

Review – Against the Crisis: Economy and Ecology in a Burning World by Ståle Holgersen

Amongst the most overused terms in politics and journalism, 'crisis' must be a strong contender for the top spot. A quick glance at today's news headlines reveals – amongst others – a nightlife crisis, a tariff crisis, a cholera crisis, a housing crisis, and – heaven forbid – an injury crisis at a leading football club! More specifically, for the Marxist left, the notion of 'the capitalist crisis' has played an important role in our collective political imaginary. How many times have we heard something to the effect that "as the crisis deepens", the working class will shed its illusions and in due course will rally to the socialist cause? Stale Holgersen recent book, *Against the Crisis*, takes issue with both the conceptual confusion surrounding the concept of crisis and, more importantly, at the notion that capitalist crises should be conceived as opportunities for the left.

In relation to the first point, Holgersen proposes a working definition of crisis which comprises three essential elements, as he writes, "*Crises are events that 1) come relatively quickly, 2) are embedded in underlying structures and processes, and 3) have negative effects on people or nature*" (p.5) Thus, as a consequence, he is sceptical about the concept of a 'permacrisis' (the Financial Times' word of the year 2022). As to the second, he stresses the role that crises play in sustaining the system and the political difficulties that they pose for the left:

"While crises can – in theory – help us to reveal and expose capitalism's weaknesses and problems, they are also – in the

actual political economy – central to the reproduction of capitalism. Crises are a good starting point for criticising capitalism, but they also make it harder to actually overthrow the system”; (p.10) moreover,

“If opportunities – as defined in textbooks – are occasions or situations that make it possible to do something you want or have to do, and if opportunities – as conventionally understood – entail moments of excitement, optimism and hopefulness, and chances for advancement, then we must refrain from referring to crises as opportunities for the working class, the environmental movement or the political left” (p.16).

‘Make the Rich Pay for the Crisis!’ may be an attractive slogan but, as Holgersen points out, it is rarely the case that they ever actually do.

Against the Crisis focusses on the nature of the recurrent economic crises under capitalism and on the overarching issue of the ecological crisis. One of the main strengths of the book is how it analyses the specifics of each of these, their similarities and differences, and the complex relationship between them. Holgersen takes issue with the (reassuring?) view that the ecological crisis, in itself, poses a threat to the continued existence of capitalism. Paraphrasing Lenin he wryly observes, “[It] is more likely ... that the last capitalist will sell a jug of gasoline to his last customer in a world on fire; or that the last capitalist will order workers to use the latest technology to produce even more survival kits” (p.106).

In attempting to understand these economic and ecological crises, Holgersen applies an approach which combines both empirical data and structural analysis by way of a series ‘abstractions’. Thus crises, Holgersen argues, need to be understood simultaneously (1) at the ‘surface level’ (e.g. a financial crisis), which is in turn related to (2) the

concrete organisation of nature/capitalism (e.g. 'neoliberalism'), rooted in (3) the crisis tendencies of the system (e.g. the increase in the 'organic composition of capital') which are finally associated with (4) the profit-driven nature of the system and (5) ultimately, with the underlying contradiction between use-value and exchange value which characterises the capitalist system as a whole. It is at these, more fundamental levels of abstraction, that both the economic and the ecological crises – despite their specificities and important differences – can be conceptualised as different manifestations of the same systemic imperatives and contradictions.

Holgersen applies this overall framework to a number of specific issues associated with crises under capitalism. Above all, he underlines the essential class dimensions of such crises. Far from us all being in the 'same boat', crises are caused by one class but typically paid for by another. More broadly he writes,

"[t]hat class struggle intensifies during crises of capitalism may sound like a dream to the left, who might be more than happy to welcome some extra class struggle. But most of this is nothing to cheer about. This is class struggle from above, subtly and quietly, often with murderous efficiency" (p.142).

Against the Crisis also includes a very useful discussion of the relationship between racism, fascism and capitalist crises. For Holgersen racism is a permanent feature of such crises, a predictable response "within a capitalism built for centuries on colonialism and imperialism", but "[w]here racism is the rule, fascism is the exception; if racism is the eternal answer to crisis, fascism is the exceptional solution" (p.187) and "[f]ascism is a solution when it seems that the crises will not be able to reproduce capitalism. In other words, fascism becomes a possibility when the basic hypothesis of this book is challenged. Fascism is the shock therapy when capitalism really needs to change in order to survive"

(p.194).

Holgersen applies a variety of theoretical frameworks to help illuminate the nature of capitalist crises, drawing on both the Trotskyist tradition, especially the work of Ernest Mandel and Daniel Bensaid, and on the 'left eurocommunism' of Nicos Poulantzas, and specifically, on the latter's concept of the 'relative autonomy' of the capitalist state. This represents a potentially innovative fusion of traditions that have traditionally been somewhat remote and indeed hostile to each other; the resumption of a dialogue that briefly took place in the late 1970's and was subsequently lost to history, not least by the virtual disappearance of the 'left eurocommunism' perspective by the early 1980's [\[1\]](#).

However, whilst Holgersen's book is theoretically rich and stimulating, in a refreshing contrast with much current leftwing theorising, it also focusses on the practical responses which capitalist crises demand of the left. Paralleling the analytical abstractions that he employs to understand the nature of crises; he distinguishes between three 'levels' around which the left should formulate such a response. In particular, he distinguishes between (1) crisis management (2) crisis policy and (3) crisis critique and argues convincingly that the left needs all of the above. In fact, it is the weakness of the left at the level of crisis management/policy, in contrast to its relative sophistication at the level of crisis critique, which leaves us vulnerable to collapsing into essentially 'Keynesian' solutions to when the crisis actually hits. Holgersen rightly stresses the urgent need for the left to develop its own distinctive and credible crisis policies and proposes several possible sources for these; including a renewed programme of 'transitional demands', the advocacy of anti-capitalist 'structural reforms' and a strategy which operates simultaneously 'in and against' the capitalist state. As he notes:

"Crisis and its causes are something we must fight against.

Rather than opportunities we look forward to exploring, or moments when the fight for socialism is put on hold, the crises are problems we must solve” (p.19).

Overall, *Against the Crisis* is a fascinating and rewarding read providing useful material on a host of topics. If I have one reservation about the book it would be that whilst correctly stressing the ‘destructive functionality’ of cyclical crises under capitalism and their essential role in ensuring the reproduction of the system, it is not at all clear that similar considerations apply to the more long-term ‘organic’ downturns of the system which can and do span numerous cyclical ‘booms’ and ‘bursts’. It is not of course that Holgersen is unaware of the distinction here and in fact discusses it at various points, but perhaps the relationship between these different ‘crises’ (indeed whether the latter is correctly regarded as a ‘crisis’ in the sense that Holgersen defines the term) could have been explored more thoroughly. The ‘functionality’ of capitalism’s cyclical undulations makes much more intuitive sense than those of its ‘long downