best of it – and it must hurry to avoid being lost in international developments.

## **The role of the government**

The federal government, consisting of Social Democrats, Greens and Liberals since 2021, has been of immense service to the German monopolies in recent years. For example, in 2022, the government convened the “Concerted Action”, a format in which government, trade union leaders and employers come together to find solutions to economic challenges. This constellation has been convened repeatedly for decades and is a key instrument of class collaboration in Germany. In its most recent edition, it led to an agreement that reduced the burden of labor struggles for companies by negotiating one-time payments instead of long-term wage increases in many collective bargaining rounds. These one-time payments were partly paid for by the state. In addition to this significant support, state subventions for companies have reached new heights in recent years. Billions have been released to companies to compensate for lost profits on the grounds of the pandemic and crisis. However, the subventions are not only intended to save companies from bankruptcy, but also to help make the German economy “ready for the future”. For example, Germany is investing billions to ramp up chip production. Intel alone is subsidized with 10 billion euros to set up a production site in Germany; TSMC gets 5 billion euros for the same purpose. In a speech, Chancellor Olaf Scholz described semiconductors as the “oil of the 21st century”. Also, 7 billion euros are provided for the steel industry to switch to “green” steel and remain internationally competitive. Some of these subventions are not paid for from the regular budget because the so-called “debt brake” applies here, a law that is intended to prevent the state from falling further into debt and which is repeatedly used to justify cuts in social areas. In order to avoid this regulation, the subventions are provided as “special assets” – but sooner or later, these too have to be paid off. The flip side of the subventions are major cuts in the social sector, with only the extent of the cuts being a subject of negotiation between the parties. In order to increase acceptance for these cuts, they are repeatedly justified by the war and the challenges facing the nation. A good example of the logic was the “freeze for peace” slogan issued by politicians when energy prices skyrocketed after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. However, the high prices (the highest in Europe) went straight into the



pockets of energy companies such as RWE and E.On, which made the highest profits in their history. In 2023, the energy corporation RWE also made an adjusted profit of 4.5 billion euros, 39% more than in the previous year, E.On recorded growth of 12% with 3.2 billion euros and even Uniper, a company that was saved from bankruptcy by the state with 20 billion euros in 2022, made a profit of 4.4 billion euros.

The ruling class is setting the course for the future and leaving no means unused to maintain and improve the position and competitiveness of the German monopolies on the global market. To this end, it is also expanding its influence beyond its own borders, with Germany's dominant position in the EU enabling it to use it to further its ambitions. Not only are the subventions partly provided by EU projects, for example in chip production with the billion-euro "Chips for Europe"-project. It is also used beyond EU borders to expand German influence in the world. One example of this is the Global Gateway project, which, alongside the "New Silk Road" and "Build Back Better World", must be seen as one of the current major imperialist strategic projects. Of the 300 billion euros currently planned for Global Gateway, 150 billion euros have been earmarked for infrastructure projects in Africa. Within this framework, for example, the so-called Lobito Corridor from Congo via Zambia to Angola is intended to ensure better access to raw materials. With the Global Gateway project, Germany is also securing its access to hydrogen from Namibia – measures to secure the future of German industry at the expense of dependent countries. At the G20 summit in 2023, a new corridor from India via the Middle East to Europe was also planned under the name IMEC, also a counter-project to the "New Silk Road". The EU is and remains central to implementing German imperialist claims in the world.

This expansion of German influence finds its greatest expression in military developments. One day after the outbreak of war in Ukraine, the Chancellor pulled a 100 billion "special asset" from his pocket to expand the German armed forces. These 100 billion euros will increase the defense budget by 2026, thus meeting NATO's 2% target for the first time. This development marks the largest rearmament since the Second World War. The war was described by the Chancellor as a "turning point" that would also challenge Germany's ability to fight. German politicians, such as

the chairman of the ruling Social Democrats, Lars Klingbeil, formulated this as follows: “After almost 80 years of restraint, Germany now has a new role in the international coordinate system.... Germany must aspire to be a leading power”. Germany is also involved in the latest escalations in the Red Sea by sending a frigate, which has been described as the navy’s most dangerous mission in decades. Up to ten percent of German foreign trade passes through the Red Sea. All these developments are clear signs that although German imperialism is weakened and needs partners, it is fighting resolutely to assert itself in the intensification of inter-imperialist contradictions. Particularly important for German imperialism today is the war in Ukraine, which is worth taking a closer look at.

### **German involvement in the war in Ukraine**

Even though a discussion erupted in German politics at the beginning of the war in Ukraine as to what exactly Germany’s position should be, it is not as if German interference in Ukraine only began on February 24, 2022. Germany has played a special role in the long-standing struggle between Western and Russian forces for influence in Ukraine. The Merkel government was already involved during the Maidan, for all the world to see, when acting Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle joined in the demonstrations on the Maidan. Germany played a key role in drafting the EU-Association Agreement, which also linked Ukraine militarily to the EU and NATO, and after Russia’s attack on Ukraine, it quickly became clear after some negotiations within the ruling class that Ukraine would receive significant military and financial support in this conflict.

The government pulled out all the stops to combat the widespread pacifist attitude among the general public. Calls for negotiations and a ceasefire were labeled as support for Putin and the issue of arms deliveries was addressed in the media until at some point, polls showed that more than half of the population approved of the idea. One particularly abstruse example was Chancellor Scholz’s description of peace demonstrators as “fallen angels from hell”. With this major propaganda campaign, whose predominant narrative was: “Ukraine is also fighting for our freedom and democracy!”, the government managed to unite large parts of the population behind its war policy. Even left-liberal

circles took to the streets in the first weeks or days, and ever heavier weapons were demanded in solidarity actions. After several years of war, we can now see where this support has led: Ukraine is in a worse negotiating position than it was at the beginning of the war, when the Western powers encouraged it to continue fighting even though negotiation options were open. At the same time, German investments in war-torn Ukraine are already being negotiated at “reconstruction conferences” in Berlin.

The reaction to the war in Ukraine among more or less progressive forces was ambivalent: The left-liberal, pro-government organizations behaved indifferently at best and, at worst, were directly harnessed to the German war policy through “solidarity demonstrations”. The German peace movement, on the other hand, quickly formulated a position against participation in the war, which initially remained relatively isolated among the population as a whole, partly due to the fact that it did not manage to give the right reasons for opposing the war. We have noticed similar attitudes in various countries, which is why it is worth going into a little more detail and explaining our concrete policy towards them. In our resolution “All monopolies and imperialists are enemies of the peoples”, we wrote in November 2023:

*“[Our conference] considers it its duty to neutralize the unscientific positions that either deny the imperialist character of China and Russia or, while admitting them as imperialist, define them as pro-humanitarian, friendly to the peoples, peaceful powers and consider only the USA and its allies and NATO as ‘enemies’. Those who aim at the establishment of a “multipolar” world, claiming that the USA and NATO are the only enemies of the peoples, as if today is ‘unipolar’ and the imperialists are not fighting to redive the world, spread the dream that one can fight against US imperialism by relying on Russian and Chinese imperialism. However, one cannot fight against one imperialist by leaning to another!”<sup>1</sup>*

This position can also be found in the German peace movement, which is dominated by bourgeois-pacifist and revisionist forces. The glorification of Russia and China goes so far that the ambassadors of Russia and China were also invited to the Rosa Luxemburg Conference 2024, the largest meeting of left-wing,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cipoml.net/en/all-monopolies-and-the-imperialists-are-the-enemies-of-the-peoples/>

opportunist, but also revolutionary parties and organizations, which is organized by the revisionists, and found a place in the program. And so, the Russian war against Ukraine was not condemned in the peace movement, its class character was not emphasized, but rather concealed, with large sections adopting the Russian justification of “security interests” and the “anti-fascist struggle” in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of the war, we have been fighting in the peace movement and beyond for the proletarian position, which is also a requirement for the peace movement and the labor movement to come together and become strengthened. The current world situation and the discussions in the countries make it necessary to retrace the profound conclusions that the world communist movement has drawn from the transition of capitalism into its imperialist stage, which continues to this day. In the struggle against the social-chauvinist leaders of the Second International, who had defected to the camp of imperialism, Lenin elaborated his analysis of imperialism, which showed in all clarity that capitalism sooner or later necessarily leads to imperialism, that imperialism results from the laws of capitalism and does not abolish them, but continues them on a world scale and draws the peoples of the world into this imperialist world system entirely. This fundamental development had to lead to the class struggle from then on taking place on a world scale, to the contradiction between wage labor and capital on a world scale giving rise to the contradiction between the imperialist nations and the contradiction between imperialist and oppressed nations. It was the Third International that worked out what this had to mean for the strategy and tactics of the communists in the struggle for revolution and allowed this development to come into its own in its significance for theory. Lenin formulated the attitude of Marxists in inter-imperialist wars in “Socialism and War” in 1915 as follows:

“It is not the business of Socialists to help the younger and stronger robber (Germany) to rob the older and overgorged robbers.”<sup>2</sup>

This principle can be applied to current inter-imperialist conflicts such as the one taking place in Ukraine. It is still not our task today to defend Russia’s security interests or to take a stand for

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/s-w/ch01.htm>

one side or the other in negotiations and compromises that the imperialists have negotiated among themselves and which they have broken time and time again. But it would be wrong to conclude from this attitude that the Marxist standpoint is indifferent to these conflicts. Lenin goes on to write:

*“Socialists must take advantage of the struggle between the robbers to overthrow them all.”*<sup>3</sup>

And:

*“A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, cannot fail to see that its military reverses facilitate its overthrow.... On the contrary, it is precisely a statement of this kind that would conform to the cherished thoughts of every class-conscious worker, and would be in line with our activities towards converting the imperialist war into civil war.”*<sup>4</sup>

The policy of the defeat of one’s own government and the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war by the Bolsheviks is a particularly clear expression of how precisely Marxists have to understand the inner connection between imperialist war and the struggle for revolution. The Marxist-Leninist standpoint grasps the inner connection between the class contradiction and the inter-imperialist contradictions in its full extent, not only by emphasizing that the end of imperialist war only becomes possible with the end of capitalism, but also by necessarily linking the struggle against imperialist war on all sides with the struggle for revolution. The Marxist standpoint makes the attitude of communists to any war dependent on the strengthening of the class struggle.

Of course, we must recognize that the slogan of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war is not applicable to the current conditions in Germany. Where the class struggle on the part of the proletariat is relatively weak, where identification with one’s own imperialists is strong even in the working class and class consciousness is weak, it is also difficult to build on it and derive one’s stance towards the war from it. In Russia and Ukraine, too, there is no large workers’ movement that expresses the interests of the class and opposes (in the case of Russia) the imperialist war from

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/s-w/ch01.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/s-w/ch01.htm>

its own ground or (in the case of Ukraine) submission to all imperialism and its own comprador bourgeoisie. These movements are weak, which makes it all the easier for the rulers to pass off their interests as the interests of the “peoples”. But just because the labor movement is weak and the transformation of imperialist war into civil war against one’s own bourgeoisie on all sides does not seem to be in the near future, Marxist analysis not only remains correct, but it even gives us very concrete guidelines for correct practice.

It warns us never to evaluate the struggle against the imperialist war independently of the class struggle, never to allow ourselves to be misled into looking for right or wrong on the side of one or the other imperialist, but to deduce the right policy from the class standpoint. In the case of Germany, this means concretely exposing the interests of German imperialism at every point, which is feeding on the war in Ukraine and deriving new strength from it. And there are enough starting points to show the class character of this war on all sides and to develop the right policy on this basis. The war policy is already directly opposed to the interests of the working population, when they are asked to “freeze for peace” or when a “special asset” of 100 billion euros is spent on armaments while social services are cut. Those who are pushing this anti-working-class policy are the same people who are crying out for more weapons for Ukraine. And for many people, this internal connection is not abstract or distant, but very concrete and tangible. This is the wound into which we must pour the salt by linking our demands in relation to this war always and at every point with the attacks on the working class.

### **Germany and the war against the Palestinian people**

It is true that the war in the Middle East cannot be compared with the war in Ukraine in terms of its significance for German imperialism. However, the war against the Palestinian people and, above all, its public discussion in Germany exhibit national specifics that are worth looking at and which mean that Israeli-German relations are always covered by moral justifications. For example, solidarity with Israel is a so-called “reason of state” in Germany and is derived from historical guilt towards the Jewish people. German imperialism has a particularly perfidious way of using its own crimes during the Second World War to legitimize its crimes

today. Germany has increased its arms deliveries to Israel more than tenfold since October 7 and has supported the Israeli government in its brutal war against the Palestinian people in every way. All of this was accompanied by a wave of demonstrations expressing sympathy for the victims of October 7 and applauding Israeli revenge. The slogan of these campaigns was “Never again is now!” (in reference to the crimes of fascism, which implicitly also places October 7 in this tradition of antisemitic terror, as the demonstrations were a reaction to this day). State-organized demonstrations were supported by civil and economic institutions and companies. The complete de-contextualization of the Holocaust allows for absurd situations, such as companies like Bayer (direct successor of IG Farben, which had its own labor camp built in Auschwitz) today being signatories and supporters of the “Never again is now”-campaign and profiling themselves about it, while progressive, anti-imperialist forces in Germany have been subjected to a huge smear campaign since the beginning of the war and demonstrations by the Palestinian community lead to debates about “imported anti-semitism”.

However, this schizophrenic public debate is not only fueled by state politics and large media outlets, but has its own reflection in the “leftist” movement. Since the 1990s, there has been a large current within anti-fascist movements that draw exactly the same conclusion from German history and see unconditional solidarity with Israel as the duty of every German citizen. This current of “anti-Germans”, which we will not go into any further, has been



Ministerial cabinet of the German government, with Social-Democratic Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the center

losing ground within the left in recent years, but its influence is still strong and there is broad support for Israel in progressive alliances and trade union circles, which is also accompanied by the criminalization and exclusion of anti-imperialist groups. For example, it is “leftists” who organize counter-demonstrations at pro-Palestinian demonstrations or demand that pro-Palestinian groups be excluded from alliances and denied spaces. This situation, which is unique in the world, means that solidarity with Palestine is by no means a matter of course in broad sections of the “left” in Germany.

We have formulated the Marxist attitude towards the Palestinian liberation struggle and its brutal oppression in many places, including in our resolution “Solidarity with the Palestinian people!” in November of 2023:

*“We affirm that any “solution” that does not put to an end the occupation of Palestinian territory, that not recognize the equality of national rights of the Palestinians, especially the right of self-determination until the formation of an independent state, serve only to justify the continuation of the genocide of Palestinian people.”<sup>5</sup>*

Here, the Marxist principle of the right to national self-determination is transferable in its full scope, among other things because the oppression of the Palestinian people is most comparable in character to a situation of colonial oppression in which the right to statehood has not yet been realized. The national question is a central question in Palestine, and as long as national self-determination has not been realized, it must be a central demand of communists to create the conditions for it. This is in no way in contradiction to strengthening the class struggle in every country in favor of the proletariat, but on the contrary is explicitly derived from it. Lenin wrote in 1916 in his theses “The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination”:

*“Socialists must not only demand the unconditional and immediate liberation of the colonies without compensation—and this demand in its political expression signifies nothing more nor less than the recognition of the right to self-determination—but must render determined support to the more revolutionary elements in the bourgeois-democratic movements for national liberation in these countries and assist their rebellion—and if need be, their revolutionary*

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<sup>5</sup> <https://cipoml.net/en/solidarity-with-the-palestinian-people/>



*war—against the imperialist powers that oppress them.”<sup>6</sup>*

This also means that our demands must make it very clear that the freedom of the Palestinian people at this point is a precondition for social progress, that there can be no peace in the region without this precondition, which also means supporting the national liberation movement, but always emphasizing the proletarian, progressive elements within these liberation movements. In the war situation that has prevailed since October, the demand for an end to military and political support for Israel and for a ceasefire (which in this case means an end to the Israeli war against Gaza) must be called for in Germany.

Representing these demands is not a matter of course in Germany. But we can see that the huge campaign of solidarity with the Israeli war being waged in the German media is by no means leading to the broad mass of the working class really supporting the Israeli war. The many migrant workers in particular, who often have a particular connection to the region, but also large sections of the working class beyond that, do not support the war, but are also unwilling to take to the streets against it. One of the consequences of this is that the pro-Palestinian movement remains isolated and heavily dominated by religion and nationalism. This makes it all the more important to focus on demands in these movements that are aimed directly at the German state, exposing its support for Israel as hypocritical and giving a political justification to the intuitive feeling of solidarity among sections of the working class.

### **The main enemy is in one’s own country!**

Germany is still a strong imperialist country that is trying to assert itself on various fronts. However, the central front against which the attacks of German imperialism are directed today is the internal front. Here, too, the current government fulfills a specific purpose. It is a tried and tested device of the German ruling class to resort to governments dressed in progressive cloaks whenever the attacks on the working class are particularly harsh. For example, it was the Social Democrats and the Greens who implemented the “Agenda 2010” in 2001. And even today, the “coalition of progress”, as they call themselves, still manages to bring large

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/jan/x01.htm>

sections of the population into its stream with its propaganda. This is achieved, among other things, by the social democrats, who explicitly use their influence in the trade unions to spread corporate policy among the workers. For example, protests have taken place in recent months in which workers in important industrial sectors were called upon by the trade union to demonstrate for a state-subsidized electricity price for industry. The declared aim of this electricity price is to maintain the competitiveness of German industry and safeguard our country's prosperity, according to Economics Minister Robert Habeck.

While the Ministry of Economic Affairs is proposing a cap on industrial electricity prices at 6 cents per kilowatt hour, which means a state-funded relief of up to 30 billion euros, the world's largest single trade union, IG Metall, is going one step further and calling for a price cap at 5 cents per kilowatt hour. But that is not enough. In mid-January 2024, Christiane Benner, First Chairwoman of IG Metall, called for a "special asset" of 600 billion euros to be set up for the "ecological restructuring" of German industry. This sum corresponds to over one and a half times the total national budget. The labor aristocracy is proving to be a tried and tested tool of German capital, especially in these times, a tradition that goes back to 1914, when the Social Democrats, and with them the trade union leaders, allowed themselves to be harnessed for the first time for the so-called "Burgfrieden", a "truce" between labor and capital for the time of the war. Although the strike movement is the strongest it has been for years and dissatisfaction with the government is very high in opinion polls, the government with its policies is currently still relatively firmly in the saddle. An increase in class consciousness, which is not only the basis for economic but also political struggles, can be observed, but identification with "German economy" and the state remains high. Military ambitions are also very successfully justified with the narrative of defending democracy and peace, as can be seen from the latest surveys, according to which, for example, over half of the population in Germany is in favor of reintroducing mandatory military service. As a consequence of all these attempts to bring the population into the reserve of imperialism, we have seen a defining political trend in recent months: the rise of nationalism. Whether it is the identification with "German economy", which is carried into the working class, or the narrative of the "external

enemy”, which would make rearmament necessary, the ruling politicians are trying by all means to establish national unity and to put the alleged national interest in the place of any class consciousness, no matter how weak. Rising nationalism is reinforced by the policies of the ruling parties, but as a consequence it also leads to conservative and right-wing parties gaining momentum. In current polls, the conservative party and the “Alternative for Germany” (AfD), which also contains fascist elements, are the strongest parties. It cannot be ruled out that the pendulum of bourgeois politics will swing and that capital will in the future rely on right-wing conservative parties rather than left-liberal ones. But regardless of how politics develops, German imperialism and the intensified class war from above, which it is forced to wage in order to assert itself on a global scale, will also cause nationalism to grow ever stronger, because this is the form of its internal rule. To the extent that we understand the connection between imperialist war policy and its insertion in the class struggle in our own country, to that extent we also open up the means for the struggle against imperialism and war, which only grows ever stronger in connection with the general class struggle. And so in these times we must emphasize the special importance of social struggles and in particular the strike movements that have been gaining strength in recent years. Even if the economic struggles do not necessarily bring with them a political awareness of class society as a whole, they are the wounds into which salt must be poured. It is clear that raising class consciousness to political demands does not happen overnight. But especially at times when German imperialism is particularly dependent on the “Burgfrieden”, every form of class struggle gains in importance because it means a crack in the national front.

No matter at what stage of the struggle, Marxism provides us with the tools to deepen our analysis and to bring the inner connection between the contradiction between wage labor and capital and the contradictions of the imperialist world system to its full significance in our practice and to do our utmost to strengthen the independent stance of the working class in all these conflicts. In Germany, Karl Liebknecht’s slogan from over 100 years ago remains relevant in this case, and we can apply it in all areas: “The main enemy is in our own country!”

*April of 2024*

## **The Depletion of the ‘Others’ and the Consolidation of the Right-Wing in Indian Politics**

### **The Elections to the state assemblies in the Five States of India in 2023**

Indian politics operates at many levels, at the level of political parties backed by imperialist and multinational corporations which have been hoping for global recovery through the ‘opening’ of the Indian market and natural resources at the cost of the Indian farmers and tribal people and the burgeoning young workers; at the level of the different segments of the Indian corporate houses with a clear agenda of pursuing a neo liberal agenda which simultaneously favours a handful of crony capitalists; at the level of the North Indian Hindu upper and landed middle castes who had to bear the brunt of the democratic aspirations of the landless Dalits and other lower castes and minorities; at the level of federal politics in which the hegemonic Hindi-speaking Hindu north Indian upper caste combines seek domination over all the states with their own cultures, regional elites and tribal communities. As the economy is being radically restructured and millions of peasant, tribal and artisanal youth are being dispossessed of access to resources (land, forests and traditional clientele) and being thrown into the unorganised sector labour market, the traditional parties (including the communists and the socialists) which catered to the interests of the labouring poor have been thrown out of gear, unable to comprehend the change or cope with the organisational challenges being posed by the new developments.

This disarray of the left has helped the consolidation of the right wing now headed by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which has tactfully shifted its stand from opposing globalisation to championing neoliberal economic policies to pursue its agenda of forging a consolidated neo-conservative political and cultural hegemony. An important new support base of the RSS has been the assiduously cultivated non-resident Indian techies

who are said to be disproportionately upper caste in composition who used the highly publicly subsidised Indian technical and science education to propel themselves into corporate bureaucracies abroad. They have helped the RSS in two main ways, firstly in systematically utilising the ‘social’ media to propagating its ideologies, fine-tuning them to even small segments of the population. Secondly it has flooded the RSS and its front organisations with ample funds. Flush with funds from its non-resident upper caste professional Hindu supporters and now with state funds, the RSS has the most flourishing grass-root organisation across the country and is actively promoting civil strife between communities and seeking to polarise and unite the conservative forces under its own leadership. This ground-level organisational consolidation of the RSS has eroded the base of organisations espousing liberal and democratic ideas, and the various political parties have ended up catering to the conservative mood created by the RSS. State power is now being used in an unabashed manner by the RSS to throttle institutions, intellectuals, artists and activists who either promote liberal or left-wing thinking and promoting a new culture of Hindu right-wing political thought. This neo-Hindu ideology which seeks to convert Hinduism hitherto without any centralised institution into a religion with a Church-like control system. The RSS which only some decades ago stood for a kind of religious economic nationalism now actively promotes the multinational corporate flooding of the country and uses the rhetoric of ‘decolonising’ Indian culture, by which it means rejection of ideas of democracy, equality, personal liberty, fraternity, social justice, civil rights and scientific thinking, all of which stand discredited as colonial impositions. Its stated aim is to institute an aggressive Hindu religious nationalist state in India in the place of the liberal democratic constitution. This would not only make religious minorities second-class citizens but also consolidate the upper-caste male control over Hindu society. Besides, the RSS is deeply uncomfortable with the idea of federalism and decentralisation and keeps harping on the slogan of ‘One Nation, One leader, one law, one tax regime, one language, one curriculum...’

Understandably this ‘one’ is to be defined as upper-caste Hindu neo-liberal ideology, which necessarily negates the multi-cultural and multi-religious character of the Indian population and egging the majority Hindus against minorities, especially Muslims

in the plains and the Christians in the tribal areas. To this effect it has used cultural symbols like renaming place names, carrying out campaigns against places of worship of Muslims, Christians and other minorities, and most importantly the amendment to Citizenship Act and the drive to build a common register of all citizens and placing the onus of proving citizenship on the citizens themselves, especially those from minority communities. This was stalled by stiff protest by all the minorities, especially the Muslim women who staged a historic sit-in agitation in the heart of the Capital, New Delhi, prior to and during the pandemic.

The emerging dominance of the RSS in Indian politics should not obfuscate the importance of the active support provided by imperialist powers and Indian corporate houses. If the 'opening' up of China propelled global capitalist economy in the preceding decades, it ran out of steam during the last few years marked by the Covid crises and slowing down. This has only been partially overcome by the final resort of capital in crises, Wars – the Afghan War, War between NATO and Russia in Ukraine, the Israeli war to exterminate Palestine, all of them fought for control over the oil resources. World capital looks to opening of India with its immense population and natural resources, which began somewhat half-heartedly by the Congress government in the 1990s, for fueling the world capitalist economy. The Congress, which could remain in power only by patching up an alliance with diverse regional political interests, could not push through the neo-liberal agenda with enough force. It had to compromise the neo-liberal agenda with a 'rights based' approach which sought to simultaneously ensure 'right to food', 'right to information', 'employment guarantee', 'right to education' as well as laws recognising the right of peasants over land or the right of indigenous tribes to forests. While some modest public funds were allocated to these programmes, in actual fact the enactments themselves did not have much teeth and remained an eyewash. Such riding on two horses drawing in opposite directions did not go down well either with the corporate interests or with the masses at large. Corporate capitalist interests both at the international and national level put their weight behind the BJP, which promised to use its Hindu communal mobilisation backed by the social media campaigns masterminded and funded by the information technology sector, to gain mass popularity and at the same time pursue an aggressive

full throttle neo-liberal policy, which meant large-scale dispossession of the peasants and tribal people, besides dismantling of the old labour laws, and replacing the ‘rights-based’ social policy with a market-linked ‘insurance’ policy and direct cash transfers through the expansion of the banking system, and bringing the vast labouring population into the orbit of commercial banking. This was to offset the social unrest that was inevitable due to the ‘zero’ employment growth and dispossession and also to use the funds allocated for amelioration to fuel capitalist circulation and accumulation. Such a combination was too attractive to corporate capital and it chose to turn a blind eye to the highly regressive communal programme. Corporate capital also stood to gain immensely by the deep wounds inflicted by the BJP government upon the informal sector, especially of the self-employed workers through its ‘demonetisation’ ‘lockdown due to the pandemic’ and the steps taken to centralise the indirect tax regime (the institution of a single Goods and Services Tax in place of locally levied ‘sales tax’ etc). The BJP’s much publicised attempt to promote manufacturing in India as an alternative destination for investment (as China went under the pandemic) did not really take off and this and other policies actually decelerated economic growth in the immediate post-pandemic years. As a response the state has initiated a vast construction programme publicly funded but routed through private corporate houses, mainly in building roads by acquiring forest and agricultural lands on an unprecedented scale. This is expected to fuel growth and also ensure access to interior markets and natural resources.

The above discussion should be able to explain the support extended to the BJP leadership by the imperialist powers and leaders of the NATO and Russian blocs and also the Middle eastern oil rich states.

The BJP government sought to use the cover of the pandemic to dismantle the earlier structure of shoring up the rich and middle peasantry in different parts of the country, which went through the ‘green revolution’, and also to dismantle the earlier regime of labour laws which regulated working hours, minimum wages, safety in worksites and also the use of women’s and children’s labour. It got away with the dismantling of the labour laws (which anyway only protected a small segment of the working class) due to the immense explosion of unemployment among the

working youth. However it faced stiff resistance to the new farm laws from the prosperous and not so prosperous farmers, who staged a historic sit-in agitation surrounding the capital city of Delhi and had to beat a retreat. If nothing else it demonstrated the possibility of a section of the privileged social classes (kulaks in this case) being alienated and resisting successfully the policies of this government, which otherwise has been riding roughshod over all popular interests. Incidentally this also resulted in the electoral defeat of both the BJP and the Congress in the state of Punjab, which was most affected by the farmers' movement.

Ever since it came to power the BJP has pursued a policy of eliminating and undermining any opposition, both electoral and ideological. The systematic attack on academic freedom in universities and media, which appeared to promote ideas contrary to that of the Hindu right-wing, is a case in point. It has also used the fact that participation in Indian electoral politics is not possible without resorting to graft and corruption, to both undermine the legitimacy of the institution of parliamentary democracy and also to gain control over the members of the opposition. The enormously expanded economic surveillance initially fuelled by the aftermath of 9/11 attack on the US, but subsequently aided by the corporate IT sector in India, has been used to compromise the position of political opponents across the country and either contain them or buy them off outright. This enabled the BJP to gain power even in states in which it had faced electoral defeat in 2018 (Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra) and decimate the opposition in many other states like Uttar Pradesh.

Even so the 'victorious march' of the BJP got stalled in the non-Hindi speaking belt, especially in the south where the upper-caste Hindu right-wing faces stiff challenge from the leftist, anti-caste, regional and other ideologies. The larger project of undermining federalism and putting in its place a highly centralised political system thus faces a stiff challenge from these southern states. The politics in the North eastern states is more complicated due to the absence of a significant upper-caste Hindu population in most of the states. The BJP has used the usual tactics of shoring up corrupt tribal leadership and playing up the leadership of one tribe against the other, promoting fratricidal warfare. To what extent this policy will be to its advantage remains to be seen.



The results of the recent state assembly elections and the prospective national general elections next year needs to be seen against this background. The fact that the Corporate and multinational capital favours the BJP, the fact that the BJP is supported by the upper-caste Hindu male orthodoxy and the equally powerful fact that the growing inequality, deprivation and unemployment is turning the BJP dream sour and a significant section of regional powers are getting more and more uncomfortable with the overall BJP-RSS agendas.

Of the four states in which elections were held in 2023, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are key Hindi-speaking states in which the BJP had seen defeat in the 2018 elections. However, the BJP managed to break a faction led by the erstwhile royal family of Gwalior and form the government. These states are also the bastions of conservative Hinduism, dominated by land-owning Brahmins, Rajput royalty and Banias despite the population being mainly the Backward Castes, Dalits and tribal Adivasis. This would also form the bulk of the Hindi-speaking population. It was therefore vital for the long-term strategy of the BJP to gain control over the government of these states and it invested much resources for this purpose. The BJP's efforts were amply complemented by the efforts of the Congress, whose infighting and dependence upon a grass-root organisation deeply enmeshed with the BJP. Thus despite pre-poll predictions that the Congress will win in both Madhya Pradesh, where the BJP was getting more and more unpopular, and in Chhattisgarh, the BJP managed to score an impressive victory.

It was largely the ability of the BJP to control the social media, aggressive Hindu propaganda and the promise of direct cash transfers of paltry sums which helped to turn the voters in its favour. We shall presently discuss more of this.

Telangana is a southern state largely consisting of the territories of the erstwhile Hyderabad Nizamate, rich in mineral and forest resources and a substantial tribal population like Chhattisgarh. The government there was in the hands of the Telangana Rajya Samiti, which had spearheaded the movement for the formation of separate state of Telangana. It was its second term and had emerged as one of the most corrupt and family-cantered parties in the country. With little developmental work and excessive graft, it had lost the popular support which had buoyed it to

power. Telangana, it should be remembered, had gone through an intense phase of communist struggles right from the 1940s and all the way till the 1980s, when they were violently suppressed. It also has a substantial Muslim and low-caste population but relatively little brahmanisation. Little wonder that the BJP has not yet made major inroads despite very active political work in the state. It was the Congress which gained from the voter disenchantment and managed to sweep the polls.

Elections in Mizoram were held under the shadows of the civil strife and ethnic cleansing in the neighbouring state of Manipur. This strife between the minority Christian Kuki tribals of the hill regions and the majority Hindu Meiteis of the plains, actively encouraged and abetted by the BJP and the state. was a stiff warning to the neighbouring states with a large tribal and also a Christian population. This enabled the alliance of more secularly oriented tribal groups under the Zoram People's Movement to win the elections on the slogan of respecting the rights of all religions in the country. The previous government led by the Mizo National Front was seen as being closer to the BJP.

A quick look at the data relating to the election results clearly indicates a gain for the BJP in the key Hindi-belt states. Above all it gives it control over the government apparatus in these states in the run up to the General Elections to the Parliament next year. It has also gained an important foothold in Telangana with 8 seats and 14% vote share.

Interestingly the BJP's gain in vote share was not really at the cost of the Congress, its main rival party. The Congress has a stable vote share of about 40% in all the states except Mizoram. The BJP's gain has been at the cost of the 'others', those not aligned to either party. These could be small local parties, not recognised as 'national parties', could simply be local potentates capable of holding on their own (independents), candidates put up by social movements and even 'rebels' from the recognised parties. During the last decade, these 'others' did manage to get elected in large numbers and when the two main parties were evenly poised, they had a crucial role to play and fetched a good price. It is these 'others' whose votes shifted to the BJP. During this election we see a dramatic decline of the 'others', both in terms of vote share and seat share. This effectively means a greater polarisation between the Congress and the BJP, also indicating the inability of the non-

corporate funded political outfits to compete in elections. It should be remembered that despite much rhetoric and sabre rattling, the two parties remain wedded to neo-liberal economic policies and ‘attracting capital investments’, and both of them at the ground level subsist upon the support of conservative feudal and cattiest landed interests. The difference remains at the level of national leadership, where the Congress ostensibly still swears by the constitutional values, liberal democracy, secular politics and a commitment to rights of various sections of the population. Significant though these stances are, it should be remembered that the Congress was also forced to stand by them due to its dependence upon the smaller players in politics, whether the Communists or the socialists or the regional anti-BJP parties. Their weakening will push the Congress closer to the BJP in terms of its overall policies and practices. As things stand the Congress is the so-called ‘B Team’ of corporate, imperialist and conservative interests.

The need then is to build grass-roots movements which are not ‘apolitical’, the way the so-called ‘social movements’ have functioned so far, but actively political even in the electoral sense. These movements need to be sustained by grass-roots and regional organisations with clear ideological orientation, which need not necessarily be revolutionary, but simply a defence of the present constitutional values and the immediate interests of the mass of the toiling people. This also needs to militantly face the ground-level bullying by the right-wing forces. Anything short of this will only push the Congress as a whole or its constituents closer to the BJP and the RSS.

## **The State Assembly Election Results 2018, 2023: A Comparative View**

### **Madhya Pradesh**

Voting % – 78%

<b>Vote Share</b>	<b>BJP</b>	<b>Congress</b>	<b>Others</b>
2018	41	40.9	18.1
2023	48.6	40.4	11

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Seat Share			
2018	109	114	7
2023	163	66	1

**Rajasthan**

Voting % – 78.4%

Vote Share	BJP	Congress	Others
2018	38.8	39.3	21.9
2023	41.7	39.5	18.8

Seat Share			
2018	73	100	27
2023	115	69	15

**Chhattisgarh**

Voting % – 72%

Vote Share	BJP	Congress	Others
2018	32.9	46.3	20.8
2023	43	42.2	14.8

Seat Share			
2018	15	68	7
2023	54	35	1

**Telangana**

Voting % – 71%

Vote Share	BJP	Congress	TRS	Others

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2018	6.9	28.7	47.4	17
2023	13.9	39.4	37.4	9.3

<b>Seat Share</b>				
2018	1	19	88	12
2023	8	64	39	8

**Mizoram**

Voting % – 78%

<b>Vote Share</b>	<b>BJP</b>	<b>Congress</b>	<b>ZPM</b>	<b>MNF</b>	<b>Others</b>
2018	8	30	23	37.7	1.3
2023	5.0	20.8	37.9	35.1	9.3

<b>Seat Share</b>					
2018	1	5	26	8	0
2023	2	1	27	10	0

## **Against Multipolarism, for Proletarian Internationalism**

The process of extending the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) with the admission of Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, established at the 15th summit in Johannesburg, has given new breath to the trumpets of proponents of a “multipolar world.”

Multipolarism is a fundamental concept of bourgeois geopolitics that contrasts with the concept of unipolarism, the latter much popularized at the turn of the 1990s by apologists for the “age-old” hegemony of U.S. imperialism, such as Charles Krauthammer and Francis Fukuyama.

The concept of unipolarism came into crisis following the loss of positions of the imperialist superpower U.S. and the rise of imperialist China, which changed the global balance of power.

Thus, multipolarism is a concept that reflects the structural decline of U.S. power and the process of economic/financial advance of China and other imperialist and capitalist countries in the international arena.

The basic features of the multipolar model are:

1. Plurality of imperialist centers of power: several international powers possessing political, economic or military influence on a global scale.
2. Balance of power: based on the idea of a system in which multiple powers exercise balanced influence, avoiding the dominance of a single global power.
3. Struggle for hegemony on the cultural and political fronts: each power pole has its own cultural, political and economic identity that influences global dynamics.
4. Interdependence among the centers: these actors interact with each other in various areas, such as trade, security and diplomacy, creating complex relationships and interconnections.

5. Management of international relations: the presence of multiple power centers makes the management of international relations more complex and requires more multifaceted and balanced diplomacy, along with polycentric world governance.

Among the leading theorists of multipolarism are Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer and Robert Kagan.

Some of the academicians who have developed the theory of multipolarism are Australian sinologist, Wang Gungwu, the Chinese chauvinist Yan Xuetong and the “soft power” theorist Zheng Bijian.

In Russia, super-reactionary Aleksandr Dugin advocates the system of multipolarism as an alternative to U.S. dominance.

Other bourgeois theorists in India, Brazil and some European Union countries also support a multipolar world order to ensure a more equitable distribution of global power.

In Italy, Lucio Caracciolo (editor of the geopolitical magazine *Limes*) is an advocate of multipolarism and the balance between rival imperialist powers.

### **The ideological roots of multipolarism**

Multipolarism, that is, the aspiration for a model of international relations in which conflicts between capitalist and imperialist states and blocs coexist and are peacefully resolved, is an ideological weapon and political theory aimed at concealing the contradictions of the imperialist-capitalist system and opposing the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and peoples.

Kautsky’s theories of international relations and imperialism influenced some concepts of multipolarism.

Kautsky denied that imperialism was the highest and final stage of development of capitalism, whose essence on the economic level is monopoly capitalism, arguing instead that it is a preferred policy of finance capital.

This definition served Kautsky to show that the imperialists can carry out another policy, a non-imperialist policy, not one of conquest or robbery.

Kautsky therefore theorized that capitalism could evolve to a stage where imperialist nations would unite in a system of common domination rather than competing with each other. This

concept of “ultra-imperialism” implies a kind of cooperation among the ruling powers for the common exploitation of the world.

Like Kautsky, the multipolarists separate economics from politics. Their theses serve to show that the imperialists can achieve a policy of peace and progress.

Clearly, behind the theses propagated by the multipolarists are the interests of imperialist and capitalist states, particularly China and Russia, which through these positions seek to strengthen themselves and open economic, political and diplomatic spaces for themselves.

Multipolarism embellishes imperialism and hides its deep contradictions; it seeks to reconcile the proletariat with the bourgeoisie and its state apparatuses and collaborators. This political theory undermines the struggle against imperialism and proletarian internationalism, makes the proletariat passive and diverts it from the revolutionary struggle for socialism, retards the consciousness of the masses and the ability of the working-class struggle to determine the course of history.

Particularly in the Russian and Chinese style of multipolarism, both the “Khrushchevite peaceful coexistence” and the “theory of the three worlds” are renewed, behind which the fundamental contradictions of our epoch are denied.

To imagine a multipolar world based on balance, détente and “perpetual peace” among the great powers is not only a false hope, it is a complete repudiation of Leninism and the historical function of the proletariat.

Those who advocate these positions do not and cannot have any revolutionary and class perspective, they have nothing to do with proletarian internationalism but express unity with the imperialists, particularly those on the rise, the coexistence between the exploited and the exploiters, between the oppressed and the oppressors, the abandonment of revolutionary struggle.

Multipolarism is not even anti-neoliberal, as it merely replaces “liberal globalization” with Western characteristics with “liberal globalization” with multipolar (especially Chinese) characteristics.

In our view, the concept of a “multipolar world” itself is not derived from a scientific approach; it is alien and opposed to the Leninist conception of imperialism. This concept conceals the deep contradictions that exist by focusing on a superficial view of



the current situation. It lends itself to an illusory model of international relations, based on an “alternative” architecture to that of today. But what is the reality?

Today there is a world dominated by imperialism, characterized by the hegemony of the imperialist superpower U.S., which seeks to prevent the rise of other imperialist powers, especially China.

We are seeing the gradual erosion of the supremacy of US imperialism, which is in historic decline, while the law of uneven development is showing a change in the balance of power in favor of the emerging imperialist powers that are challenging US hegemony.

Multipolarism is the ideological and political expression of the strategic interests of these powers which demand a position within the capitalist-imperialist system, corresponding to their growing economic, political and military strength.

The real contradiction, then, is not between “unipolarism and multipolarism”, but between rival imperialist powers and monopolies. The so-called “multipolar world with zero-sum hegemony” is a deception that serves to keep the class nature of the imperialist system hidden and to spread deadly illusions about the expediency of “progressive cooperation” and “management of contrasts” in a world that is convulsed and divided, dominated by imperialist powers fighting among themselves for a new redivision of the world.

### **Marxism-Leninism and multipolarism**

While Marxism-Leninism advocates the struggle for a world revolution and the overthrow of capitalism to build socialism, multipolarism focuses on the coexistence and balance between different imperialist and capitalist powers without addressing the economic roots of the capitalist mode of production and the economic and social inequalities it produces, the exploitation of the workers and the plundering of the peoples’ resources.

The Marxist-Leninist conception of social differentiation rests on the theory of classes and class struggle, up to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The rhetoric of multipolarism, on the other hand, is based on the relationship between states, apparatuses of oppression of the ruling classes, behind

which the class struggle of the exploited and oppressed is completely concealed.

For multipolarists, the class struggle is not the motive force of history, progress is not the result of the struggle of the working class and peoples, of their combative action, which is completely hidden and denied. In multipolarism, global relations are shaped by bourgeois class dynamics and economic and military relations of power between bourgeois states that act to settle their conflicts in the interests “of all”.

Underlying multipolarism is class conciliation, the attempt to mitigate the class struggle, to deceive the working class and oppressed peoples with catchy formulas.

Behind the demagoguery about “finding suitable solutions” at a time of international change, multipolarism preaches cooperation and social peace between the exploited and exploiting classes, between oppressed and oppressor countries, between oppressed and oppressor nations.

Modern revisionists, particularly the Chinese revisionists, by advocating multilateralism disavow the objective character of the existence of class contradictions and endorse the idea that imperialism and capitalism are, on the whole, once certain “dysfunctions” are corrected, factors for progress and world peace.

For modern revisionists –who for decades have replaced the essence of revolutionary class theory and class struggle with bourgeois concepts and practices – it is not the working class and popular masses that are the driving force behind the historical process and action.

The advocates of multipolarism, not believing in and having no faith in the revolutionary potential of the proletariat and the peoples, seeing no possibility and necessity of the revolutionary break with the capitalist-imperialist system and the building of scientific socialism, merely promote and support the action of the bourgeois states that aspire to new balances of power on the international stage.

Multipolarism is not directed against the imperialist system, but against a specific imperialist country, the US. Its purpose is not the destruction of the imperialist system, but its preservation, not the suppression of the exploitation of human beings by human beings, not the end of the oppression of peoples, not socialism, but only the reduction of the power of the currently hegemonic

imperialist power, a change in the balance of power among imperialist brigands, preserving the imperialist-capitalist system intact.

Unlike the Khrushchevite theses of “peaceful coexistence” and the Maoist “theory of three worlds,” multipolarism is not presented as a doctrine in the purported interest of the proletariat and peoples, not as an opportunist version of the proletariat’s class struggle. It is a theory devised by bourgeois intellectuals aimed at developing a system of unprincipled alliances with imperialists and reactionaries, under the leadership of the ruling classes of states attempting to free themselves from US hegemony.

Under the banners of “fair and orderly global multipolarity” and “inclusive economic globalization,” the Chinese imperialists, Russian chauvinists and all kind of revisionists seek to unite, for their own interests, the revolutionaries with the counterrevolutionaries, the anti-imperialists with the pro-imperialists, the anti-fascists with the fascists, the peace-lovers with the warmongers.

Their aim is to decapitate and decompose the revolutionary movement of the working class, to transform the class struggle of the proletariat into class collaboration with its exploiters, to ensure the survival of the moribund capitalist system.

Therefore, they must try to convince the proletariat and the peoples that class contradictions and those between imperialist and capitalist powers are compatible within the framework of the bourgeois system, that the solution to the existing dramatic problems is to be found in greater mutual understanding and better cooperation with the ruling classes, in coalition with the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Multipolarism does not challenge capitalist social relations of production, but defends them to the end. It therefore reflects the interests of the exploiting classes, which are inevitably at odds with the demands of social progress. It is a liberal-type methodology that has the obvious purpose of convincing the proletariat to resign itself to its condition as an oppressed class, to become a docile instrument of bourgeois politics.

At the same time, multipolarism is the most flagrant denial of the principle and practice of proletarian internationalism, which is replaced with bourgeoisie nationalism (Chinese, Russian, etc.). In this way, solidarity among the peoples is replaced with support for the oppressors of the peoples.

From the ideological aspect, as well as from the practical aspect, multipolarism is antagonistically contradictory to the interests of the proletariat and the principles of scientific socialism, which express the objective tendencies of historical evolution.

### **Mystifications and realities**

Proponents of multipolarism propagate different arguments to convince the working class and peoples of the correctness of their proposals and policies. They use sophistry and mystifications to induce the workers and peoples to accept their theses, claiming that with multipolarism, that is, siding with Chinese and Russian imperialism to scale back the international power of the U.S., the workers and peoples would have something to gain.

Among the arguments that are used by the revisionists and opportunists in favor of multipolarism we frequently find the following: “there would be a more peaceful, stable and prosperous world”, poverty and inequality would be “reduced”, the survival of humanity and the planet would be “ensured”.

In many western countries, including Italy, some of the anti-”imperialist” (anti-US) organizations take a position of support for Russia and China. At first, it seems that this is somewhat different from World War I, where the opportunists supported their own imperialist power. However, although this is clearly a political difference, ideologically in both cases (now and in WWI) this opportunist tendency works to forget the class struggle and to unite the laboring masses with the bourgeoisie.

According to this point of view, to move toward a “better world” one would have to do nothing more than to support the “weaker” brigand or the “less dangerous” one in the conflicts between imperialists for the partition of the world.

This way of seeing things, as mystifying as it is illusory, has nothing socialist or revolutionary about it.

Because of the law of unequal development, in the imperialist system there will always be a stronger brigand and a weaker one, one on the rise and the other on the decline, etc. If the proletariat were to act by conforming to the method of helping the weaker one, of siding with the “less dangerous” against the stronger and more dangerous one, it would always find itself trapped in wars, would be permanently cannon fodder in the conflict to decide

which imperialist state and which monopoly groups should dominate the world.

In reality, contrary to the poisonous propaganda of multipolarism, peace and détente are not advancing, but rivalry and conflict among imperialist powers are being exacerbated.

The “multipolar world” is what first and foremost China and Russia seek to create for their imperialist ambitions by using the lie that it will be more peaceful, without hostility between imperialist and capitalist countries, without aggression against peoples, etc.; that there will be “peaceful coexistence”. But their ambitions under the imperialist-capitalist system will only be able to assert themselves through military force.

The epoch of imperialism (from the beginning of the 20th century to the present) has been characterized by the struggle between the major imperialist powers against each other, resulting in wars to decide which imperialist power would become hegemonic, at the head of its allies.

Today, along with the decline of U.S. imperialism, we are witnessing the rise of China, which wants to overtake the United States and become the new hegemonic power by the middle of this century. So the so-called “multipolar world” is once again a world of imperialist powers colliding with each other.

The transition to “multipolarism” is not peaceful. The enlarged BRICS does not form a bloc or an organization that has an anti-imperialist function, as it is an association that includes imperialist powers and more or less advanced capitalist countries, some of them “countries on the threshold” to becoming



imperialist. The advance of these countries on the world stage, their attempt to break the currently existing imperialist order and set themselves on the path of independent development, will inevitably produce new conflicts and wars.

Although at the moment the BRICS are on the rise, internal tensions among these countries, characterized by deep differences and different political systems, cannot be ruled out either. Especially among the strongest states or among those interested in the same markets and spheres of influence, conflicts may arise, just as class contradictions sharpen within them.

The so-called multipolar world is a mystification and an illusion about a world that is actually characterized by imperialist and capitalist states and monopolies fighting each other and by bitter class and national liberation struggles. The purpose of the politics of multipolarity is to disorient the labor movement and unite it with opportunism and social chauvinism, both nationally and internationally.

### **How to take advantage of the contradictions between brigands?**

The advocates of multipolarism, under the pretext that contradictions should be exploited, preach union with the currently weaker imperialisms to oppose the stronger one.

In the struggle between bandits who aspire to plunder, oppress and exploit the workers and peoples, there is nothing to choose. "One is worse than the other," they are all our enemies, and the aim of communists is to take advantage of their contradictions, not in order to take the side of one or the other, but to bring them down.

Taking advantage of the contradictions in the ranks of the enemies must lead to the growth and strengthening of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and peoples, their revolutionary and independent organizations, not to their weakening and erosion, not to passivity as the multipolarists would like. This must lead to an increasingly active mobilization of the revolutionary forces in the struggle against imperialism, without allowing any kind of illusion to arise among the proletariat and the peoples.

Considering the contradictions between imperialist powers as the only ones and denying the contradiction between revolution and counterrevolution, placing at the center of one's strategy the

taking advantage of contradictions in the imperialist camp, denying what is essential – the growth of the consciousness, organization and revolutionary spirit, the ability of the masses to struggle, the development of the revolutionary movement of workers and peoples – is to give up the preparation for revolution: all this is in complete contrast to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

By trying to pass off China and Russia as allies of the proletarians and peoples in the alleged struggle against U.S. and Western imperialism, multipolarism clearly shows its pseudo-anti-imperialist (actually anti-US) character.

It is a counter-revolutionary theory and policy because it preaches to the proletariat the strategic alliance with the monopoly bourgeoisie and the rising imperialist powers, and consequently the renunciation of revolution.

It is also a pro-imperialist theory because it justifies and supports the neocolonialist and exploitative policy imperialist powers that are rivals of the U.S. and calls on the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe not to oppose this policy under the pretext of creating a “more breathable atmosphere.”

U.S. imperialism is a fierce, aggressive, warmongering imperialism that relies on the strength of the dollar and weapons to maintain its hegemonic position and sink its claws into all regions and continents.

This does not at all mean that the other enemies of the working class and peoples of the world, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, German, etc., imperialism, are peace-loving and anti-militarist, as the proponents of multipolarism claim. Such theses are very dangerous for the fate of the revolution; they create blinders about the non-aggressive, non-hegemonic and non-expansionist nature of the other imperialist powers.

The strategic task of the proletariat and the proletarian revolution is to overthrow and bring down imperialism, not just one imperialist country.

For the proletariat and for every communist who has fully assimilated Leninism, the mortal enemy, on the strategic level, is world imperialism.

Practice has shown that all imperialist powers are the enemies of the revolution and of socialism, of the freedom and independence of the peoples and nations, that they are the major force in

defense of exploitative systems, the real threat aiming to drag humanity into a third world war.

Ignoring this truth, underestimating the danger posed by one or the other power and, what is even worse, appealing to join one superpower against the other, relying on one imperialism to fight another, has disastrous consequences and poses a great danger to the future of the proletarian revolution and the freedom of peoples.

The struggle that the Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations are waging against war is not separate from the class struggle to overthrow the system that inevitably creates it, with the objective of building the general front of the revolutionary movement of all countries against the global front of imperialism.

Consequently, the motto “the enemies of my enemies are my friends” cannot apply regarding the imperialist and capitalist powers that use all means to sabotage and drown in blood the revolution and socialism, to assure the survival of the current barbaric system.

China, Russia and other imperialist powers are not fighting for the freedom of the peoples and the workers, but to extend their domination and exploitation over the oppressed proletariat, peoples and nations. When they fight against the US brigand, eroding its outlet markets, weakening its positions and spheres of influence, and strengthening their own, they do so to extend their claws over the peoples. And as soon as the people of one country come to shake off the yoke of one superpower, the other comes immediately to replace it. Africa and the Middle East are clear evidence of this.

So it is not a question of being “neutral” or “equidistant”, but of being consistently anti-imperialist and acting as communists in full independence from the bourgeoisie.

### **To conclude**

The current anti-Leninist theories of multipolarism and multilateralism are aimed at undermining the revolution, extinguishing the struggle against imperialism, dividing the Marxist-Leninist movement, and fighting the parties that remain loyal to Marxism-Leninism and the cause of socialist revolution.

Attempts to analyze situations in a “new” way, different from Lenin’s and Stalin’s, to change the revolutionary strategy to which



the communist movement has always adhered, lead down a false, anti-Marxist road, to the abandonment of the struggle against imperialism and revisionism.

The only path that leads to victory passes through loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, the struggle against all revisionist deviations and opportunism, the revolutionary mobilization of the working class and peoples against the bourgeoisie and imperialism.

As communists (Marxist-Leninists) we must openly fight multipolarism and all bourgeois and revisionist ideological mystifications that hide or misrepresent today's reality, that embellish imperialism and its barbarism, leaving no room for them.

Today's capitalist-imperialist world is objectively increasingly fragmented, divided and conflicted. The fact that some countries are emerging and others declining, given the inequality of economic and political development, does not mean that the world is safer.

The inequality of development among capitalist and imperialist countries leads to accentuating the imbalances within the current system. There are countries that seek to change the situation and redistribute markets, sources of raw materials, transport routes, "spheres of influence" to their advantage. To do so they must necessarily use armed force, though today the main use of force still comes from the US, trying to hold on to what it has. As a result, hostile camps are created and wars break out for a new division of the world.

Talks about multipolarism are just a screen behind which the great powers hide preparations for new wars, deceiving the peoples.

In the metropolises of capitalism, the process of world proletarian revolution is embodied today in the resumption of the class struggle of the proletariat and other strata of exploited workers against capitalist exploitation and oppression, against the attempts of the bourgeoisie to place the burden of the general crisis of the world capitalist system on the shoulders of the workers, against the consequences of imperialist wars, against the advance of reaction and fascism in this or that form.

Thanks to communist propaganda, the popular masses, with the proletariat at their head, are becoming more and more aware that breaking with the capitalist-imperialist system is the only revolutionary way out to escape the crises and other scourges of

capitalism, bourgeois exploitation, fascist violence and imperialist wars.

Objective conditions are increasingly favorable for revolution in the developed imperialist and capitalist countries; here proletarian revolution is posed as a problem that must be solved.

The Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations, which raise the banner of the revolution that has been betrayed and abandoned by the revisionists, have set themselves the task of preparing the proletariat and its allies for future struggles for the overthrow of the bourgeois order; they are working to realize it.

Modern revisionists, proponents of multipolarism and other bourgeois and reformist theories, seek to sabotage the revolution and its preparation, to maintain the status quo of the capitalist-imperialist order.

The political and ideological struggle against the proponents of multipolarism and multilateralism is therefore an important aspect of the struggle against imperialism, revisionism, opportunism and reaction, to push the working class and peoples to oppose the policy of war and denounce the military blocs (NATO, EU, Shanghai Pact, AUKUS, etc.), building anti-imperialist fronts, for the affirmation of the historical necessity of socialist revolution and proletarian internationalism.

It is necessary to fight strenuously to prevent the workers' and communist movement from taking sides under the banners of this or that imperialist power, becoming dependent on it and subservient to its strategic interests.

Today as yesterday, one cannot fight imperialism, one cannot build the revolutionary unity of the communist and workers' movement, one cannot be an internationalist without fighting the revisionist and opportunist theses, without breaking openly and sharply with these currents and their organizations. Such necessary separation, fostered by the sharpening of the major contradictions of our epoch, is historically inevitable and necessary to develop the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

The defense and development of Marxism-Leninism, the unmasking and unrelenting struggle against all forms of revisionism and opportunism within the workers' and communist movement, the revival of the living practice of proletarian internationalism, are essential aspects of the struggle to advance the cooperation

ITALY – AGAINST MULTIPOLARISM, FOR PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM

and integration of the revolutionary parties of the proletariat in the perspective of a new Communist International.

March of 2024

## **The 2024 Elections and the Tactics of the Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist)**

*Advance in the practical and concrete building of the National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico, for the victory of the Proletarian Revolution!*

### **Context**

On June 2, 2024, the biggest elections in the history of Mexico will be held, as the President of the Mexican Republic will be elected, as well as 500 deputies and 128 senators to the Congress of the Union; at the same time, the following will also be elected: 9 governorships out of 32 (Mexico City, Guanajuato, Chiapas, Morelos, Jalisco, Tabasco, Puebla, Yucatán and Veracruz); 31 Local Congresses; and the city councils and mayors of the 32 federative units. In short, more than 20,000 positions at all levels of government will be up for election. On most ballots, the voter will have to choose among candidates for 5 offices (President of Mexico, Federal Deputy, Senator, Local Deputy, Municipal President). According to data from the National Electoral Institute (INE), there are approximately 98 million voters.

According to the General Council of the INE, 22,322,879,716 pesos have been approved for these elections just for logistical expenses related to the electoral process, separately the public budget was approved for parties registered in the INE, to whom 10,444,157,311 pesos are allocated for campaign expenses (canvassing, chairs, sound, bandstands, billboards, propaganda of all kinds, TV commercials, etc.)

The following political parties will participate in this electoral process:

1. National Regeneration Movement (Morena) with: 1,023,068,078 pesos.
2. National Action Party (PAN) with: 613,175,183 pesos.
3. Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) with: 600, 814, 265 pesos.
4. Citizen's Movement (MC) with: 323,172,846 pesos.

5. Green Ecologist Party of Mexico (PVEM) with: 282,581,897 pesos.
6. Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) with: 236,266,711 pesos.
7. Party of Labor (PT) with: 225,814,634 pesos.

To this, we must also add local funding for these parties and for local parties.

For these elections, at the federal level, alliances have been established between various parties: “Let’s Keep Making History”, made up of Morena-PT-PVEM; that has Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo as its candidate for the Presidency of the Republic; and the other coalition: “Strength and Heart for Mexico”, made up of PAN-PRI-PRD, which has Bertha Xóchilt Gálvez Ruiz as its candidate for the Presidency of the Republic. In the case of the Citizen’s Movement, it has Jorge Álvarez Máynez as its candidate for the Presidency of the Republic. In accordance with the interests of each party, at the same time, agreements, alliances, coalitions or common candidacies have been established between the national and local parties for other positions at the local and municipal levels.

### **Background.**

In Mexico, with the victory of the so-called Constitutionalist Army, headed by Venustiano Carranza, in the Third Bourgeois Revolution in Mexico (1910-17), the contradictions between the various national and imperialist bourgeois factions were resolved, and beginning with this – although various “opposition” and “satellite” parties were formed – the PRI and its predecessors – had absolute power for more than 70 years.

From 2000 to 2012, the leadership of the Federal Executive Power went to the far-right party: PAN.

From 2012 to 2018, the PRI returned to govern but now in a fusion – through the “Pact for Mexico” – with the rest of the bourgeois parties and the right-wing middle and petty bourgeoisie and social democrats – such as the PRD (predecessor of what is now Morena) and the PT (now as part of: “Let’s Keep Making History”).

From 2018 to the present day, Morena and its allies have held the following powers: the Federal Executive Branch; the majority of senators and deputies of the Congress of the Union; 22 out of 32 governorships and local congresses (including Mexico City, the

country's capital); and 7 out of 16 mayoralities in Mexico City and approximately 896 municipal councils out of 2469 municipalities throughout the country, except for the more than 418 municipalities in Oaxaca and other states that are elected according to their own habits and customs. To this, we must also add the positions of municipal trustees and councilors.

Thus, throughout at least 106 years of class struggle, while the capitalist-imperialist system and its bourgeois state have been developing and consolidating in our country, we, the working class and peoples of Mexico, have also continued the struggle to build our own history of class struggle.

On the side of the dictatorship of capital, the bourgeoisie and imperialism, through its state and its various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois governments and parties, which manage and administer their class interests, the capitalist-imperialist social formation in Mexico, the main and fundamental contradictions of our epoch have sufficiently matured: between capital and labor; between the great imperialist powers and the exploited and oppressed peoples; between the imperialist powers themselves and their various financial, industrial, commercial and military alliances; and between the capitalist-imperialist option and the socialist-communist option. The objective conditions for the victory of the Proletarian Socialist Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in our country have sufficiently matured.

In this way, the development of the capitalist-imperialist system through the exploitation of wage labor, now places Mexico



as the 12th most important economy in the world. It is also clear that this wealth has been accumulated by a few well-known billionaires.

It is also true that we, the proletariat and the peoples of Mexico, have been learning from our national and universal history. Throughout these 106 years of class struggle we have also been building the tools and subjective conditions for the victory of the Proletarian Revolution.

During all this time, we have transformed the heritage bequeathed to us by our utopian socialist and anarchist grandparents, embracing the scientific socialism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. In 1919, through the orientation of the Communist International and our own development as a proletarian class and peoples of Mexico, we founded the Communist Party of Mexico – Mexican Section of the Communist International and with it, we laid the foundations to advance towards the Proletarian Revolution, although the old Communist Party had degenerated and died in 1978. This was precisely the year in which our Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist) was founded as an embryo for the reconstruction of the Vanguard and General Staff of the Proletariat and peoples of Mexico.

Parallel to the development and consolidation of the capitalist-imperialist system in Mexico, the history of the tactics and strategy of the Proletarian Revolution has also been developing. The growth of our class in the main strategic branches of production, trade and services; various economic, political, social and ideological struggles have allowed us to organize unions, have collective agreements and general working conditions with historical rights and achievements, such as decent wages in some sectors, comprehensive social security, decent housing, scientific, secular, free and compulsory education; access to culture, sport and recreation; nutritious food; rights of organization for the defense and expansion of all our gains and demands, including our right to the proletarian and popular electoral struggle, which we will never renounce, no matter who governs!

In short, through the class struggle we have been forging in the practical and concrete building of the National Assembly of the Proletariat and the Peoples of Mexico – as the foundations of our mass Soviet power – for the victory of the Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

These are the clear, simple and forceful lessons that emerge from experiences such as: the railroad workers' strike in 1959; the national doctors' strike in 1964; the student strike of 1968; the guerrilla struggle of the 1960s and 1970s; the various forms of the struggle for the freedom of political prisoners, the return alive of the disappeared detainees and the defense of democratic freedoms and political rights. The most relevant examples of these are the National Front Against Repression and the various collectives of Las Madres Buscadoras [The Searching Mothers, looking for their disappeared loved ones]; the unwavering struggle of the CNTE [National Coordinator of Education Workers] which, since the 1980 strike, has remained unassailable throughout the neoliberal period from Carlos Salinas to AMLO; the armed uprising of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in 1994 and its own or various related initiatives such as the structuring and restructuring of its system of government and autonomy, the National Democratic Convention, the Other Campaign, the National Indigenous Congress and the Indigenous Governing Council; the student strike at the National Autonomous University of Mexico in 1999 (CGH-UNAM); the struggle of the rural teachers' colleges (FECSM); the struggle of the Fathers and Mothers of the 43 and the National People's Assembly (ANP) for the return alive of the 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Guerrero; the insurgency of the women's movement for their achievements and rights and against patriarchy; the struggle in defense of the land and territory of San Salvador Atenco and many peoples and communities throughout the country; the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca, the struggle of the Mexican Union of Electricians, the Student Movement #YoSoy132; The Battle of San Lázaro to prevent the inauguration of Enrique Peña Nieto as President of the Republic; the Insurrection of the Proletarian City of Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán, in support of the strike of the workers of the former SICARTSA company; the general strike and insurrection of agricultural laborers in the San Quintín Valley, Baja California; the experience in building community and popular police; the experience of the proletariat of Matamoros, Tamaulipas; the struggle of the National Assembly of Electricity Users (ANUEE); the trade union strikes of SUTNOTIMEX, STRM, SUTCOBACH, Monte de Piedad, SUDTAUDI and other unions of the national confederations such as UNT, NCT, CNSUESIC, CNDTT, Negotiating Table for Trade



Union Dialogue, locals such as in Mexico City, Michoacán, Zacatecas, Oaxaca; the unitary experiences for Truth and Justice such as the REVO in Oaxaca; the various past and present experiences of coordination and unity such as: the ANOCP, the DN, the FACMLN, the FASU-ENADI, the M8M, the ENUPM and the Conference of Resistances; the experiences of the popular self-defense groups in the face of organized crime in collusion with some spheres of government, police and military; the most exemplary and mass mobilizations such as those of January 31, March 8 and May 1; mass electoral experiences such as those of 1988 and 2018; the experiences of community municipal elections by habits and customs, and even the experience of the boycott of the electoral process called by the Fathers and Mothers of the 43 and the National People's Assembly in 2015. Here are the lessons and experiences of the embryos and paths that can help us to build in a practical and concrete way our mass Soviet power, the National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico!

The governments of the PRI and the PAN and their merger with other parties in the “Pact for Mexico” had as its main characteristic the neoliberal economic model whose main promoter was Carlos Salinas de Gortari, a model that was consolidated from 1988 to 2018, with the entry into force of the North American Free Trade Agreement. During this period, 390 companies were placed at the disposal of big capital through privatization and disincorporation from the Mexican state, which sharpened the contradiction between capital and labor.

The main families of the financial oligarchy in Mexico, who benefited from this neoliberal political economy, in contrast to millions and millions of proletarians in the country, are:

1. Carlos Slim Helú, Grupo Carso, covers industries and telecommunications with a fortune of \$102 billion, occupies the 14th place of the richest people in the world.
2. Germán Larrea. Grupo Mexico, mining and oil, with a fortune of \$27.9 billion.
3. Ricardo Salinas Pliego. Grupo Salinas with \$13.4 billion.
4. Alejandro Baillères. Grupo Bal with a fortune of \$8.1 billion.
5. María Asunción Aramburuzabala. Grupo Modelo, Tresalia Capital and ABILIA, with a fortune of \$6.3 billion.

6. Juan Domingo Beckmann. Jose Cuervo with \$4.6 billion.
7. Carlos Hank Rhon. Hermes Group, with \$4.4 billion.
8. Antonio del Valle Ruiz. Mexichem with \$3.5 billion.
9. Rufino Vigil “The Steel King” with \$3.3 billion.
10. Fernando Chico Pardo. Grupo Aeroportuario del Sureste with \$3.3 billion.
11. Karen Virginia Beckmann. Becle Company, with \$3.2 billion.
12. Enrique Coppel Luken. Coppel with \$2.4 billion.
13. Cynthia Helena Grossman Fleishman. Arca Continental with \$2 billion.
14. Rubén Coppel Luken. Coppel Group, with \$1.9 billion
15. Roberto Hernández Ramírez. BANAMEX, with \$1.9 billion.
16. Alberto Coppel Luken. GC1 Holdings with \$1.8 billion
17. José Coppel Luken. Coppel Group, with \$1.8 billion
18. David Peñaloza Alanís. Tribasa Group, with \$1.8 billion
19. Agustín Coppel Luken. Coppel Group with \$1.6 billion
20. Fernando Espinosa Abdalá. ABC Capital Bank with \$1.6 billion
21. Alfredo Harp Helú. Accival Brokerage House with \$1.2 billion.

(Source: Forbes 2024 List).

The concentration and centralization of capital in these 21 families also led to the fact that – according to the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) – for the year 2022, the Mexican population with income below the poverty line amounts to 56.1 million people.

### **Morena: A Regime of Neoliberal Continuity**

On July 1, 2018, elections were held for President of the Republic and Chamber of Deputies and Senators; for the third time Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) ran for President of Mexico (he had previously run in 2006, and 2012), only now he changed Party, from the PRD to Morena, with a populist and much more moderate discourse than in 2006 and 2012, In addition, in clear alliance with his former opponents and with the support of some national and foreign oligarchic factions, he embodied his so-called “Alternative Project for the Nation” in “100 campaign promises”,

trying to take over the demands of the social movement and promising that: “For the good of all, the poor first”. He said that he would fight corruption, would bring justice for the thousands of disappeared, especially the forced disappearance of the 43 students of the Teacher Training School “Raúl Isidro Burgos” of Ayotzinapa; that he would repeal the so-called “Educational Reform” of EPN [Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico from 2012 to 2018]; that he would resolve the demands of the SME and the ANUEE, derived from the illegal elimination of the Compañía Luz y Fuerza, by Felipe Calderón Hinojosa; and so on.

Faced with the weariness of millions of Mexicans towards past governments, they decided to give their vote to AMLO, as a punishment vote against the parties of the “Pact for Mexico.” This situation together with the agreement that AMLO made with the largest business sector in Mexico headed by Carlos Slim, led him to victory, and to appoint as coordinator of the office of the Presidency of the Republic the businessman and millionaire Alfonso Romo.

Andrés Manuel López Obrador represents a sector of the bourgeoisie; our Party had already characterized him in “Cuadernos de la lucha de clase, n° 3”, published in August 2018. There it stated that:

***“The evolution and development of capitalism meant that the different factions of the bourgeoisie could not resolve their contradictions within the PRI, because the interests of sector II of the economy no longer fit into the ranks of the PRI; they had to resolve them by expelling the “nationalist” sector for the creation first of the National Democratic Front headed by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and Porfirio Muñoz Ledo. This tendency, of which AMLO was a part, evolved into the PRD, where this sector of bourgeois nationalism, sectors of political opportunism that had acted in parastatal parties, a sector of Trotskyism and all the revisionism of Mexican style “Eurocommunism”, redeeming the political principles and economic objectives of the faction of the bourgeoisie that is linked to sector II of the economy, merged. until evolving into what is now Morena”*** (<https://pcmml.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/TacticaC3.pdf>)

Throughout the almost 5 and a half years of the self-styled 4T (4th Transformation) government headed by AMLO, none of the so-called neoliberal structural reforms carried out from 1982 to 2018 has been repealed or abrogated! All of them now provide

sustenance, basis and legality for the political economy of neoliberal continuity of the AMLO government! and they serve their system and sector II of the capitalist-imperialist economy in Mexico. From the “100 Campaign Commitments”, to the continuity of NAFTA through what is now the USMCA [USA-Mexico-Canada Agreement], to megaprojects; to the 20 reform initiatives that are now before the Congress of the Union, all of which are supported and promoted by AMLO, we must add the “100 Campaign Commitments”, the “New Industrial Corridors” as well as what is being added in the direction of capitalist-imperialist development in our country. This has been promoted by the candidate Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo (Morena-PT-PVEM) and against which there is no antagonistic opposition from the candidate Xóchitl Gálvez Ruiz (PAN-PRI-PRD), nor the candidate Jorge Álvarez Máynez (MC).

### **Elections in Mexico**

Morena, in its eagerness to win a significant majority in the Chamber of Deputies, within the framework of this electoral juncture, has incorporated more or less 150 former activists of the PAN and PRI. Most of them are former candidates, former officials, current municipal presidents, people accused of corruption and other practices that were supposed to have been combated in the self-proclaimed Fourth Transformation; This incorporation has created minimal protests, internal and public disagreements, especially among activists and founders of Morena who blindly believed in reformist principles and objectives; they have now been displaced by the arrival of these corrupt characters.

The most representative are: Rommel Pacheco, a former PAN member close to Xóchitl Gálvez; Eviel Pérez Magaña, a former PRI member close to the former governor of Oaxaca Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, accused of repressing and murdering activists in 2006; José Carlos Marín, who was an activist in the PRI in Yucatan for 44 years; Ramírez Marín, who was Peña Nieto’s deputy campaign coordinator; Pedro Kumamoto, who claimed to be “independent”; Gonzalo Espina, former local deputy of Mexico City for the PAN linked to the real estate cartel, which is still under investigation; Jorge Gaviño, former director of the Mexico City Metro, who left the ranks of the PRD to join Morena; Germán Torres Landa, real estate business owner and owner of a private water pipeline for his construction companies in Querétaro; Javier Corral, an old PAN member

who is now a member of Sheinbaum's team of more or less 150 people; Alejandro Murat and Eruviel Ávila, former governor of Oaxaca and the State of Mexico, along with other former PRI members, who created the "Progressive Alliance" with which they announced their support for Claudia Sheinbaum. These are just a few examples of people who have been included since the pre-campaign called "Hope unites us" and now appear as candidates of Morena and its allies, openly presenting themselves in the massive events where the candidate supports these former members of the PRI and PAN. These additions of the most rotten part of politics in Mexico to Morena, intend to win all the positions that are contested in these elections and to consolidate the neoliberal economic model, which will bring in its wake hunger and misery for the majority.

### **Accumulate forces and raise all forms of struggle and organization of the masses**

In November 2023, the 8th Ordinary National Congress of our Party was held. The essential slogan of the Congress was: "To build in a practical and concrete way, the National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico, for the victory of the Proletarian Revolution!" One of its conclusions is as follows:

**"g). Concretize and advance in the revolutionary use of bourgeois legality and institutions, multiplying the mechanisms for this, ranging from NGOs for the defense of human rights, professional services consultancies, study and research centers, cooperatives, to the building of a long-term electoral vehicle of its own. In the meantime, the putting forth of proletarian candidacies in the form of independent candidacies, the alliance with local parties, the support for popular and proletarian candidacies, the building of local electoral vehicles that will allow us to raise a democratic-revolutionary platform (in the form of a protest program). To contest the control of the masses by the parties of the bourgeoisie, to enter the electoral scenarios with a revolutionary policy, as well as to put bourgeois legality and institutions, as far as possible, at the service of the process of the revolutionary accumulation of forces. All of this must be subordinated to the whole of the Strategy and Tactics of the Proletarian Revolution in our country."** (Source: <https://pcmml.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Conclusiones-8CNO.pdf>)

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ML PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

With these conclusions for this electoral conjuncture and after, we will continue to work for the revolutionary accumulation of forces, to take advantage, in accordance with our dialectical materialist conception of history, of the maturation of the objective conditions and to raise the forms of struggle and organization of the proletarian and popular masses, to build the tools and subjective conditions, that make possible the conscious, orderly, planned intervention through the embryos of their Soviet power for the victory of the Proletarian Revolution, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the building of socialism and communism.

In the electoral situation, at the same time that we promote some candidacies in Municipal Councils and in a Local District, trying to learn from the history of the International Communist Movement; we will continue to promote the struggle in the streets; defending the rights and gains of the working class and popular masses; fighting against fascism and the imperialist war of plunder, for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and against genocide; advancing in the quantity and quality of our International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations and in the collective building of a great world democratic, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist movement. We are forging together with the proletariat and peoples and their political and social organizations: convergence, coordination, unity and the united front against the dictatorship of capital; advancing in the practical and concrete building of our mass Soviet power in the form of the National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico, for the victory of the Proletarian Revolution.

Fraternally  
Workers of the World, Unite!  
8th-Central Committee  
Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist)

*April 2024*

## **Will Pakistan Achieve Economic and Political Stability?**

The 12th general elections in Pakistan were held in the 75th year of its history. Pakistan characterised by a semi-feudal, semi-capitalist and tribal system, is reeling under the burden a loan of 6 billion dollars from IMF on the most stringent conditions. The country has a population of 25 crore people, of whom more than 12 crore people are registered in the voter list. The bulk of this population is aged between 18 and 40 which is currently facing severe unemployment. The Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and now the Israel-Hamas war have had very negative effects on Pakistan's economy. Climatic changes have also affected the entire environment of Pakistan, and the devastating floods a year ago greatly affected half of Pakistan. Agriculture and industry have not yet recovered from these shocks causing among other things shortage of food stuffs and other daily necessities. During this time, the financial crises of Europe, America, Russia, Ukraine and the Middle East also affected Pakistan's economy. Pakistan imports about 75% of its oil requirements which costs it billions of dollars.

The main source of Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings come from remittances of Pakistani workers abroad who send about 30 billion dollars annually. In addition, Pakistan has a great potential for cotton and textile production and about 450 Textile mills employing millions of workers are also there. However, during the last few years climatic changes resulting in reduction of cotton production coupled with increase in electricity and gas prices have affected the sector greatly causing unemployment. The defence expenditure of Pakistan has also been increasing day by day and reached Rs 2,284 billion (\$14.3 billion) in the fiscal year 2020-21.

Pakistan is neck deep in debt and has to borrow from international financial institutions on their terms to pay the interest. The value of Pakistani currency has fallen to the lowest level in its history. There are no signs of improvement in Pakistani exports. The

process of selling national institutions to the private sector is also going on. The country's fiscal deficit was Rs 3,403 billion (\$21.3 billion). The national income was approximately Rs 47,709 billion (\$298.2 billion). Currently, foreign direct investment is negligible. High inflation and economic stagnation and low productivity have made the situation very difficult.

Three major political parties participated in the 2024 elections, Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML) Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). These three parties elections have ruled the country in different periods. The PML and PPP have been in power more than once, but these three parties have failed to provide a strong foundation for Pakistan's economy or to end the feudal and tribal system. No party could make the country industrially strong. Despite having one of the most extensive irrigation systems, Pakistan's agriculture has been in decline. Except for rice and sugarcane, all the other essential foodstuffs are imported adding to the trade imbalance. Given the economic stagnation, rampant youth unemployment has also given birth to many social problems. The election manifestoes of these parties include provisions for employment, education, cheap electricity, independent foreign policy, social security for workers, financial assistance for youth employment, addressing climate change, direct election of the prime minister, cheap supply of solar electricity, providing free electricity up to 300 units to each family, IT revolution for youth, strengthening and stabilizing Pakistan's defence, legal and judicial reforms, promotion of modern agriculture, modern health facilities, and settlement of disputes with neighbouring countries.

PPP and the PML emerged victorious in the February 8 elections. They are going to form a coalition government together. The PTI has decided to sit in the opposition.

The "**China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**" project was also an issue in these elections. It is expected to build a safe transport of oil from the Middle East to China and in the process help Pakistan develop its industrial and transport infrastructure. It is also expected to generate employment and industrial growth. There is a general impression that the American government is not happy with the project and they want a government in Pakistan that either slows down the pace of the CPEC project or ends it. There is evidence that the PTI government formed in 2018 has



slowed down the pace of this project while the leaderships of Muslim League-N and Pakistan People's Party are in favour of completing the CPEC project. Some analysts also argue that the government of China also favours a government which will play a positive role in completing the CPEC project.

In the politics of Pakistan, there are also talks about improving diplomatic and trade relations with neighbouring countries, especially India. The PML and Nawaz Sharif are said to favour strong trade relations with India.

The general impression was that if the Muslim League-N forms a government, then Nawaz Sharif will be the head of it. But this did not happen. PML-N is forming the government together with its allied parties, but instead of Nawaz Sharif, the headship of this government will be handed over to Shahbaz Sharif, the president of PML-N, who is also the younger brother of Nawaz Sharif.

Our point of view in this regard is that Pakistan should improve its relations with all its neighbouring countries in order to get rid of its economic crisis and terrorism, and move forward by resolving all other disputes with India, including Kashmir, through dialogue. In this regard, the rulers of India should take a positive approach and take positive steps to normalize the relations between the two countries.

***Pakistan Mazdoor Mahaz***  
***Pakistan Labour Front***  
*April of 2024*



## Marxism and the Social Chauvinists

### On BRICS and “Multipolar” Imperialism

*“...The new imperialism differs from the older, first, in substituting for the ambition of a single growing empire the theory and the practice of competing empires, each motivated by similar lusts of political aggrandizement and commercial gain; secondly, in the dominance of financial or investing over mercantile interests....”* Lenin, “Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism.” FLP Peking, p. 109.

This quote from the book *“Imperialism”* by the English author Hobson, is taken up by Lenin in “Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism”. Lenin, who in this work masterfully characterizes from a Marxist point of view the new stage of dying capitalism, attacks the social-chauvinist degeneration of the revisionists of his time, who embellished the predatory and violent character of capitalism, creating false illusions about peaceful competition between the powers in an “ultra-imperialism” that would anticipate its self-improvement. Regarding these idealist fantasies, he writes: *“...We see that Kautsky, while claiming that he continues to advocate Marxism, as a matter of fact takes a step backward compared with the social-liberal Hobson, who more correctly takes into account two “historically concrete”...features of modern imperialism: 1) the competition between several imperialisms, and 2) the predominance of the financier over the merchant....”*

He adds: *“... The essence of the matter is that **Kautsky detaches the politics of imperialism from its economics**, speaks of annexations as being a policy “preferred” by finance capital, and opposes to it another bourgeois policy which, **he alleges**, is possible on this very same basis of finance capital. It follows, then, (for Kautsky) that. **It follows, then, that the territorial division of the world**, which was completed precisely during the epoch of finance capital, and **which constitutes the basis of the present peculiar forms of rivalry between the biggest capitalist states**, is compatible with a non-imperialist policy. The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the latest stage of capitalism, instead*

***of an exposure of their depth; the result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism...***” Ibid., p. 110-111. (I highlight in bold the parts of Lenin’s text which allow us to better compare the opportunist tendency of that time with that of today.)

Our Party always fought against the social-imperialist character of the revisionist foreign policy of the USSR; at that time, we were confronted with the old revisionist parties that virulently defended the thesis of the national roads to socialism and justified the chauvinist alliance of the revisionist leaders with all kinds of populist currents that contributed to weakening the socialist camp.

Since the implosion of the USSR, betrayed from within by the clique which includes the Yeltsins, Putins and a large part of the current oligarchic mafia that controls power in Russia and in the states that emerged after its destruction, the revisionists, far from abandoning their support for the theses of chauvinist opportunism, have redoubled their efforts to portray the policy of some of the most aggressive imperialist powers as advanced and progressive. They have gone a step further: they once rejected the policy of China, a country that was then formally “socialist” and a “rival” of the USSR, which was already preparing for the leap to State Monopoly Capitalism (it is true that the sole intention of the opposition of the partisans of Khrushchevism was to defend the leadership of the CPSU from the formal criticisms of the Chinese leaders who accused them of being revisionists). Today, however, they have extended their explicit support to the Chinese imperialist power in its struggle against “Western imperialism.”

There are no limits to this eagerness of the revisionists to justify their social chauvinist policy, pandering to one imperialism against another. In their eagerness to be lackeys of the bourgeoisie they justify everything: from the wars of annexation of the “good” imperialists, to their financial penetration into the dependent countries to place them under their political rule, the activity of their private “armies” in the “backyards” where the inter-imperialist war is actually being waged, etc.

When it is (often) necessary and to embellish friendly imperialism, they conceal the most obvious contradictions: that there are private armies at the service of their economic and political interests, that they attempt coups d’état against the governments whose interests they protect; that ultra-reactionary states that are the engine of wars and conflicts that create hundreds of thousands of

innocent victims and have been (and continue to be) firm allies of brutal Yankee imperialism for decades, such as Saudi Arabia, are taking steps towards the other imperialist camp in order to follow their own path of expansion for their financial capital; even, as we shall see later, to defend without blinking or blushing the policy of the “Western” imperialist bloc, at the same time they praise the attempts of its “Eastern” rivals to create what they cynically call a more “just” “multipolar” world. As Lenin pointed out in the above quotation, for them, as for Kautsky: *“monopolies in economics are compatible with non-monopolistic, non-violent, non-annexationist methods in politics.”*

Lenin wrote his book on imperialism more than a century ago (1916), when the first socialist revolution in history, led by him, had not yet taken place, and Europe was bleeding in a cruel war in which the interests of the main powers of that time were settled; a carnage whose conclusion was only a truce that would give way to the most brutal confrontation in the history of humanity: World War II. Since then, bourgeois historians have only recognized a long period of peace between the great imperialist powers, subject to the order imposed by the power that emerged strongest from the Second World War, the United States, whose policy was imposed on the rest to regulate relations between them and divide the world; a brutal imperialism that has maintained “order” with an iron fist. It is an imperialist power in decline that still has the largest military budget on the planet, far ahead of its competitors, ready to maintain its power over the rest at all costs.

But that peace was always relative; over the years, there have been dozens of conflicts that have made countries disappear, changed maps, destroyed economies and provoked wars that ended the lives of millions of people: coups d'état, invasions and military occupations, criminal attacks against independent States under the pretext of fighting terrorism, etc. Only the bourgeoisie and its admirers speak of peace when it comes to imperialist policy.

### **About the BRICS.**

*“...Typical of the old capitalism... was the export of goods. Typical of the latest stage of capitalism, when monopolies rule, is the export of capital... Uneven and spasmodic development of individual enterprises, of individual branches of industry and individual countries, is inevitable under the capitalist system.... As long as capitalism*

*remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilized not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists, but for the purpose of increasing profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries. In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap.* Lenin, *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

Revisionism does not distinguish (and never has) the tendencies in the changes that take place in the different social and economic formations that have emerged as capitalism has developed, because they have renounced Marxist analysis and its revolutionary aim. Revisionism is a bourgeois ideology based on the idea that the capitalist mode of production can be improved but cannot be overcome. That is why its conclusions are absolutely unclear.

We communists know that in a socialist system (such as that of the USSR under Lenin and Stalin) the economy is not only centralized, but socially controlled. But it is not isolated from the rest of the world. As long as the revolution has not been achieved in the whole planet, or at least the most developed states, the proletarian state will necessarily have to maintain commercial and financial relations with other, capitalist countries, including, of course, the great imperialist powers, which are economically and politically hostile. But this does not mean that relations with those undeveloped countries are established on the basis of gaining economic or political control of them, nor that it acts in a way that ignores the predatory nature of capitalism.

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Nor does it mean that, under the current conditions, supported by this interconnection between the different economies, any policy opposed to the policy of the Yankee state is justifiable for that reason alone. At present, capitalist economies are profoundly interrelated, whoever dominates the mechanisms and agencies that regulate these relations and facilitate investments will be able to favor the expansion of its capital and control the economy of other nations and economic regions, as the United States has done so far. For this reason, what was once a silent advance of Chinese state capitalism has become a fierce fight with the US for control of the areas of influence and the agencies and mechanisms that regulate inter-imperialist relations. Today, the struggle between the imperialist

states that dominate the world has taken a qualitative leap: the financial movements have a global scope and are marked by China's attempts to contend for the areas hitherto controlled by other imperialist powers and to limit the control of the US and its currency, the dollar, in the international movement of capital on the one hand; and by the U.S. policy aimed at maintaining the current status quo at all costs on the other.

From the beginning, the BRICS (an acronym for the countries that make it up: Brazil, Russia, India, China and, since 2010, South Africa) was of interest to China to help create a "counter-power" to Yankee imperialism. Despite its deep internal contradictions, which I will talk about later, this forum serves China and Russia to try little by little to form a new bloc in the inter-imperialist struggle for the redivision of the world, as opposed to the one formed by the "West" led by the United States.

The leaders of the two imperialist powers that lead the BRICS do not hide their intentions either; in March of 2023 there was an interview between Xi Jinping and Putin in which the Chinese leader stated as he said goodbye: *"Changes are taking place that we haven't seen in a hundred years, and we're leading them together"*.

Perhaps because of their past or the "socialist" disguise of these states, the revisionists have become their propagandists and repeat to anyone who will listen the nonsense about the altruism of their policy, the peaceful character of their investments and the promising possibility of a new "multipolar" order that would put an end to the internal contradictions of the imperialist economy and in whose gestation the BRICS occupies a prominent place to the extent that, according to them, it is serving to attract new states towards a "humanist" alternative to the different organizations (OECD, IMF, G20, etc.) that regulated inter-imperialist relations during the era of Yankee domination. Let us see, then, what is the class character and the policy pursued by the two allied powers, China and Russia.

When analyzing the economic and political relations between states, we Marxist-Leninists are always guided by a class criterion: a socialist economy, as I pointed out above, is not only centralized, but also socially controlled by the people and, therefore, private initiative is restricted to small-scale local production and distribution. That is why, when dealing with the economic and political relations between countries at a time as confusing as the present, to compare the policy of the USSR during Stalin's lifetime with that of the

revisionism that followed, and even less with that of the gangster power that today controls the Russian state and the countries that emerged from the implosion of the former, is a betrayal of Marxism that helps to maintain this confusion.

After Stalin's death, the economy of the USSR remained formally "socialist" to the extent that there was a centralized economy and most enterprises were formally owned by the state, although the underground economy and the theft of the social product by the caste that controlled the activity of the state enterprises and state institutions gradually grew as social control weakened, until the disappearance of the USSR and the division of the collective property among the gangsters who today control those states. Today, the Russian proletariat is subjected to one of the most ferocious systems of capitalist exploitation; of the heroic experience of the Soviet Union, there is only the memory that the ruling clique headed by Putin skillfully uses when it is in his interest to justify his aggressive policy.

### China

*"From the very first steps of its activity, the Communist Party of China displayed open nationalist and chauvinist tendencies, which, as the facts show, could not be eradicated during the succeeding periods, either. Li Ta-chao, one of the founders of the Communist Party of China, said, 'the Europeans think that the world belongs exclusively to the whites and that they are the superior class, while the coloured peoples are inferior. The Chinese people,' Li Ta-chao continues, 'must be ready to wage a class struggle against the other races of the world, in which they will once again display their special national qualities.' The Communist Party of China was imbued with such views right from the beginning."* E. Hoxha, "Imperialism and the Revolution," pp. 435-436.

In the case of China, there has never been a socialist economy. Its Communist Party, practically from the beginning, "adapted" Marxism to a particular ideology that the Chinese leaders called "Mao-Tse Tung Thought." The confused idealistic gibberish of this thought initially went unnoticed when modern revisionism took control of the CPSU, as the Chinese party presented itself as the standard-bearer of the Marxist-Leninist nuclei that emerged in the old parties and rejected the rotten ideology of Khrushchev and Co. It didn't take long for the true character of the "Chinese road to socialism" to be revealed.

In his book, *“Imperialism and the Revolution”* Enver Hoxha takes up this quotation that shows the idealist and petty-bourgeois character of so-called “Mao Tse Tung Thought”: *“Actually all ultra-reactionaries of the world are ultra-reactionaries, and they will remain such tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, they will not remain such unto death, and in the end they change... Essentially, ultra-reactionaries are die-hards but not stable... It may happen that ultra-reactionaries may change for the better... they come to see their mistakes and change for the better. In short, ultra-reactionaries do change”*. (Quoted from *“Imperialism and the Revolution,”*) p. 430.

Comrade Enver Hoxha added: *“Proceeding from such anti-Marxist concepts, according to which with the lapse of time the class enemies will be corrected, he advocated class conciliation with them and allowed them to continue to enrich themselves, to exploit, to speak, and to act freely against the revolution. To justify this capitulationist stand towards the class enemy, Mao Tsetung wrote: ‘We have a lot to do now. It is impossible to keep on hitting out at them day in day out for the next fifty years. There are people who refuse to correct their mistakes, they can take them into their coffins when they go to see the King of Hell’”* (Quoted from *“Imperialism and the Revolution,”*) p. 431.

The theses of the CCP have always been benevolent towards the role of the bourgeoisie, they have rejected the role of the proletariat for social change, centered the leading role of the revolution on the peasantry, and have always maintained an indulgent and opportunist attitude towards the exploiting classes. This attitude guided the CCP’s policy from its beginning.

Throughout their history, the Chinese revisionists have been shaping an apparently erratic policy step by step but always guided by the objective of occupying the zenith of the imperialist camp: the so-called “theory of the three worlds” gave a green light to the so-called “ping-pong diplomacy” that for years made the Chinese government an objective ally of Yankee imperialism. Hence: “To get rich is glorious,” Deng Xiaoping’s war cry. China has been applying its model of state capitalism, although always using its “Socialism with Chinese characteristics” as an alibi for the naïve.

It is worth rereading Enver Hoxha, when he stated: “As very lengthy experience has already proved, state capitalism is supported and developed by the bourgeoisie, not to create the foundations of socialist society,.. but to strengthen the foundations of capitalist



society,... in order to exploit and oppress the working people more. Those who run the ‘public sector’ are not the representatives of the workers, but the men of big capital, those who have the reins of the whole economy and the state in their hands. The social position of the worker in the enterprises of the ‘public sector’ is no different from that of the worker in the private sector.” E. Hoxha, “Eurocommunism is Anti-Communism”, Tirana, 1980, pp. 145-146.

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China has increased its GDP fivefold since 2001 and is the world’s largest creditor. Today, for some, the champion of a more just and multipolar world is already the power that is contesting the hegemony of the imperialist camp with the United States. But it is not the working class that controls this development.

As Comrade Enver Hoxha pointed out: *“Unified central planning becomes possible only where complete social ownership has been established over the means of production, and this is characteristic only of socialism. Private property, in whatever form, has not submitted and never will submit to centralized planning.”* E. Hoxha, *ibid.*, p. 223.

The official Xinhua news agency reported in June 2022 that the number of private companies had quadrupled in the last ten years (from 10.85 million to 44.57 million). The private sector accounted for more than 50 per cent of tax revenues, more than 60 per cent of GDP, more than 70 per cent of technological innovations and 80 per cent of urban employment. Where do its apologists see socialism in the Chinese economy?

A few months later, Sputnik World included the list of the top ten Chinese billionaires, headed by Zhong Shanshan with \$65,000 million and ended with Colin Huang Zheng with \$24,300 million... Where do the sycophants of “Socialism with Chinese characteristics” see socialism?

It is now even easier to understand what Comrade E. Hoxha meant when he said: *“As a result of these anti-Marxist concepts about contradictions, about classes, and their role in revolution that ..Mao Tsetung thought\* advocates, China never proceeded on the correct road of socialist construction. It is not just the economic, political, ideological and social remnants of the past that have survived and continue to exist in Chinese society, but the exploiting classes continue to exist there as classes, and still remain in power. Not only*

*does the bourgeoisie still exist, but it also continues to gain income from the property it has had*" (E. Hoxha, "Imperialism and the Revolution," p. 433.)

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In other words, the fight to form another bloc responds to China's interest in breaking the current status quo in the imperialist camp. Its economy represents 18% of the world's GDP and it is the world's largest creditor; even in 2019 it possessed \$1.2 trillion of Yankee debt. Meanwhile its main rival, the United States, which until today controls the main agencies that regulate the economic, political and military relations of capitalism, is, however, a great power in decline that is facing a severe crisis and a public debt that reaches \$30 trillion, an amount equivalent to almost 133% of its GDP (the highest figure in its history). Yet China only has a 5% voting share in the World Bank's main lending arm (the top management positions of the World Bank and the IMF have been divided between the US and Europe since their creation).

The Chinese state, therefore, is not fighting to secure a "*Fairer and more equitable global governance*," as its president said in his speech at the meeting (see below), but to "balance" its economic weight in the imperialist camp with its political weight in the agencies that regulate relations within it; to resolve a contradiction that prevents it from being recognized as "first among equals" in the Olympus of capitalism. To do this, it is moving its pawns to influence areas that until now "belonged" to its Western rivals and it is investing huge amounts of money in undeveloped countries, because, as Lenin pointed out, there profit is high, capital is scarce, raw materials as well as the land is cheaper on which, in some cases, there is an abundance of rare materials essential for the most modern production processes.

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### **Russia.**

The proletariat of that immense country led the first socialist revolution and created the USSR, the first proletarian state in history; For almost forty years it built a socialist economy, guaranteed immense social, political and cultural progress to its people, helped the revolutionaries of the world to organize and advance against

their respective bourgeoisies and defeated the fascist Nazi beast. During those years, all the attacks of imperialism crashed against the insurmountable wall of a people on the march led by a Communist Party armed with a scientific ideology and made up of the best cadres that emerged from the people.

Today, that state has disappeared and, in its place, revisionism ended up giving birth to a reactionary state formed and dominated by the bourgeoisie who appropriated the wealth created by the Soviet people. It is an implacable bourgeoisie that hides behind the glorious past of the USSR to ensure it a certain social stability when the people's weariness with their gangster exploitation has become unbearable. Today the Russian bourgeoisie is trying to make us forget that experience and is showing the scarecrow of tsarist "Great Russia" while trying to appropriate the victory of the glorious Red Army against Nazi fascism; all in order to embellish its brutal exploitation and the disgusting nationalism of its international policy.

A June 2001 article published by the IMF stated that, according to official estimates, as early as 2000, the Russian private sector generated more than 70 per cent of GDP, compared with less than 10 per cent just eight years earlier, when the "reform" began. It added: "This is a remarkable achievement, but the expansion of the private sector is mainly due to the privatization of state-owned enterprises, and not to the creation of new enterprises."

Things have not gone badly for Russian big capital: in 2019, *Forbes* magazine reported that the 200 largest private companies in Russia saw their total revenues increase by 22% in 2018, reaching



around €618.11 billion. In fact, only 19 of the companies included in the survey had declining indicators compared to the previous year.

The invasion of Ukraine, as much as they want to justify it by the pressure exerted by the US and NATO and by the reactionary character of the Ukrainian regime (both of which are true, of course) has meant a further escalation in the race of thugs among the imperialists. It is clear that, instead of preventing NATO's eastward expansion, Russian aggression has only served to begin an armed conflict that is claiming thousands of victims, extend military tension among the imperialist powers and reinforce nationalist tendencies in the area. In short, it is not the interests of the Russian people or the Ukrainian people that are at stake in this fight, but those of their respective oligarchies and the most reactionary sectors of both countries, whose policy is not far from Nazism.

Behind the analyses of bourgeois political scientists, historians and military strategists, the sermons of politicians and religious leaders on peace and democracy; the false reasons based on historical brotherhoods, shared empires, and national or racial identities, there is only one real explanation: the financial oligarchy is facing a crushing crisis that it can only be overcome by contesting with its rival over its prey. Putin's Russia has nothing to do with the Soviet Union; the army that today is shelling and bombarding Ukraine is not the Red Army, in which Russians and Ukrainians fought together against Nazi fascism until it was defeated. Putin, like his Ukrainian enemies, is the head of a reactionary regime, controlled by political gangsters.

Russia is also acting as a gendarme in other parts of the world, especially in Africa, where, as a complement to the "invasion" of Chinese capital, it offers military power: weapons, advice and training, etc., including its own mercenary army, the Wagner group, in exchange for raw materials and political influence in the face of future conflicts. Taking advantage of the righteous anger of the peoples of the area against the cruel exploitation of "Western" imperialism, the Russian empire is occupying the positions left empty by the "West.". This happened in Libya and today the Russian penetration through the private group of mercenaries in the Sahel is extending to the Central African Republic, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, etc. The greed of French imperialism, which is interested only in obtaining maximum profits, ignoring the sufferings of the peoples it occupies with the argument of the "fight against jihadist terrorism," has provoked

constant revolts and coups d'état and facilitated the entry of Russian troops into the area, also in “defense of peace against jihadist terrorism”, the often-repeated excuse to bleed Africa dry in endless wars. Russia is gradually increasing its presence and influence in Africa. Like the Western empire, it is extending its control, presenting itself as one more actor in African politics: recently, for example, it was reported that a Russian naval base was being built in Sudan, with access to the Red Sea.

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### **About the BRICS summit**

*“...Since we are speaking of colonial policy in the epoch, of capitalist imperialism, it must be observed that finance capital and its corresponding foreign policy, which reduces itself to the struggle of the Great Powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of transitional forms of state dependence. Typical of this epoch is not only... colonies, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, officially, are politically independent, but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence....”* Lenin, *Ibid*, p. 101.

Before the August summit, the BRICS group already accounted for more than 42% of the world’s population, 30% of the territory, 25% of GDP and 18% of world trade. Of the twenty countries that have formally applied to join the group and the 40 or so that have shown interest in the project (even Macron’s France has “fooled around” with the idea), Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia and Iran have been formally invited to join the bloc since January 2024. With this, the BRICS economies would add up to 36.38% of global GDP compared to the 30.39% represented by the G7 countries (Germany, Canada, the United States, Japan, France, the United Kingdom and Italy) and would have 45% of world oil production and a more than considerable weight in the extraction industry of iron, coal and bauxite, not to mention agricultural production (taken from *El País*, September 24, 2023).

The expansion agreed to at the summit thus represents an undeniable victory for China, which is seeing its geopolitical influence rise: we must not forget that China’s GDP represents about 70% of the total GDP of the BRICS, and Beijing is behind many of the

initiatives that these countries are implementing, from the New Silk Roads to the Shanghai-based New Development Bank.

In his speech to the Assembly, Xi Jinping said in Johannesburg: *“...The BRICS are a major force in shaping the international landscape... We must contribute to reforming global governance to make it fairer and more equitable, and bring greater positive certainty, stability and energy to the world... We should expand political and security cooperation in order to maintain peace and tranquility. As a Chinese saying suggests: ‘Nothing is more beneficial than stability, and nothing more harmful than turmoil’... Human history will not end with a particular civilization or system... The BRICS countries should practice true multilateralism, uphold the UN-centered international system, support and strengthen the multilateral trading system centered in the WTO, and reject attempts to create small circles or exclusive blocs. We must make full use of the role of the New Development Bank, push for reform of the international financial and monetary systems, and increase the representation and voice of the developing countries... China is willing to work with its BRICS partners to pursue the vision of a community with a common future for mankind, to strengthen strategic partnership and deepen cooperation in all fields. As BRICS members, we must face our common challenges with a shared sense of mission, forge a brighter future with a common purpose, and walk the path of modernization together.”* Taken from Grand Continent.

This is a monument to cynicism, an explicit renunciation of any socialist revolutionary change, (I recommend stopping to think about the intentions expressed in the underlined lines of the speech); a pompous and mellifluous hymn to “universal justice” incompatible with the imperialist practice of capitalist states.

For months, the apologists of the “new multipolar order” have been spreading the good news of this meeting, focused on two issues that were constantly pointed out as the main objectives of the meeting: the expansion of the group and the proposals for the “de-dollarization” of the world economy.

**The first objective, expansion, as I say, has been achieved,** although at the cost of increasing the internal contradictions of a very heterogeneous group in which the major powers seek their own

interest in association.<sup>1</sup> It is worth referring again to Lenin's text, which stated: "...*We see plainly here how private and state monopolies are interwoven in the age of finance capital; how both are but separate links in the imperialist struggle between the big monopolists for the division of the world...*" *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

For any aware analyst, it is surprising that states such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, which have been at loggerheads for decades for socio-political reasons (Iran is a declared enemy of the US and Saudi Arabia is one of its staunchest allies), economic reasons (both are among the main oil producers) and even religious reasons (one is the head of Shiite and the other of Sunni Islamism) are in the same forum where it is a matter of forging alliances and common agreements between the allies... It seems that the speed at which events are unfolding in periods of imperialist crisis is helping capitalist leaders to be extremely "creative".

It is true that since the 1990s, China has gradually become Saudi Arabia's top trading partner: China's exports to Saudi Arabia have increased at an average of 15.3% per year, rising from \$905 million in 1995 to \$31.8 billion in 2020. Meanwhile, during the same period, China's imports from Saudi Arabia rose from \$393 million to \$33.4 billion, an average annual increase of 19.4%. *Taken from De conversatio March 2023.*

But, the point is that the BRICS countries have their own interests and they are going to work for them. This is how the newspaper *Expansión* explained it in the case of Saudi Arabia last September: "... *the loss of influence of the United States in the Middle East has led the Arab monarchy to seek more powerful allies and has turned to Russia and, above all, to China. It is no accident that the understanding between Saudi Arabia and Iran was signed in Beijing. Xi Jinping's government has the ability to control Tehran, because the Iranian regime depends on the economic support supplied by the Asian giant... Moreover, China's mediation sends a serious message to Washington. This reminds it that if it relinquishes its influence in the Middle East, other powers will take its place... Its petrodollars*

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<sup>1</sup> After Milei's victory in the elections, last January Argentina announced its renunciation of integration into the BRICS.

*are serving to soften the criticism that its deficient relationship with human rights still provokes..."*<sup>2</sup>

This shift does not prevent the Arab theocratic monarchy from being two-faced in its eagerness to find its own way to investments of its financial oligarchy (the recent purchase of 9.9% of Telefónica's shares and the rain of "petrodollars" in the world of soccer have shown a practice that reaches many other areas).

This was noted by *The Wall Street Journal* last month: *"The U.S. and Saudi Arabia are talking about a possible alliance to obtain metals in Africa that are key to their respective energy transitions... Saudi Arabia is considering investing \$15,000 million in mining assets on the continent, in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea and Namibia... Although the details have not been finalized, a possible deal between Washington and Riyadh would mean that certain U.S. companies would have the rights to buy some of the production of those Saudi-owned assets. That way Saudi Arabia would help the U.S. gain positions with respect to China in the race to develop electric vehicles, which require cobalt, lithium and other metals to make batteries."*

The same can be said of India; A member of the BRICS from the beginning, it has a common border with China, which in 1962 led to a short war between the two countries; they are the two most populous countries in the world and India is running to replace China as the engine of global growth... Prime Minister Modi predicts that India will reach the level of a developed country by 2047, but, today, it is a giant with feet of clay because its disparities are immense: its development is not enough to absorb the 12 million young people who enter the labor market each year. It continues to be a rural country with a very low level of income. in which agriculture employs 44% of the population and contributes only 15% of GDP. Taken from *El Economista*, September 24, 2023.

That is why the representatives of this state, firm supporters of monopoly capital, are also being two-faced: a few days after the

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<sup>2</sup> In 2019, a U.S. intelligence report implicated Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and current Prime Minister, Mohammed bin Salman, in the 2018 murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Biden, after promising to make Saudi Arabia "a pariah state", granted him immunity in 2022 as he considered him "unimpeachable" due to his status as Prime Minister.



BRICS summit, India presided over the G20 as host, a summit that Jinping would not attend. There, the Indian prime minister made all kinds of diplomatic ruses to touch upon all the issues in conflict, without saying anything, in the final communiqué, leaving all the imperialist leaders satisfied by the false image of peace and understanding that he conveyed “despite the differences”. Everyone happily congratulated each other, acknowledging that Narendra Modi and his diplomats had achieved the goal of becoming the axis of international geopolitics.

On more practical terms, coinciding with the G20 summit, the US, the European Union, India and Saudi Arabia announced the agreement on a mega-project of railways, ports and energy connections that aim to be an alternative to China’s Silk Road. The president of the European Commission, enraptured, described the project as “historic”; Narendra Modi said it was “unprecedented”. As we can see, the enlargement of the BRICS has only increased the internal contradictions of the group.

**With regard to the second objective**, the agreement has been much weaker, limiting itself to recommending payment with national currencies in purchases between partners, something that was already a common practice. This is especially convenient for powers such as Russia, which faces harsh sanctions from Western powers, to be able to trade with other countries without using or pegging their currency to the dollar. However, each country’s confidence in its partners’ currency is limited. And China doesn’t seem to have any particular interest in it.

The fact that the dollar is the world’s reserve currency means that it is used to setting the price of all commodities, such as oil. The U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, in its report on “The Future of Dollar Hegemony” states: “Nearly 60% of the world’s foreign exchange reserves are held in dollars, with the euro a distant second at around 20%. About 90% of transactions in foreign exchange markets are invoiced in dollars, as is half of global trade. That is, the dollarization of the world capitalist economy is key to U.S. dominance of the global economy, since the U.S. Federal Reserve controls the supply of U.S. dollars and is therefore in fact the world’s central bank. Taken from “The Crisis Observatory”.

As of today, about 45% of all global payments made through SWIFT were made in US dollars, while 32% were made in euros. Only 2.3% of SWIFT transactions were made in yuan. Similarly, in the

fourth quarter of 2022, the dollar accounted for 54% of the world's foreign exchange reserves, according to IMF data. The euro accounted for 20% of reserves, while the yuan accounted for only 2.5% of reserves. In fact, in August 2018, China was the largest holder of dollars in its foreign exchange reserves, with \$3.08 trillion.

So the sharp fall of the dollar in the economic relations between the imperialist countries would harm the rest of the economies, including those that are part of the BRICS and in particular China. On the other hand, the control of the public accounts of some of the countries that will join the group as of next January is not very edifying and as a consequence their currencies have depreciated greatly against the dollar: 98% for the Argentine peso; 90% for the Iranian rial; 78% for the Egyptian pound, and 55% for the Brazilian real. With this situation it is very difficult to build a common currency. In short, de-dollarization will be a slower process than the social chauvinists anticipate.

**On the BRICS and Africa.** The Johannesburg summit, which was attended by representatives of 60 countries, was held under the theme: *“BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism”*. Behind this “exuberant” semantics, so much to the liking of diplomatic language, there is a very different reality of financial domination over the economies of the African countries in contention between the “Western” imperialist powers (especially France and the United States) and the new “Eastern benefactor”.

For years, taking advantage of the justified weariness of the African peoples with the European and Yankee exploiters, China with its financial investments and Russia using its military “advice”, the sale of arms and even the direct intervention of private military forces, have advanced positions on the African continent. They are investing in infrastructures that facilitate the entry of their products, take advantage of the lower cost of labor and the legal and administrative facilities of the States in the area to set up “mixed” enterprises; obtain raw materials (in particular, rare metals, gold, etc.) on advantageous terms. They are gaining positions in the geopolitical war waged with their imperialist rivals (the African continent, for example, accounts for 54 seats in the UN General Assembly) and bridgeheads for the advance of their troops in the event of conflict.

In the relationship between the imperialist powers and the dominated countries there is anything but internationalism or altruism.<sup>3</sup>

This reality to which the social chauvinists are absolutely immune is not something new; it is the consequence of an essential tendency in the capitalist mode of production in its last, imperialist phase. As early as 1916, Lenin pointed out: “... *The export of capital affects and greatly accelerates the development of capitalism in those countries to which it is exported... the utilization of “connections” for profitable transactions takes the place of competition on the open market. The most usual thing is to stipulate that part of the loan that is granted shall be spent on purchases in the creditor country, particularly on orders for war materials, or for ships, etc... The export of capital abroad thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities....*” Lenin, *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

**Why Africa?** In recent years, the line of inter-imperialist confrontation has shifted towards Africa and the Indo-Pacific region (in the Pacific there are constant clashes between China and the US, Japan and other “Western” imperialist powers – the AUKUS, a military alliance explicitly aimed against China was recently formed – particularly on account of the status of Taiwan, the island whose sovereignty China has claimed since the end of its civil war).

That is to say, in the Indo-Pacific there are already great powers (China, India, Japan, Australia, etc.) and therefore “equal-to-equal” relations prevail there; but Africa, however, is again a territory “under contention” for the access of imperialist finance capital.

In Africa, between 1978 to 2017, China’s trade increased by more than 200 times. Today, Chinese investment in the African continent amounts to more than \$100 billion US, and about 3100 Chinese companies from various sectors have invested there. It is clear that this investment is connected to the competition and access to the raw materials and natural resources that China needs to sustain its economic growth. Infolibre noted in August 2023: “*China’s trade volume with Africa is \$282 billion, \$72 billion for the U.S. and only \$18 billion for Russia. Of course China is in the best position to say that it is taking over Africa. One in three major infrastructure projects is being built by Chinese companies and one in five is financed*

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<sup>3</sup> Africa has a debt of \$153 billion with China, which between 2000 and 2020 granted 1143 loans to governments on that continent, according to data from John Hopkins University.

*by Chinese banks. Beijing has taken the place left by the West, which was hesitant about financing these projects... It is true, in any case, that Beijing obtains certain 'marginal' benefits. For example, some maintenance contracts can extend up to 99 years and certain funded projects involve the exclusive use of Chinese workers, although some African governments require quotas for local workers."*

In the same vein, the digital magazine "Idees" pointed out the following in 2022: *"China's influence on the African political economy is significant on many levels. It is the first trading partner and also one of the main investors, especially in infrastructure. On the other hand, the commitments made by the institutions of the Asian country have a clear long-term vision. On the Chinese side, the need to forge strategic alliances with other developing countries makes its presence on the African continent solid and lasting... Despite this, some imbalances are observable. First, the pattern of trade is reproducing the classic pattern whereby African countries essentially export raw materials and import manufactured goods. Secondly, there are risks of over-indebtedness, which have been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the policy of ad hoc debt forgiveness and restructuring by the Chinese authorities has prevented major default crises, we will have to be vigilant about this issue..."*

In other words, an open war has been going on in Africa for years. It is not only NATO that is deploying its strength on the African continent in support of the Western powers. In the same way that Russia has military-technical cooperation agreements with 40 African countries, China formed the First China-Africa Forum on Security and Defense in 2018 and since 2017 has had its first naval base abroad, in Djibouti, a strategic country located in a maritime strait towards the Suez Canal, through which 25% of world exports navigate, mostly oil.

One of the bloodiest examples of the military occupation by the imperialists and their interference in the internal affairs of African countries is that of Libya; once one of the regional powers that, after NATO's aggression in 2011<sup>4</sup>, is today a country divided into two states controlled respectively by puppet governments of Western

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<sup>4</sup> General Julio Rodríguez, at that time Chief of the Defense Staff and head of operational manager of the Spanish Armed Forces, was then part of the Spanish military center in the attack on that country, and is now responsible for Podemos' Think Tank.

imperialism (the Western sector) and Russian imperialism (the Eastern). The recent flooding of the city of Derna, which has caused more than 11,000 deaths and thousands of disappearances, has proven the consequences of the inter-imperialist struggle in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

Is this altruism? Of course not. The report of our Enlarged CC of April of last year included the following comment that appeared on the “Investing.com” website: *“At the period of colonial rule, the appropriation of raw materials was quite simple. A place on earth was conquered by force of arms, the population was enslaved, and coveted raw materials were sent home. Today things are similar, but not as obvious. The former colonies were destroyed after the departure of their occupants. In order for people to be able to work, everything had to be rebuilt, which was not possible without money... The banks of the colonial masters came on the scene and, out of sheer charity, gave countries capital resources to enable the extraction of raw materials, which were then exported. What the slave masters did with their whips works in a (capitalist) society through debts and interest... Everything went well at first, but the market is now so oversaturated with credit that this system is visibly heading towards an abyss that some colleagues equate with the end of the world. It is getting harder and harder to create growth and meet interest payments.”* That is, after the good words about *“Mutually accelerated growth, sustainable development and inclusive multilateralism”* we find only the same financial occupation of the dependent countries, the same objectives of domination.

The inter-imperialist war is above all an economic war without concessions. To advance its positions, China has been resorting to offering “selfless aid” for years that bind countries to the “debt noose”<sup>6</sup> and they turn them in the direction marked by the one who

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<sup>5</sup> The lack of a viable centralized state and the consequent lack of coordination was the ultimate cause of the lack of maintenance of the two dams, whose destruction caused the avalanche that destroyed at least a quarter of the city.

<sup>6</sup> The U.S. cynically complains that China’s actions imply a “debt trap” for Africa because, it claims, Beijing offers loans for expensive infrastructure projects and when a certain country cannot repay the loan, China takes control of its strategic assets... In short, the thief knows perfectly well how his colleagues manage to break into other people’s houses, because he has done it before.

controls the rope. In exchange, it obtains as loot the control of the raw materials, labor and “geostrategic” advantages for its armed forces, in anticipation of open confrontations. This is nothing that the empires that preceded them in Africa: England, the USA, France, etc. have not done before and continue to do. In the end, as Lenin said: *“The creditor is more firmly attached to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer.”* Ibid. p. 122.

### On the Social Chauvinists

Last September 11, an article was published in *Mundo Obrero*, the organ of the PCE, signed by its chair José Luis Centella with the title: *“The influence of the BRICS summit on the process of reshaping the international order”* in which the same social chauvinist position is defended as that of other forces that emerged from the long process of decomposition of Carrillo-type revisionism that today fiercely define themselves as communist and, on other issues related to national politics, virulently attack the reformism of the PCE.

The article as a whole is a defense of the “new order” promoted by China and Russia and a priceless example of the degree of

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Regarding the so-called “debt noose” and its political use to control places in dependent countries, it should be said that from the beginning it has been part of the “modus operandi” of imperialism, including that of China. An example: The port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka was built with a \$1.1 billion Chinese loan and turned out to be a commercial failure... In 2017, it was placed in Beijing’s hands with a 99-year lease agreement, following the government of that country’s troubles in paying its debts. Since then, there have been several talks of the possibility that China might want to use it to patrol the Indian Ocean.

This is how the Chinese embassy in Panama justified the matter: *“Here are the facts—true, not fictitious... Sri Lanka faced (and continues to face) a debt crisis. It has taken significant amounts of loans from China in recent years and in 2017 it agreed to lease the port of Hambantota to China for 99 years in a debt-for-equity swap, on the condition that it could not be used for military purposes... But it is a myth that the port was ‘ceded’ to China—to begin with, the concept of cession does not apply since it is a lease arrangement under which Sri Lanka always has the right to suspend the contract and regain the title to the port in accordance with the procedures and terms agreed upon by the contracting parties, (that is, if you pay), because Sri Lanka had trouble repaying Chinese loans.*

surrender which revisionism has reached in its eagerness to embellish capitalism and proclaim its renunciation of the revolution.

The author does not seem to be aware of the immense contradiction involved in the defense of the bloc whose formation is precisely linked to this body, BRICS, based on which China aspires to advance in the contention for hegemony with the United States, and the objective fact that his party, the PCE, defends and participates in the policy of the Spanish government. It is directly involved in all those decisions taken by Western imperialism led by the Yankee power: involvement in the war in Ukraine on its side against Russia, active participation in NATO, including the sending of weapons and troops to various conflicts in which the interests of the Western imperialist powers are involved, the increase in the Spanish military budget, etc.<sup>7</sup>

When J. L. Centella speaks of the objectives set out at the BRICS summit, his language reaches the levels of “political lyricism” of the Chinese president in his speech at the Johannesburg summit. In the first point he states: *“the BRICS approach is one of building a multi-lateral system that must be based on a truly open and multilateral trading system that is transparent, fair, inclusive and equitable, non-discriminatory, based on clear and transparent rules that ensure mutual benefit”*.

And, in assessing the initiatives that were discussed in order to advance a new framework for international relations and the global security model, J. L. Centella forgets any notion of dialectics in order to state: *“The construction of a New International Order must put an end to a centralism of the West when it comes to understanding life and assume that the history of humanity did not begin, nor will it end in a single civilization, so it is necessary to defend a peaceful coexistence and a coexistence between different peoples, different cultures...”*

The author completely ignores not only the class struggle, but its very existence. For him, contradictions are cultural and civilizational; he is silent about the mode of production that conditions life

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<sup>7</sup> This cynicism is reminiscent of the “Marxism” of the famous comedian Groucho Marx and his acquaintance: “these are my principles... If you don’t like them, I have others.” But it is simply part of the mode of operations of revisionist opportunism: it is a matter of casting nets on both sides to see what is caught.

and relations between countries, and within them between the different classes. He talks about the problems faced by countries as if there were no classes there either, as if the various African governments and regimes defended “their nation”, as if there were no exploitation in Africa. This is tantamount to justifying regimes as rotten as that of Egypt or Morocco.

After so much pompous talk, an equally anti-Marxist conclusion had to be reached: *“Therefore, despite hailing the advances, one cannot claim victory. The enemy is powerful and is determined to use all the resources at its disposal to achieve its objectives, so it is necessary to combine the advances that multilateralism is making at the institutional, political and economic levels, with achieving a greater capacity for response and popular mobilization in defense of the proposals for reforms of international institutions that are proposed by the BRICS. Because without popular pressure, the bloc that has been hegemonic until now is not willing to give up its privileges in favor of building an international community that does not have hegemonic centers of power, but that has multilateral relations of mutual benefit. To this end, it is necessary to collectively build a plan that transforms analyses and proposals into concrete actions so that they are really effective and everything is documented in the institutional actions of governments.”*

All of this, to end up demanding the action of the peoples, not to advance in their liberation, but to change masters. This is what the social chauvinists are putting forward: *“In this regard, it should be considered how to take advantage of existing areas of political and social relations in order to elaborate and, above all, carry out, what we can call a great consensus in defense of the planet, with the key being citizen mobilization that forms the broadest and most plural alliance of governments, peoples, social, political and trade union organizations that allows us to accumulate forces to break the imperialist strategy of leading us into a new Cold War fail and allows us to build a multilateral world that ensures a future of peace and progress for humanity in harmony with nature”*. (my emphases)

Lenin criticized the positions of the social chauvinists of his era who concealed the character of capitalism and its true essence from the eyes of the workers, creating the false illusion of a world at peace, without contradictions, in which the different powers coexisted with each other in harmony, without conflicts. He did so in these terms: *“From the purely economic point of view,”* writes



*Kautsky, "it is not impossible that capitalism will yet go through a new phase, that of the extension of the policy of the cartels to foreign policy, the phase of ultraimperialism." This is, Lenin added, "superimperialism, a union of all imperialisms of the whole world and not struggles among them, a phase when wars shall cease under capitalism, a phase of 'the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital.'... Kautsky's utterly meaningless talk about ultraimperialism encourages, among other things, that profoundly mistaken idea which only brings grist to the mill of the apologists of imperialism, viz., that the rule of finance capital lessens the unevenness and contradictions inherent in world economy, whereas in reality it increases them..." Lenin, *ibid.*, pp. 112-113.*

History has come to fully substantiate the theses defended by Lenin. In the same way in domestic politics the revisionists have tried to reconcile the possibility of maintaining the achievements of the working class and advancing democracy, on the basis of and within the limits of the Liberal State, or, as in Spain, a State tailored to the interests of an oligarchy that emerged during and linked by a thousand ties to the institutions of the Franco dictatorship. As far as international politics is concerned, they weaken the struggle against imperialism by creating a false illusion of the possibility of overcoming the capitalist system without fighting it, and by claiming that in this imperialist stage it is possible to temper the contradictions between the bourgeois states and to achieve a just and equitable peace between them, without putting an end in a revolutionary way to a system that is behind these contradictions. These are nothing but the expression of the tendency of the capitalist system towards crisis, confrontation and war in the capitalist mode of production in its imperialist phase.

Revisionists and opportunists have been supporting all kinds of irrational theories that pretend to supersede the Marxist analysis and to present capitalist China and Putin's Russia as states legitimately interested in promoting the peaceful development of the world economy and the well-being of the peoples. They see their interference in the politics of other nations as an "altruistic" if not "internationalist" attitude; they share the mystical and nationalist analysis of imperialist leaders such as Putin or Jinping on alleged reasons of racial identity, a shared imperial past, national security, etc., to justify the imposition of vital spaces, areas of influence and rigid borders against the imperialist competitor.

They systematically forget what Lenin said in his work, and subsequent history has irrefutably confirmed: *“The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it ‘in proportion to capital,’ ‘in proportion to strength,’ because there cannot be any other method of division under commodity production and capitalism. But strength varies with the degree of economic and political development.... To substitute the question of the form of the struggle and agreements (today peaceful, tomorrow warlike, the next day warlike again) for the question of the substance of the struggle and agreements between capitalist combines is to sink to the role of a sophist. The epoch of the latest stage of capitalism shows us that certain relations between capitalist combines grow up, based on the economic division of the world; while parallel and in connection with it, certain relations grow up between political combines, between states, on the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the “struggle for economic territory.”* Lenin, *ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

Nothing new, nothing that humanity did not experience when the ideological degeneration of social democracy, went over with weapons and baggage to the camp of reaction and class collaboration, justified the parasitic work of its financial oligarchy by passing off its ruthless colonial exploitation as “good” imperialism, and the rancid nationalism that justified its militarism based on past imperial greatness as necessary to ensure peace in the face of the aggressiveness of its competitor. That betrayal gave way to the first bloodbath in Europe, the First World War.

**In conclusion**, the weakening of the U.S. as a hegemonic power is advancing. Despite its indisputable military power (its enormous military spending, more than \$800,000 million a year, doubles that of the next country in spending), the Yankee economy is sinking into a spiral of production crisis, debt growth, etc. that it cannot solve despite the constant intervention of the capitalist state to save itself from the crash that is gripping its economy.

Also advancing is the formation of a new pole that, despite its growing internal contradictions, can bring together in a future hostile bloc led by China the states that today are subject to the noose of Yankee imperialism. Both processes should be self-evident to the eyes of an attentive person.

Today, the objective data do not allow us to come to a final conclusion about processes that are subject to the influence of factors whose determination will ultimately depend on the interests of the different sectors of the international oligarchy in a world in crisis that is entering more and more rapidly into an economic storm that is affecting the whole of the imperialist economy. It will depend above all on the working class regaining its strength, on communists helping to orient the future struggles of the proletariat by reinforcing internationalism and being implacable towards ideologies that confuse the peoples by denying the need to fight for clear class objectives, to end exploitation, destruction and war.

In any case, the question for communists is whether this shift towards a “multipolar” world portrayed by the social chauvinists represents an advance towards stability and peace among nations and peoples, or a mere temporary state within the tendency of capital in its imperialist phase towards confrontation; that is, the confirmation of the theses of the great proletarian leader, Lenin, who recalled: “... *Certain bourgeois writers (whom K. Kautsky, who has completely abandoned the Marxist position... has now joined) have expressed the opinion that international cartels, being one of the most striking expressions of the internationalization of capital, give the hope of peace among nations under capitalism.... the forms of the struggle may and do constantly change in accordance with varying, relatively particular and temporary causes, but the substance of the struggle, its class content, positively cannot change while classes exist...*” Ibid., p. 88.

In view of the facts, it is clear that communists cannot be propagandists of any “multipolar world” governed by the laws of finance capital. To do so is to lie and betray the revolution; To pretend that capitalism can overcome its tendency towards crisis and confrontation is to embellish exploitation, misery and war, as well as being an attack on reason.

*Madrid, March of 2024*

## **When the past sheds light on the present and the future...**

### **(Tactical Issues to Confront Populism)**

#### **I. Lessons from the Past**

In 1991, Ben Ali put his affairs in order for the four years following the coup d'état of November 7, 1987, which he took advantage of to reorganize the state apparatus and subjugate it completely. He launched a general and comprehensive repressive campaign against the civilian and political opposition forces. First, he attacked the Islamist movement Ennahda and its supporters with the aim of uprooting it, using the most horrendous means of repression and torture, which cost the lives of dozens of detainees. For the record, during the 1989 elections the Ennahda movement had called to vote for "President Ben Ali," and Ghannouchi was one of the most eminent supporters of the November 7, 1987, coup d'état. This saved the regime of "the big comprador bourgeoisie" from collapse or even an inevitable uprising. On his release from prison, on the eve of the anniversary of March 20, 1988, he declared, "our trust in God and in Zayn al-Abidin Ben Ali is great..."

But Ben Ali, wishing to establish absolute power, a dictatorship, launched his war against the parties, organizations, media and all cultural, feminist and youth movements outside his control, to destroy them, or at least enslave them and transform them into mere ornaments. The attack initially directed against the Ennahda movement was due to its political clout and its infiltration of the state apparatus. This behavior was not new to the current regime. In fact, the dictatorial regime of Bourguiba, to which Ben Ali is heir, systematically followed the same behavior whenever it perceived a danger, even a limited one, on the part of the political forces, however weak. This was the case of the left-wing or Arab nationalist opposition in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as well as the workers' union that dared to declare a general strike on January 26, 1978. The repression was bloody, leaving hundreds dead,

an episode that would be repeated six years later (January 3, 1984) during the bread revolt.

At that time, that is, in the early 1990s, the Workers' Party, which had faced the coup of November 7, 1987, from day one, warned of its negative consequences for the people and refused to sign the "National Pact" (1988). It raised its voice to say: "No to dictatorship... No to repression... No to murder by torture. no to trials to settle scores." It warned that the country was on the verge of a new dark phase, where the time of the so-called "opening" in which reactionary forces left spaces for freedom of expression and movement, has closed, giving way to global and indiscriminate repression. In this context, the party explained that Ben Ali did not attack the Ennahda movement due to the fact that it was a right-wing, reactionary and obscurantist movement, and that he did not intend to achieve a progressive democratic project, respectful of freedoms and human rights, to allow the people to freely choose their representatives, to achieve social justice and to free the country from dependence on neocolonial forces. On the contrary, he sought to liquidate a political opponent which represented a threat to his dictatorial regime, which he wanted to establish in defense of the interests of the comprador/neocolonial alliance, and which the stick of repression will not stop at the Ennahda movement, but which will gradually strike all the political, civil and trade union opposition.

The Workers' Party recalled that whoever wants to seriously resist the obscurantist movements from a progressive point of view, must not resort to repressive methods, but to intellectual and political weapons, responding to the demands of the popular classes for freedom and a dignified life, and through the development of culture and education of society (change and development of school and cultural programs), etc. in order to raise the level of consciousness of these classes and groups. At the time, the Workers' Party was the most prominent opponent of the Ennahda movement. It never ceased to resist it through thought (books, articles, etc.), political positions and work in the countryside, but at the same time it was aware of Ben Ali's project and of the nature of the dictatorial regime he wanted to establish, as a natural extension of the Bourguiba regime or as a renewal of it.

From this point of view, the Workers' Party, which called for a patriotic, democratic, popular and social revolution, clearly

formulated its tactical orientations in 1994, taking into account all the contradictions that run through our society, the state of the relations of forces at the precise moment and the priority tasks, which are the objective bases on which all revolutionary tactics are built.

These trends can be summarized in the following points:

- First: whoever wants to prevent the Ennahda movement from coming to power must take the initiative in the struggle against the existing dictatorship in order to overthrow it and establish a democratic, patriotic and popular regime, and not line up behind fascism with the illusion that it will take over the liquidation of this movement, which represents one of the right-wing forces in society and which is the subject of a general liquidation campaign, which has virtually eliminated it from the political arena.
- Second, the repression exercised by dictatorial regimes against political movements wrapped in religion, as historical experience shows, strengthens these movements and does not weaken them, because it gives them the opportunity to appear as victims who are paying the price of “defending the truth”, Islam. The real struggle against religious political movements can be achieved through diligent work among the working and poor masses, to organize and arm them with the consciousness that will enable them to understand the illusions spread among them by these movements, exploiting their religious feelings.
- Third: a situation in which freedoms exist, even if reactionary movements benefit from them, is better for everyone than a tyrannical situation that restricts all voices, in particular those of the people and revolutionary, progressive and democratic forces, under the pretext of “fighting religious extremism” and, in the case of our country, of “resistance to the Muslim Brotherhood”. We say “better” because the existence of freedoms gives the workers, revolutionaries and progressives the freedom to express, organize and promote their positions and unite people around them in the face of the different forces of the liberal

and religious right, which the dictatorship does not allow and which the gagging of their mouths does not allow.

- Fourth, democracy and social justice will not be achieved either with or in cooperation with the dictatorial regime of Ben Ali, but by fighting against it and on its ruins. This places the issue of revolution at the top of the agenda of the party and of the revolutionary and progressive forces, as the main task that must be fulfilled in order to advance the homeland and bring about a radical change in the material and moral conditions of the workers, employees and the poor, women and men, in the cities and the countryside, and free them from the domination of the reactionary neocolonial alliance.

At that time, certain parties had risen up, in particular parties that had recently sided with the Ennahda movement and allied themselves with it. They called us “infidels” and described us as “allies of the Ennahda movement” and that “we didn’t want anything good for the country.” Some said it clearly: “Let Ben Ali stop them and even kill them; he will free us from them...”, “ at least we can work with Ben Ali...”, “A civil tyranny that respects people”, “freedoms are a thousand times better than a tyranny with a religious façade...”. This dangerous opportunist and vindictive tendency even permeated human rights organizations, some of whose leaders were infected by a spirit of fascism.

A certain number of democrats and so-called leftists who abandoned the fighting positions and then threw themselves into the arms of Ben Ali, did not hesitate to join the “Rally” party (the ruling party) and the apparatuses and institutions of the dictatorship, including the police; some, to become the worst enemies of the progressive revolutionary and democratic forces, and sometimes mere informants in the service of their master. In this historical context, the conflict between the different poles of the reactionary right spread in society, particularly among the educated petty-bourgeois milieu, including part of the “left” milieu. This spirit reflected the inability of this petty-bourgeois milieu to confront the Islamist movement alone and achieve victory over it, and so chose to take refuge behind a dictatorial, reactionary and corrupt regime.

But it was life that confirmed the correctness of the position of the Workers' Party on the coup d'état of November 7, 1987, and the validity of its predictions about subsequent events, in particular the turning point of 1991-1992. Unfortunately for those who applauded Ben Ali, there was only a short period of time during which he settled scores with the "Muslim Brotherhood" and established his fascist dictatorship. Then he could bare his fangs and turn against them, and they found themselves, one after another, in prison, often on trumped-up charges, or losing their jobs, and subject to police surveillance and various pressures. Because Ben Ali wants them to be just a servile ornament, applauding him and doing his bidding, and they didn't even have the right to keep silent because their silence aroused suspicion about them.

Ben Ali eliminated all opposition and replaced it with a decorative opposition. He subjugated the General Union of Tunisian Workers and tamed the media and the movements defending human, women's, cultural and student rights. The state assumed an unprecedented police character, torturing and ill-treating citizens for the most senseless reasons, attacking their means of subsistence and sometimes even seizing them, which became a method of government. It is no exaggeration to say that the State, in the midst of this widespread suppression of freedoms, rights and human dignity, no longer had anything to envy the dictatorial regimes. In fact, it was "privatized" with its various administrations, its judicial, financial and security apparatuses for the benefit of Ben Ali, his family and his entourage, thus in many cases losing even its formal public character; this led to orders and instructions in order to replace the laws in force.

Of course, everyone knows the political, economic and social crises that this situation created, the widespread, across the board corruption, and the unprecedented injustice and oppression at that period. Ben Ali found, as usual, the support of the capitals of the colonial countries, including Washington, Paris, Rome, Berlin, Brussels, and others. During these difficult times, the Workers' Party, as well as its friends among the democratic and progressive forces, did not give up the struggle. It followed the tactics of resistance, exploiting all examples of persecution, repression, exploitation, corruption and dependency to denounce the dictatorship, and participated in all forms of resistance, however small, partial and limited, in order to develop and strengthen



them. In all spheres of politics, trade unions, human rights, youth, women and culture, the Workers' Party did not hesitate to conclude the simplest agreements that would contribute to gradually breaking the image of the dictatorship and raising the morale of the masses.

Then came the creation of the “Committee on Rights and Freedoms of October 18” (2005), to which the most important intellectual and political movements of the time, active and influential on the political scene, contributed, including the “Ennahda Movement”, which was repressed at the time and part of the opposition. This is a situation that, as we will explain later, is different from what it would become later, when after the revolution it was transformed into the ruling party. This grouping was formed around three major demands: “general amnesty, freedom of expression and freedom of organization”, which everyone needed, but which they could not impose by relying only on their own strength. This was one of the most important successes achieved that confused the Ben Ali regime, intensifying its isolation with its decorative opposition.

The activity of the Workers' Party did not stop at the national level, as it established links with democratic and progressive forces abroad (parties, human rights organizations, etc.) to contribute to the formation of a global network of support, to put pressure on the colonial governments that supported the dictatorship in Tunisia with money and repressive means to perpetuate its period in power in the service of their interests.

As we know, the mass movement gradually came back to life after years of fear and stagnation. Most of the political forces became aware of the reality of what was happening and a process of classification took place within them, as well as within the trade union, feminist, cultural and media movements, among judges and lawyers, and within all sectors.

The circle of resistance widened and what had been a slogan or a position against the dictatorship limited to a restricted circle, became a slogan and a position taken up by the broad masses.

The six-month uprising in the mining basin (2008) was one of the most important indicators of the reversal of the situation in Tunisia and the beginning of the end of the dictatorship. Then followed the events of Ben Guerdane and Skhira, etc. and finally the revolution broke out on December 17, 2010, in Sidi Bouzid, causing

the fall of the dictatorship and the flight of Ben Ali on January 14, 2011, and the beginning of a new era in Tunisian history. The Workers' Party was the first to understand the emerging revolutionary situation, which allowed it to brandish the slogan of the overthrow of the Ben Ali regime at the opportune moment, and to present a transitional program to lead Tunisia on the path of real revolutionary change starting with January 11, 2011. During this time, many were still questioning what was happening and supporting the regime without participating in the struggle of the masses who were facing bare-chested the brutality of the dictatorship and its bullets. Party activists participated in all the mass movements that shook the country, leading to the arrest and torture of a large number of them.

In a word, the general tactical line drawn up by the Workers' Party against the dictatorship during the Ben Ali era was a solid revolutionary line. The Workers' Party did not make any mistakes in its analysis or in its elections. During the dictatorship it did not make concessions at any time nor did it fall into leftist and infantile behavior. On the contrary, it was always ready to determine the correct tactics and slogans, to put them into practice without hesitation, despite the difficult circumstances it was going through. The Workers' Party operated in absolute secrecy and its activists, men and women, were persecuted, arrested, tortured, tried, imprisoned and expelled from school or work. The situation was totally unfavorable for the communist movement and the left in general after the fall of the Soviet Union, which the international bourgeoisie took advantage of to launch a flagrant attack not only on the communist movements of the left, but also on the national anti-colonial and progressive movements. But it persevered and did not deviate from the path of struggle and revolution.

## **II. What about the present?**

Twelve years after the overthrow of the November dictatorship, we found ourselves in a situation similar in some tactical respects to that of 1991. After the revolution, things did not take the direction that the Workers' Party, the revolutionary and progressive forces, wanted, and that the Tunisian people dreamed of. They had overthrown the dictatorship and obtained their freedom, but they did not take the revolution to the end to remove from power their oppressors who caused their suffering, and to

take the reins of power, which is the central question of any revolution, into their own hands. This would have allowed them to reorganize the state and the economy on new bases and achieve the goals for which they fought, expressed in the slogan “Work, Freedom and National Dignity.”

All that the Tunisian revolution achieved was the overthrow of the dictatorship and the achievement of political freedom, and the consequent change in the form of government from an absolute autocratic system to a democratic and liberal one. The state apparatus remained as it was, despite the disturbances that rocked it. Society also remained under the domination of the reactionary, local/neocolonial and foreign class alliance: locally, the wealthy comprador minorities who lived off the Ben Ali regime and who quickly adapted to the new conditions by supporting the rising right, the counter-revolutionary forces, led by the Ennahda movement, and Nidaa Tounes, and its later branches, led by the “Vive la Tunisie” (Long Live Tunisia) party, created by the dissident Youssef Chahed. Externally, the influential capitalist-imperialist decision-making centers in Tunisia, in particular the United States of America, France and the European Union in general, in addition to their agents in the Gulf and Middle East (Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, etc.), all these forces quickly intervened to hijack the revolution and arrange things in their favor.

The people had rebelled for work, but unemployment, poverty, and corruption worsened. The people had rebelled for freedom, but the financial lobbies that controlled the most important media and all the elections that took place (2011-2014-2019) turned against them, creating institutions at their service. The people had rebelled for national dignity, but dependence on the outside world increased. All of this has worsened the society’s crisis.

Broad sections of the working and popular classes felt deceived and manipulated in the struggle of the right-wing counter-revolutionary forces, which corrupted and rotted public life and showed the limits of bourgeois representative democracy and its various institutions. This created a climate conducive to the rise of populism, which took advantage of the absence of a revolutionary and independent popular movement to declare war on the “elites.” It presented itself as the “true representative” of the people, “capable of realizing their demands and ambitions,” and above all of “giving power back to them.” Populism was the

expression, in this climate, of the deep crisis of bourgeois democracy and its traditional and liberal forms of representation. It proposes a solution to this crisis, just like fascism of the 1930s, by liquidating this democracy and its representative forms, not to replace it with a real and effective democracy, but rather with a system of government of the individual, of the inspiring leader, the deified messenger, etc.

The populist Kais Saied came to the presidency in the 2019 elections, repeating that he had no program or promises and that it was the people who knew what they wanted... But he had a clear program in his pocket, which was to eliminate the democratic gains of the revolution and establish his authoritarian and conservative regime. We know that he would not have been able to accede to the presidency without the support of the Ennahda Movement and the “Coalition for Dignity”, against which he would turn after a year and a half of his reign, a period in which there was a fierce struggle between them for “positions and prerogatives”. On July 25, Kais Saied seized power with the support of the hardline state apparatuses, preparing to eliminate the democratic gains of the revolution.

Today he is on the verge of establishing a dictatorial and fascist regime. In fact, he began by imposing the state of emergency that allowed him to promulgate a constitution written by himself and for himself, which granted him pharaonic powers and made him the supreme commander in all areas, without control or accountability. He installed a puppet parliament, deprived of powers, and completely subjugated the judiciary after arbitrarily expelling dozens of judges from its ranks and dismantling all control bodies. Today he is entering a new phase whose aim is to abolish the gains of freedoms, to eliminate political opponents, journalists, bloggers, intellectuals and demonstrators on the basis of fabricated accusations, and to seize control of the public media, the whose management he called agents of the old regime.

And finally, Kais Saied reappears after a “certain absence” in Monastir [a city on the central coast of Tunisia]. There, on April 6, the 23rd anniversary of the death of former President Habib Bourguiba, who had declared himself president for life, Saied stated: “I am not willing to cede my country to someone who has no patriotism...” and since all opponents or critics of this man were “traitors” and he was “the only patriot” and that Tunisia was “his

country alone” (I will not cede “my” country...), it would be “obvious” that no one could replace him as head of state... Such speeches are not surprising, because when has a coup plotter, a messenger, handed over power on his own initiative without seeking to monopolize it by all means?

This authoritarian political orientation is accompanied by the fact that it continues to enshrine the same economic and social options as those against which it turned, i.e., capitalist, neoliberal and barbaric policies. Worse still, they are aggravated by the implementation of what their predecessors did not dare to do, including the dictates of the international financial institutions (abolition of subsidies, wage freezes, freezing of public sector hiring, privatization of public establishments, etc.) in order to impose a policy of austerity. This deepens dependency in all areas, causing the country to lose sovereignty over its decisions, and also aggravating the debt, which has reached unprecedented heights, and financial inflation, exacerbating the destruction of the lives of workers, employees and the marginalized due to the increase in unemployment, poverty, misery, insane increase in prices and shortages of basic necessities. We are also witnessing the unprecedented deterioration of public services and the scarcity of drinking water, which has led to its rationing throughout the country and at all stations. Added to all this is the increase in the number of people fleeing the “populist paradise of Saied”, not to mention that the number of illegal immigrants since 2021 has increased ten-fold. Crime and violence, particularly violence against women and suicide, have been exacerbated.

Kais Saied is trying to hide his unpopular and unpatriotic politics by promoting illusions, either by him or by his followers, about the “promised wealth, etc.” He stated that benefits would be obtained from the “criminal reconciliation” (with the corrupt) that do not let him return..., and he repeated demagogic slogans about the “defense of national sovereignty” and resistance to corruption. He organizes unannounced show visits, which do not provide solutions to the growing problems of the working and popular classes, where it blames internal and external “conspirators and traitors” for all the misfortunes of the people, without even being ashamed to launch an unprecedented racist campaign, slogans against our brothers and sisters of immigration from the sub-Saharan.

This governance, with its politically authoritarian and economically and socially neoliberal aspects, continues to reveal its class nature. It in no way serves the interests of the working class and the people in general, whose living conditions are deteriorating more and more, but rather serves the interests of a minority of rich people and high state officials, institutions and foreign countries, all of whom have no interest in freedom and democracy today. Rather they want the tyranny to impose painful solutions on the Tunisian people in order to deal with the suffocating crisis. This is what has made us repeatedly emphasize that populism is not a solution to the problems of the people, but a solution to the problems of their worst enemies, who are fed up with the few and fragile freedoms that the people have won thanks to their sacrifices. Today they want to eliminate them and impose a policy of force to further impoverish and starve the people without them having the right to protest and defend themselves. But this solution is only temporary and cannot last long, because it has aggravated the problems and sharpened the contradictions even compared to the pre-coup period, even within the right-wing forces.

Kais Saïed's unbridled desire to monopolize all powers, to exclude parties, trade unions and civil organizations, to antagonize the media, intellectuals and jurists, places him in a general confrontation with the majority of political and trade union forces. He even went so far as to expel those close to him who worked with and for him in the palace or in certain ministries, defaming them and accusing some of them of "conspiracy".

In addition, the demagoguery of hostility to corruption, the fight against lobbies and the defense of people's livelihoods continues to come to light day by day. Indeed, in reality it has become clear that the richest have not seen their interests compromised, but are at peace, secure in their interests, while the condition of the workers, employees and people in general is getting even worse than it was even before the coup, which will push them more and more into struggle and protest.

Thus, the extreme right-wing populism that reigns in our country today represents the high point of the counterrevolution, and also represents a coup d'état against the few freedoms and democratic gains that the people won with their revolution, which makes it the beginning of a new stage full of dangers for our people and our homeland. We have passed from one form of bourgeois rule to

another form of political system, from a fragile, incomplete representative bourgeois democracy, which quickly became rotten and corrupt, to an authoritarian system of government, tending towards fascism. In fact, the measures adopted by the coup authorities, in particular the Constitution of July 25, 2022, which trampled on even the most basic demands of the democratic system, in particular the recognition of the civilian nature of the state, the separation of powers to create a kind of balance and mutual control, and the submission of the leader to monitoring and accountability.

Of course, in this case we must take this change into account. Far-right populism is today part of the right-wing forces that hold the reins of power and represent the spearhead of a reactionary system that opens fire on “everyone”. This makes it, logically, even objectively, the direct target of the struggle of the workers, of the people in general, and the revolutionary, democratic and progressive forces. Its overthrow will be the means that opens the way to achieve the objectives of the revolution and not to fall back under the wings of this or that right-wing force. Needless to say, populism will not fall on its own, whatever the many signs of its weakness, but will only fall due to an organized and tenacious popular political struggle.

### **III. The Road to Independent Salvation Is the Guarantee of Real Victory**

The fact that the Workers’ Party today focuses on the authoritarian populist project of Kais Saied and makes it the central object of its resistance does not mean, therefore, an appeasement of the rest of the right-wing forces, in particular the Ennahda or Destourian movements, heir to Ben Ali’s Party. It is a matter of organizing tactical priorities. Limiting the confrontation to the Ennahda movement, in order to justify collusion with Kais Saied and his fascist project, is pure opportunism, like the opportunism we experienced during the Ben Ali era in the early 1990s: concentrating on the Ennahda movement, hiding its cowardice towards Ben Ali. This is the same thing we are experiencing today: blaming the situation on the Ennahda movement and turning a blind eye to what Kais Saied is doing, out of greed or fear.

The Workers’ Party, and we repeat it for the umpteenth time, in opposing Kais Saied’s project, does not close its eyes to the responsibility of the Ennahda movement and its allies (Nidaa

Tounes, Youssef Chahed, and others) for the crisis and the level of decadence that the country has reached, paving the way for far-right populism to do to the country what it is doing. Nor does it mean turning a blind eye to crimes committed at the expense of the people and abandoning responsibility and accountability. On the contrary, the tactics of the Workers' Party paved the way for removing the obstacles that stand in its way.

On the other hand, lining up behind Kais Saied on the grounds that he is “the only one capable of achieving what no one else has achieved, that is, overthrowing the Ennahda movement”, as well as lining up behind the Ennahda movement and making a clean sweep of its previous responsibilities, in the face of the populist threat, can only lead to the abandonment of the achievements of the revolution and neglecting everyone’s accountability.

It is irrelevant, since we are talking about the Ennahda movement, that the situation of this movement before the revolution, more precisely in 2005, at the time of the formation of the “October 18 Committee”, differs from its situation after the revolution, that of today. As we mentioned earlier, before the revolution the Ennahda movement was in opposition, suffered repression and won the sympathy of important social sectors, but after the revolution it came to power, where it remained influential at all stages, but turned its back on the revolution and the demands of the people who carried it out. It practiced oppression and exploitation,



Sign reads “For a New Republic”



deepened the country's dependency and created conditions suitable for the spread of terrorism and the commission of the most heinous crimes of assassination against politicians, security personnel, military and civilians, headed by the nation's martyrs, Chokri Belaid and Mohamed Brahimi. This makes relations with the Ennahda movement today different from those with it years before the revolution against the November dictator. Each situation has its own characteristics that determine how to deal with it.

This is what the partisans of ideological rigidity, fascinated by empty phrases and ridiculous projections, do not understand.

That is why the Workers' Party is addressing the Tunisian people today with an independent, political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc. program of salvation. This also explains the role of the Party in a coordination of democratic and progressive political forces so that things do not get confused in the minds of the people. Thus, although the Workers' Party knows how to place contradictions in order according to a concrete analysis of concrete reality, it is not a supporter of the saying "the enemy of my enemy is my friend", nor a supporter of "let us unite against Saied and deal with other issues later", so that we find ourselves again before one dictator or another dictatorship in a different form. The Workers' Party is well aware that the spearhead of the reactionary right is whoever is in power. This is what makes it a direct enemy of the people. However, in order for the people not to fall into the trap of another right-wing force, they must mobilize around a project and a program that truly responds to their aspirations so that we can avoid the mistakes of the 2010/2011 Revolution, when the people found themselves victims of forces that stole their revolution, forces of the same class nature as the regime against which the people rebelled.

From this point of view, we can consider some fundamental and necessary conclusions and lessons that will illuminate our path and help us determine the correct behavior to achieve the goals of the revolution:

- What was overthrown on July 25, 2021, was not the "Ennahda Movement" and the entire previous failed and corrupt system, as Kais Saied and his opportunist supporters claim, but the achievements of the Tunisian revolution, which especially concern the democratic atmosphere. These are achievements that were imposed

in the 2014 Constitution, despite its weaknesses and shortcomings, thanks to the blood of the martyrs and the sacrifices of the daughters and sons of the people, at a time when Kais Saied was working for the benefit of the dictatorship and enjoying its privileges. On the day of the coup d'état of July 25, 2021, the Tunisian people escaped from the power of the Ennahda movement and its allies in parliament and government, to fall under the tyranny of an individual originally without power or prerogatives. That is to say that the people escaped the scandalous exploitation of the same alliance only to fall under an exploitation no less brutal than that of the Ennahda movement, with Kais Saied and his government....

- Whoever really does not want to return to the situation before July 25, 2021, and rid society of the Ennahda movement and the reactionary religious right in general, must take the lead today in the struggle against the populist and tyrannical regime of Kais Saied. They must have a patriotic, democratic, popular and progressive program that unites the people around them, and not subordinate themselves to this regime and become its servile follower. They must oppose all its measures and practices that are hostile to freedom and democracy and destructive of the livelihoods of the broader working classes, and which deepen dependence; knowing that Kais Saied himself does not differ much from the Ennahda movement and the religious right in general in ideological terms. It is conservative, if not more so than the Muslim Brotherhood, hostile to equality and seeking to monopolize spiritual and religious authority through the state's monopoly on religion. This path, that is, the path that consists of following Saied, will only lead his supporters into the abyss, without forgetting that it will not eliminate the reactionary religious right, but, on the contrary, will bring it back to the forefront, as we see today and as we saw yesterday in Tunisia and in other countries. The repression of the Ennahda movement in Tunisia and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Libya did not prevent them from

taking the lead on the political scene after the fall of Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, and the assassination of the late Muammar Gaddafi and the occupation of Libya by NATO forces. Similarly, 20 years of NATO's U.S.-led war of annihilation in Afghanistan did not prevent the Taliban movement from returning victoriously to power, while NATO soldiers were defeated. This confirms that a real resistance to obscurantist thinking and the use of religion in politics involves changing mentalities and raising awareness among people and providing them with dignified livelihoods so that they are not bait for these movements.

- The logic of alignment that prevails today, as it prevailed in the early 1990s, is represented by a duality according to which if you are not with Kais Saied, then you are with the “Islamists” and vice versa. This is a reactionary and opportunist logic that profoundly undermines the independence of the revolutionary, democratic and progressive forces. It considers them a mere appendage of this or that reactionary camp, which profoundly undermines the possibility of the independence of the social and popular movement and its unity around a patriotic, democratic and popular program that corresponds to its demands and that fuels the struggle among the different right-wing forces, in particular the populism that currently holds power.
- This logic of alignment is characteristic of the petty-bourgeois element, which is vacillating, confused, cowardly and incapable of independence from the reactionary forces, always looking for a force under which to take refuge, with the illusion of achieving its “ambitions”. The situation of certain parties that called themselves left-wing, revolutionary or progressive before falling into the arms of the coup d'état today arouses contempt. Kais Saied inflicts insult upon insult. He does not consult them about anything and does not consider their opinion on anything. If they claim otherwise, he publicly denounces them with contempt and disdain, repeating that he alone decides, leaving them with only one behavior: humiliation and unconditional applause.

We know that these parties that contributed to the puppet parliamentary elections were left empty-handed, and for others it has become clear that they represent only a small minority in this parliament, after constantly repeating that they would represent a major force there. First place in this farce was won by people from the old regime, in particular the remnants of the RCD [Democratic Constitutional Rally, Ben Ali's party] and Nidaa Tounes.

- The fight against corruption and the revelation of the truth about the assassinations, which are the pretexts with which these opportunists justify their alignment with Saied, cannot be achieved through an unjust and corrupt dictatorship based on fear, terror and the manipulation of the judiciary. This can only be achieved through a genuine rule of law, which means respect for rights and freedoms, separation of powers, effective and complete independence of the judiciary and the presence of supervisory bodies. Such conditions ensure fair trials, give real weight to their decisions and establish a new society in which justice and respect for human rights prevail. As for the dictatorship, it only instills fear and injustice and does not solve any of the problems of society, but on the contrary deepens them, and even if it gets its hands on some corrupt or criminal people within the framework of regulatory accounts, it creates the climate conducive to the creation of new corrupt people and criminals that we see with our own eyes today. We are up against a kind of leader that Tunisians have never seen before.
- The right-wing, extremist, authoritarian and oppressive populist regime will not fall on its own, as we pointed out earlier; it will only fall through fierce struggle. The aims of the revolution will not be achieved either with this regime, nor by cooperating with it, nor by becoming an appendage of it, but rather by fighting against it and on its ruins, as was the case at the time of the revolution against the November dictatorship. Progressive revolutionary and democratic forces must do enormous work, whether within parties, trade unions,

human rights or women's organizations, youth and cultural activities, to denounce this regime and dismantle its demagogic rhetoric that is, in fact, hostile to freedoms, equality between women and men, democratic representation and cultural creativity. It is also hostile to the interests of workers and the poor, and first and foremost to their right to a dignified life, to their right to work, health, education, wages that effectively guarantee a dignified life, to adequate housing and a healthy environment, as well as their right to culture, entertainment and rest. These forces must expose all the measures taken or announced by Kais Saied in all areas and demonstrate their falsity to the broader masses who are under the influence of his demagogic rhetoric. It is important to use simple and clear arguments to make them easy to understand. Large groups of the masses, in the absence of a revolutionary, democratic and progressive alternative capable of imposing itself, have thrown themselves into the arms of extreme right-wing populism, thinking that this would allow them to achieve their goals and hopes. Despite the beginning of the revelation of the class character of this populism and its opposition to the interests of the workers and poor, the fear of the return of the Ennahda movement and the system that existed before July 25, 2021, pushes large sections of them to try to find weak justifications for the fascist decisions and measures taken by Kais Saied and demand that they be given more time to judge him. This requires the progressive revolutionary and democratic forces to redouble their efforts to work among the masses and educate them, especially to convince them that they are capable of creating an independent path that will free them from populism, on the one hand, and protect them from a return to the democracy of the power of the system before July 25, 2021, and the one before January 14, 2011 on the other hand. Finally, there is no doubt that achieving this goal urgently requires progressive revolutionary and democratic forces to unite their ranks around a common program and appropriate forms of

organization. The classification is almost complete and we must all work, simply work, to save our people and our homeland from collapse in a very turbulent and very dangerous regional and international situation.

*Tunisian Workers' Party  
Tunisia, April 7, 2023*

## The Military-Industrial Complex in Turkey

We can talk about the existence of an arms industry in Turkey. This industry is certainly not on a scale comparable to the war industries of imperialist countries such as France, Britain and even Germany, which banned armaments until recently, let alone the USA, Russia or China. Nevertheless, especially in the last 20-30 years, Turkey has been building and developing a military-industrial complex that produces tanks and armoured vehicles, drones, artillery and missiles, warships and helicopters, even if it has to import essential parts such as engines and certain electronic devices.

It may or may not materialize, but every nation-state aims to set up its national industry, including defence. The Turkish bourgeoisie also had this goal from the early days of the Republic. However, the real turning point for the military industry was the 1970s. When the US imposed an embargo on Turkey, its ally in NATO, following its invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the resolve to establish a “national arms industry” was fuelled. However, the level of capital accumulation did not allow for this.

To this end, various foundations were established to strengthen the Land, Naval and Air Force, and they were merged in 1987 under the name of the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation (TAFF). This laid the basis for the companies in the defence industry, which was strengthened as an organisation in 1989 and a Defence Industry Support Fund was established.

With this fund, a special source outside the budget was created for the arms industry and its projects, as well as for the imports needed. The fund, which has grown steadily over the years, is filled with deductions from various taxes and indirect taxes on fuel and games of chance such as bets and the national lottery.

Thus, public resources are collected in a pool which is also outside the budget of the Ministry of Defence and is used for modernization projects of the armed forces. These projects, which totalled \$12 billion over 10 years in 1985, were increased to \$150 billion over 30 years in 1996. The Turkish bourgeoisie did not have the power to make large investments at that time, and large companies such as Aselsan, Havelsan, Roketsan, Tusaş, TAI, which

would invest in the arms industry, were established under the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation. Until it was changed after the coup attempt in 2016, this foundation and therefore the companies were under the control of the General Staff.

From the 1980s onwards, in addition to the large companies established by the state, private companies such as Koç, Nurol and BMC also entered the market and grew in cooperation with public institutions. These companies also make patent and cooperation agreements with foreign arms monopolies.

In the early 1990s, as part of the “low intensity war” strategy against the Kurds, the armed forces were restructured in terms of organization and equipment, from helicopters to night vision binoculars. In the main, the war against the Kurds conditioned an uninterrupted increase in military spending despite the financial crises of the 1990s and the cyclical crises of the following years.

One example is the threat of an embargo by Germany when imported panzers were used against the Newroz demonstrations in the predominantly Kurdish city of Diyarbakir, and such restrictions led the bourgeoisie to turn to domestic arms production.

Another dimension of the change in the 1990s was the need for Turkey to take a course in accordance with the restructuring of NATO after the collapse of the Soviet Union. NATO’s demand from Turkey was a strong army on its eastern border, where it provided aerial “security”, and the renewal of its land forces, and the bourgeoisie was mainly oriented towards strengthening these forces.

The first was the question of tanks. The US offered the Abrahams tanks it had used in Iraq and wanted Turkey to undertake their modernization. Faced with embargoes in Cyprus in 1974 and during the Kurdish war in the 1990s, Turkey turned to domestic production and restructuring plans were prepared for the production of tanks and ships. Thus, the 1990s were a turning point in the arms industry.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO’s threat perception and mechanisms changed the form of wars. Large-scale interstate wars have certainly not ended, but they have been postponed for a period of time, while regional and civil wars and proxy wars have come to the fore. Military structures have also changed with the growing need for smaller and more flexible units. The



change overlapped with the model used by Turkey in its “low intensity warfare” strategy in the Kurdish war. As the Turkish army, NATO’s second largest, became more flexible, the need for a domestic military industry to produce equipment for the Kurdish war grew.

In the early 2000s, 25% of the needs of the Turkish Armed Forces were met through domestic production, while 75% were supplied by the US, Canada, Germany, France, Spain, Sweden and other European countries or through joint projects. The US had the largest share. Until the early 2000s, these countries did not transfer technology, but allowed Turkey to produce certain parts, such as those for F-16s. So, a kind of assembly work was being done. In this process, we witnessed the development of the arms industry, which started with offset agreements and patent agreements.

In 2004, it was decided to abandon the model based on co-production and supply agreements and to shift to a model that emphasized domestic weapon production; new “defence industry projects” were put on the agenda where domestic companies became the main contractors.

In 2008, the share of private companies in the total turnover of the arms industry rose to 36%, TAFF companies to 33% and public companies to 31%.

The most important pillar of the military industry was privatization. Banks, petrochemical plants, communications, etc. were transferred to domestic and foreign capital through large-scale privatization, including the arms industry. Foreign capital was buying the banks, and domestic big capital bought the public monopolies. The capital groups underpinning the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) were only able to make small-scale purchases as their size was still small. In the 2000s, when the public-private partnership model was introduced, private capital accumulation accelerated with state support. This, of course, brought with it a fight for bigger shares and competition. The transfer of shares to the bourgeois cliques that are the pillars of the AKP and directly to political cliques created tense relations with rooted big capital.

Turkey’s first two projects were the production of tanks and “national ships” (MİLGEM). Both tenders, which were finalized in the first half of the 2000s, were awarded to the Koç Group, one of

the largest and most rooted capital groups in Turkey. Then these tenders were cancelled. Then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan did not give tenders to capital groups that he considered politically disloyal. He took back the tenders for armoured vehicle and national ship given to Koç's Otokar and gave them to the Kalkavans' company and the BMC. The Koç group, of course, was not "victimized"; they exported the vehicles they produced, and their path was paved, having adapted to the process. For example, they opened factories in Kazakhstan and Qatar, and began to sell most armoured vehicles in Africa. Where BMC sells, Koç also sells.

Erdoğan is shifting public tenders to capital groups he wants to grow and with which he can maintain organic relations. The arms industry was one of the biggest shares and how it would be shared was a matter of dispute. In 2008-2009, when the AKP was trying to take control of the military, tensions continued with arrests and major trials. The military industry was an important reason. When the production of tanks is given to a capital group, it means that the inventory of the Turkish Armed Forces will be tied to it for almost fifty years, that not only tanks but also many other military vehicles will be produced on the production line. And production will be directed towards a large and profit-guaranteed market. Therefore, the fight over the military industry has been much tougher than over other tenders and privatization competition.

According to data from the Presidency of Defence Industries, by 2018 the share of domestic production had risen to 65%, with a target of 70% in 2023. The sector's turnover was \$1.3 billion in 2004 and \$10.1 billion in 2021. While production and turnover grew, exports also increased. However, the sector is still foreign-dependent and high-tech products with imported inputs cannot be exported.

The number of projects underway has increased from 84 in 2004 to 667 in 2018 and is now 800. Almost all of them are public-private partnerships.

In 2002, contracts worth \$5 billion were signed with private companies. Today they have increased to \$65 billion. In the last five years, Baykar, the company of Erdoğan's son-in-law, has jumped to first place with \$1.1 billion, surpassing even state monopolies in a short time.

The number of companies in the defence industry's capability inventory was 56 in 2002; it reached 2086 in 2020 and 2300 this year, with guaranteed profits. There are also companies that work under them and make flexible production.

There are three levels in the military industry: In the first group, we see large companies such as ASELSAN, TAI, Roketsan, MKEK, HAVELSAN, Otokar and FNSS, which carry out major projects and are the main contractors in the procurement of combat vehicles. Within this group, companies affiliated to the TAFF still have a significant power. Also included in this group are public companies such as MKEK and STM and private capital groups such as Otokar, FNSS, NuroI, BMC.

The second group includes arms industry companies such as STM, SDT, Savronik, Alp Aviation, HMS, which can be prime contractors in medium-sized projects, but are mostly subcontractors in large projects.

The third group has companies that meet small defence needs and produce directly for the Turkish Armed Forces or for companies in the first and second groups.

These companies from top to bottom spread towards small and medium-sized companies. 2015-2016 was a turning point in this respect. Subcontracting has always existed. This is how Aselsan was organized. The rate was smaller in the beginning. Large publicly-owned aerospace companies such as TUSAŞ and TAI, which work with foreign companies and obtain patents, started to outsource projects to private companies. This is especially practiced by Aselsan and MKEK. After 2017, this downward organization of production accelerated. Compared to 2017, the number of small and medium-sized companies increased by 280%, while the number of large companies increased by 242%.

One example: 75% of the F-515 TCG Istanbul frigate is produced domestically. More than 150 weapons, machinery, life equipment and ship fittings; more than 400 construction materials, 245 km of electrical cables, 2675 lighting fixtures are used. 220 companies directly work on the project as do 80 subcontractors.

Erdoğan took the arms industry out of the control of the military bureaucracy and kept it in his hands. He also turned the undersecretariat into a defence industry presidency and took it under his control. Thus, the arms industry became centralized.

Satellite, software and technology software companies were established.

Aselsan, for example, applied the system of subcontractor companies to the arms industry. Aviation and military industrial zones and clusters were established in Istanbul, Eskişehir, İzmir and Ankara. Large and small companies that would work with the military industry were asked to cluster in these regions. The arms companies spread to Anatolia. The main monopoly Aselsan transfers its know-how to sub-companies, which in turn produce the parts. For example, the TCG Anadolu, an aircraft carrier for the F-35s, was produced with 200 parent companies and 600 subcontractors, and named to be a “helicopter carrier” following Turkey’s exclusion from the production of F-35s due to its purchase of S-400s from Russia.

In 2020, 70% of the companies Roketsan worked with were small and medium-sized. It works with 1710 suppliers in 37 provinces. The armoured vehicle “Kirpi” produced by BMC has 6000 different parts; it has established partnerships with 1200 different companies and buys parts from 5200 small companies.

Military monopolies like Aselsan, MKE and Roketsan are in constant contact with small-scale companies and these companies have subcontractors. They in turn subcontract sub-sections of their work and production spreads downwards. This network of subcontractors is one of the reasons why there were no



bankruptcies during the crisis as they are given continuous and guaranteed work.

The main companies of the military-industrial complex receive tenders from the state; they are awarded contracts, procurement and supplies. This industry also has a foot in universities, especially in engineering-oriented ones. This complex feeds the capital factions and the bureaucracy, and attracts physical and mental labour force.

The arms industry has only one field or market, and that is war. This sector is in constant need of war.

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In the “unipolar” world of the 1980s and ‘90s under US hegemony, Turkey’s role and share in the arms industry was insignificant. In today’s multipolarity, medium-sized capitalist countries like Turkey can act with a certain autonomy in the military sphere, taking advantage of the “gaps” created by the rise of China and Russia. Turkey has opened such a space with the drones it has supplied to Ukraine and to its east, especially Azerbaijan. They are cheaper to produce than Israeli drones and have become a tool in foreign policy.

Turkey expands into foreign markets as its capitalism dictates, and this goes hand in hand with and is necessitated by becoming a military power. Turkey’s exports of war equipment are not limited to drones.

On the other hand, due to the limitations of its military industry, Turkey is a dependent country, both technologically and in terms of air defence, as demonstrated, for example, by its purchase of the S-400 from Russia and its exclusion from F-35 production by the US. It has no chance of meeting the fighter jet needs of its armed forces through domestic production. Since the small and medium-sized companies on which it relies produce with cheap labour, the military industry cannot leap forward to produce domestic high-tech products.

International competition gives Turkey and similar countries a certain autonomy and freedom to realize their “special” interests, but also it imposes certain limits. NATO also has certain conditions.

NATO – and the US – does not interfere in what member countries can and cannot produce, but it does interfere in its members’

relations with countries outside the bloc. For example, if Turkey makes a tank deal with Russia, there would be a problem.

Another aspect of the problem is the intra-bloc relations of the Turkish arms industry and its role in binding not only the industry but the country to the bloc. Turkey's arms industry and its subcontractor network, which is in the supply chain of NATO, the US and its allies, is not only useful for Turkey, but also a great opportunity for international capital. Through this network, cheap labour gets qualified and small companies are specialized and included in the network. Germany, for example, has discussed outsourcing the production of drones to Turkey due to lower costs. The US is the primary country where the companies in the military industry subcontractor network export the most. They do not sell final products, but intermediate goods. Therefore, there is no conflict with NATO.

The intensifying contradictions and competition between the big imperialist countries create a series of opportunities for Turkish capitalism. When Erdoğan was opening up to the Middle East, Asia and Africa between 2002 and 2013, he did so in harmony with the US and its strategy. After 2013, the rise of China and Russia, the "Arab Spring" and the proxy war in Syria allowed Turkey to pursue autonomous policies to a certain extent. Erdoğan, with his Neo-Ottomanist approach and in pursuit of expansionism in the region, took advantage of the contradictions between the two major imperialist states, the US and Russia, which also have a military presence in the region.

Not only the needs of the arms industry but also the bottlenecks in capital accumulation are pushing the Turkish bourgeoisie more and more towards foreign markets. The arms industry serves as the lead in the expansionist orientation.

In the 1990s, Turkey also had the goal of becoming a regional power and was trying to expand into the Balkans and the Turkic Republics of Asia. Only after the 2000s was this possible. Interventions in Syria, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Libya came in the 2010s.

George Soros once said that "Turkey's best export product is its army". In the first decade of the 2000s, Turkey took part in NATO missions in the Balkans, Somalia and Afghanistan. Today, the army is once again an effective tool of foreign policy intervention, but contrary to the past when it used to act on NATO

missions, now it exploits the gaps that arise. A governor is appointed in the occupied Afrin in northern Syria, cross-border operations are carried out in Iraq and Syria, and military interventions take place in Azerbaijan and Libya. New war technologies such as drones are being used and marketed. Foreign policy is becoming more militarized.

The rise of Baykar Makina is one example. In fact, Turkey was buying drones from Israel as early as 2007 to use on the PKK, the nationalist armed Kurdish organisation, which had settled in Qandil, Northern Iraq, but they were not functional and they were dependent on Israel.

TAI and TUSAŞ, which are public institutions in Turkey with huge investments in engineering work, undertook production in this field, while Baykar, the company of Erdoğan's son-in-law, had never entered this field before. Erdoğan directly transferred the technology, resources and engineering know-how of the public sector to Baykar, as well as allocating to it a special industrial zone. Baykar has become a billion-dollar monopoly, while the weapons it produces have become a trump card in diplomacy. Erdoğan puts drones on the table as a condition for his relations and exchanges with Gulf and Central Asian capital. Following the results achieved in the war against the PKK, drones attracted attention with their use in Ukraine and in the Azerbaijan-Armenia war, opening up foreign markets for these weapons.

No company in Turkey has developed in such a short time. Baykar now has exports worth \$1.1 billion, and Bayraktar, the son-in-law, has announced that the deal with the Saudis is three times that amount.

Baykar's "successes" also have social consequences. It sets examples and the regime reaps the benefits.

During the last presidential elections, Erdoğan posed in a pilot's suit and sunglasses for his election posters. Again in the latest elections, the TGC Anadolu ship was taken from port to port, coast to coast and opened to visitors in Istanbul, accompanied by nationalist propaganda praising "national production" and "national weapons".

The US-educated Bayraktar, the son-in-law, organizes techno-fests and is portrayed as a "local and national" hero, the young and future face of the regime.

It is also certain that the tycoons of the arms industry and Bayraktar have formed a new faction and have an impact on political life. However, it cannot yet be said that this is on a scale that will define the entire capital accumulation regime in Turkey. But the process is open-ended. Turkish capitalism is in the top 20 in the world rankings and the arms industry is a rapidly developing sector of Turkish capitalism. Its prominence is on the rise and the developments in the world, especially the increasing need for armies and weapons with the intensification of the fight for redistribution, indicate that this prominence will increase even more.

Moreover, the moves made in line with the general needs of Turkish capitalism, the militarization of foreign policy and the increasing need for armaments fuel the arms industry and the arms industry militarizes foreign policy in turn. This plays a role in increasing tension, especially in the wider Middle East, which is already mired in tension.

Developments in this direction have accelerated the process of professionalization of the army's combat units.

While the army is professionalizing, the police force is becoming more militarized. This is in line with the trends around the world. While the army is being politicized, the police force is also being militarized, turning into an apparatus of war, and these two coercive apparatuses of the state are being reshaped together.

The law was amended and the central intelligence organization (MİT) was given the authority to carry out operations. Now MİT also has an army. Erdoğan has turned MİT into an operational force and a pillar of his power. The pillars of Erdoğan's rule are the army, the bureaucracy and intelligence; a much more advanced model of this is in the US where the Pentagon was established in place of the abolished force commands. Erdoğan is also trying to create his own Pentagon. Instead of an army ruled by force commanders, he is building a structure to which the commanders are subordinate, which is intertwined with the arms industry and headed by Erdoğan and his team. The gendarmerie has been subordinated to the Interior Minister. Force commanders are no longer in charge. According to the presidential decree, the President can give direct orders to all force commanders and their subordinates.

Turkey has moved to a "presidential" system with no checks and balances. While parliament has lost its importance, the



judiciary is now completely under the control of the executive. Bans are widespread and generalized, while social opposition is criminalized and protests for rights are suppressed by force. Erdogan is moving towards establishing a fascist dictatorship, the means and basis of which are the extreme centralization of the executive and the establishment of a military-industrial complex.

*April of 2024*

## **The Confrontation Between Two Imperialist Blocs and Fascistization Are Marking the Political Period**

The deepening of the confrontation between two imperialist blocs on a world scale and the process of fascistization of society are part of the phenomena that must be urgently studied by revolutionaries and especially by Marxist-Leninists since they show the form that the fundamental contradictions of imperialism are acquiring at this time. They need revolutionary responses in each country together with the coordination of actions on the world level.

The consolidation of the confrontation between the US-EU bloc versus the China-Russia bloc in various areas is something that is increasingly clear and indisputable as part of the reality of our world today.

In the same way, the intensification of the violent retaliation of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat is increasingly evident. This can sometimes go unnoticed or seen as the action of some “eccentric madman”, but beyond specific and alarming cases, they mark the rise of the extreme right in the events of the first third of the 21st century. We see clearly fascist actors in politics and even in government functions, as in Israel, Argentina, Ecuador, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, El Salvador or in France, Spain, Romania, Turkey and the United States, to name some of the most affected. But we also see them in other countries such as Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua and also Honduras, controlled by alternative governments but with the presence of forces of right-wing fascists that are quite violent and active, promoted by the U.S.-E.U. imperialist bloc.

The fact that at the same time there is the polarization of the world into two imperialist blocs and the revival of the extreme right is clarifying the international alignments in this stage of the advance of fascistization with threats of the expansion of war as a natural product of imperialism and the bourgeois method to resolve the deep crises of its mode of production.

In these economic, political and social phenomena, confrontations between the two blocs are combined with trade disputes or wars by means of mercenaries, with a shift to the right on the part of important political sectors throughout the world. These affect the broad masses as a result of the economic crisis, reactionary propaganda, the discontent with social democracy and the lack of strong revolutionary reference points. These are seen in the loss of labor rights and the significant economic struggles of the workers, in the ideological weakness of the political organizations and the class struggle trade unions, the expansion of opportunism or political pragmatism. The right-wing is responding to these situations with the open presentation of fascist organizations or caudillos and their ascension to the government with the support of the of lumpen sectors in the midst of some confused masses.

These complex facts must be identified and defined as part of the attempt at fascistization, due to the decomposition of capitalist society, with the positioning of militarism and reactionary ideas as a response of the bourgeoisie. This class uses various means to take office, a step before eliminating rights and truly imposing fascism, a process that must be analyzed to define the revolutionary tasks necessary to confront it.

The policy of the Marxist-Leninists against imperialism and fascism has already been applied for a century. It has had some ups and downs, but the main element, which has proved indisputably successful, is that it has been built on the basis of taking up the first line of combat and promoting revolutionary popular unity. It always places the proletarian forces at the head of all democratic organizations by its fighting example and the promotion of revolution. the organization of the United Front, as well as the Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Popular Front, with political actions and their corresponding expressions in direct street fighting.

During the first phase of the general crisis of capitalism the victory of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the end of the First World War led to an upsurge of popular struggles, with an immense expansion of Marxist ideas. There was then a certain equilibrium that was broken in the second phase of the general crisis of capitalism with the end of the Second World War. the Chinese revolution in 1949 and the processes of national liberation that

spread over time and geographically in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. This gave an immense impulse to Marxism-Leninism that, as it grew, split into various currents, without ceasing to expand its influence among the masses and in intellectual strata, fundamentally due to the full-time organization, dedication, study, struggle of the revolutionary militants.

The great dedication and activism of the revolutionary vanguard to confront fascism attracted the masses to the ideological, political and military struggle with various proposals. These later exacerbated the struggles between currents, which led to the division of the international communist movement, on its own under the influence of the ideological struggle. This also took place under the stimulus of enemy intelligence, which was responsible for exacerbating the contradictions to the point of promoting confrontations among revolutionaries and the fragmentation of the international communist movement into various currents.

Despite this, advanced ideas became generalized and fascism was totally pushed back after its defeat in the Second World War. This was taken as the definitive death of fascism and the victory of humanist approaches with a preponderant role of the communists led by the guidelines of the Comintern and Stalin.

At the time when fascism was destroyed militarily and attacked ideologically and socially, treated as the scourge that it is, humanity was clear about the need to isolate and subdue the proposals of the extreme right. This would prevent their presence by nipping them in the bud with anti-fascist laws and with force, when the criminal experience of the Nazi and fascist governments of Germany Italy, Japan and their henchmen was still fresh.

After Stalin's death, the weakness and confusion in the revolutionary movement accelerated. There were various divisions of the communist left, in some cases necessary to define camps and delimit positions, distancing themselves from the tendencies penetrated by revisionism or reformism. The latter increasingly surrendered to capital; others with an opportunist or sectarian basis, left Marxism-Leninism and with it the true revolutionary ideas of the proletariat in a process of dispersion of their forces and confusion. This allowed the most reactionary bourgeoisie, with its fascist conceptions, to continue gaining ground and repositioning the ideas of the extreme right. Today they walk freely and menacingly hand in hand with lackeys like Netanyahu, Zelenski, Trump,

Bukele, Milei and Noboa who are creating repressive and propaganda mechanisms to trample on the peoples, presenting themselves as an option in the face of the errors of social democracy and the weakness of the revolutionary left.

It is important to assess how this phenomenon of fascistization is spreading dangerously throughout the world, with its representatives already brazenly and publicly using fascist, Nazi and criminal ideas and symbols. These are becoming normalized in a society that, due to the lack of strength of the proletarian currents, is left debating between the right and the ultra-right, between petty-bourgeois and cowardly social democracy or violent and threatening fascism that cries out for vengeance while carrying out its revenge, attacking the popular masses and the alternatives of the revolutionary left with special viciousness.

Parallel to the political and social spheres, these phenomena seek to increase the processes of concentration and centralization of capital, so intense that the rate of surplus value in large monopoly companies reaches extraordinarily large levels, together with the growth of immense fortunes, increasingly obscene and concentrated in fewer families.

While the proletariat is experiencing the loss of rights and accelerated impoverishment, the fascist offensive is condemning millions of people to hunger and death with total impunity and shamelessly, even premeditatedly. This is creating insensitivity in certain social strata, such as in political sectors and employers' unions, even complicity in the negotiation and sell-out of the historical demands in the labor, economic, political or social sphere.

In some tendencies there is an opportunist turn to conservative and sell-out positions, leading many former leaders and "revolutionary" parties to a process of ideological decomposition. This leads them to merge with social democracy, playing a liquidationist role within the proletarian organizations, assuming a defensive, defeatist and demoralizing attitude towards the right. Another sector is becoming more reactive, isolating itself from the masses, seeing how the right threatens all democratic tendencies and instead of seeking anti-fascist and anti-imperialist alliances to confront them, it locks itself into sectarianism, isolating itself from the masses.

These phenomena leading to dissolution within the revolutionary movement during crises are well-known and long-

standing, but now they can be accelerated in periods of confrontation. Therefore, we true Marxist-Leninist organizations work to overcome these pressures by delving deeper into the teachings of the classics, the experiences of anti-fascist struggle and especially the concrete references bequeathed by the Comintern under Stalin's guidance in the struggle against the Nazis and all kinds of reactionaries.

Due to this complex process of inter-imperialist struggles and the fascistization of the world, which today is very great and intense, and is also occurring at the same time, the reactionary tendencies are working to accustom society to the abuses and crimes. This is reaching extremes of cynicism such as those experienced in the cases of El Salvador with the indiscriminate repression and illegal re-election of a fascist who maintains his tyrannical regime with the support of the U.S. and the E.U. and the complicit silence of others. Ukraine is another case where the new breed of Nazis, supported by NATO, are openly waving their symbols; or Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people, in a horror that betrays the criminal ideological foundations of Zionism. These few examples are just a sample of the application of Nazi methods, but now on a world scale, worse than any nightmare and still waiting for the response of the peoples and their vanguards.

In addition to this process of moving to the right, other effects are created, produced by the struggle among bourgeois tendencies. On the one side, the "progressive" governments with all their burden of dependent capitalism, social democracy, betrayal of democratic postulates, surrender of sovereignty, tolerance of fascism and conciliation with the bourgeoisie, seem at times to be on the left and in confrontation with that ultra-reactionary extreme movement. This is because on the other side, in the spectrum of the revolutionary left, the response has been so slow that it seems to be non-existent for the broad masses, who have been deeply manipulated by the mass media.

It is very important to look at these dialectical phenomena, since we know that everything changes, everything is transformed. But a revolutionary thrust is necessary to get out of inertia to modify the scenarios posed by the enemy; we must always keep in mind that it is not enough to interpret reality, for us the problem is to change it, as Marx said.

## VENEZUELA –CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TWO IMPERIALIST BLOCS...

In this period it is evident that the world is turning to the most extreme right, while the truly proletarian and revolutionary left must overcome the routine and passive methods to confront it. That is why it is urgent to adjust the mechanisms of international action in order to advance in consolidating our presence among the masses, to create broad organizations, mass revolutionary movements and fronts. We are looking for other anti-fascist and anti-imperialist combative forces that together are capable of modifying the balance of forces, that today are favorable to the most extreme tendencies of the bourgeoisie, of openly fascist ideology, which are advancing in an accelerated way, even building spaces of international coordination.

It is up to us Marxist-Leninists to work more in the organizational and theoretical planes, in building real reference points of mass struggle that can resist and stop the reactionary offensive in order to initiate a strong counteroffensive and bring the most advanced ideas of humanity back to power.

Social justice, rights, education and health-care for all, the building of friendly cities, the defense of nature, the high evaluation of children, the elderly, women and people in situations of impoverishment; solidarity and mutual aid among peoples, the mobilization of the workers and peasants, are values that must overcome the law of the strongest, selfishness, insensitivity, and all the racist and xenophobic tendencies that fascism promotes.

To prepare the struggle against the fascist scourge, which we have already defeated in other periods, but which is now rearing its head with the complicity of spineless social democracy, is now



a fundamental and necessary task for us. To consolidate a broad international movement of solidarity and struggle against fascism and imperialist aggression from the popular bases is an urgent task that must overcome national limitations in order to reach agreements with other democratic tendencies and revolutionaries willing to confront the common enemy.

Bringing together the democratic forces, placing ourselves in the front line of combat, promoting a broad and active international anti-fascist front, are actions that will allow us to win the confidence of the popular masses and other tendencies, Today they are confused by reactionary propaganda, but sooner rather than later they will learn from their own experience what the right really is, and then we Marxist-Leninist communists will always be ready to participate in the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist organizations that must be built quickly.

“The way is hard, but it is the way,” said a Venezuelan revolutionary fighter. Let us not deviate from the path and let us continue to deepen the revolutionary theory and practice that will allow us to reach the broad masses eager to fight and win.

On the historical path of today’s struggles, we have examples of courageous mobilizations and protests in several countries of the world where the workers and peoples, youth and women, peasants, migrants and industrial workers are advancing in the main revolutionary school. This is the daily struggle against the bourgeoisie, imperialism and its most reactionary form which is fascism. This is where the true combative ability of the proletariat is seen, capable of learning more in a day of truly revolutionary struggle than in 100 years of bourgeois peace. That is why the mobilization and confrontation against imperialism and fascism as scourges of capitalism will always be a beacon and a guide to define the revolutionary line at each moment of history.

### **The Situation in Venezuela.**

In recent days, in addition to the commemoration of important dates of popular resistance of the past, two other new aggressions have been added to the history of the anti-popular offensive of the local and international bourgeoisie grouped under the imperialist bloc of the U.S.-U.E. against the people of Venezuela who are resisting and fighting against imperialist aggression:



- 1) The U.S. Senate's decision to revoke economic licenses for oil exports from Venezuela.
- 2) The decision of the International Court of Justice on Guyana's claim to the Essequibo.
- 3) These two responses are instruments of subjugation used by the U.S. imperialist bloc. That is why they imply a worsening of the internal difficulties in a dependent and blockaded country like Venezuela.

It is important to be clear that these are decisive aspects, with important consequences, which aim to worsen the material situation of the Venezuelan people in order to try to “twist our arm” and force us to reverse the democratic process that has been maintained with ups and downs since 1999. This was a stage of great mass upsurge and popular expectations with Chávez and another stage of retreat and resistance in the face of an immense imperialist offensive, beneficial alliances with the supposedly “revolutionary” bourgeoisie and internal weakness under Maduro's leadership.

In the first stage, the popular gains were accelerated. Workers' rights, trade union institutions, collective bargaining agreements and wages were significantly improved; company takeovers, workers' control and expropriations were in the minds and realities of the working class; peasants were reclaiming land appropriated by the landlords; there was financing, technical advice and support for production. The communal councils and communes were the center of a great economic, political and social movement, the movements of women, youth, the elderly, the Bolivarian circles, collectives and in general the popular movement had spaces in the media as well as an institutional support that encouraged the transformative momentum.

Things have changed significantly in recent years, but what has not changed is the plan of the most reactionary imperialists to oust the legitimate government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and impose an extreme right-wing government that is a puppet of the United States.

In their eagerness to take direct control of the energy, gold or other resources in our country, to rebuild a total relationship of submission as existed before 1999, the Yankees have used all kinds of actions, from attempted assassination of important persons, threats, replacement of the president, assassinations,

invasions, manipulated negotiations, buying up of high officials, infiltration, coups d'état, blockade, sanctions, sabotage, terrorism against the civilian population, destruction of production and boycott of the economy, but they did not succeed, mainly because of the decisiveness of the popular majorities to defend independence and sovereignty.

Despite the difficulties and shortages experienced, the people of Venezuela who are resisting and fighting against imperialist aggression remain firm and will not bow their heads in the face of this new onslaught of the U.S.-E.U. imperialist bloc. It is thus necessary to continue organizing and mobilizing in order to maintain national sovereignty and independence as an important step to advancing along the line of construction to achieve national and social liberation.

Despite the differences with the policies of social democracy in the government, we are clear about the need to confront the common enemy and the new offensive of the U.S.-E.U. imperialist bloc. We must apply the policy of defense of national sovereignty, along the Leninist line of the Communist International. This was expressed in the theses on the national and colonial question, criticizing the corruption within the government and its party, as well as the process of erosion of wages and workers' rights in general. This must be pursued by constantly demanding the increase of wages, indexation of wages and price controls, financing and productive support for the poor and middle peasants, as well as for the production of the communes in the search for building a line of popular resistance in order to advance towards a worker, peasant and communal government that is the basis for popular democracy towards socialism.

***“Socialism can only be built with the workers’ and peasants’ alliance in power and the people in arms.”***

CC of the PCMLV,  
Caracas, April 2024.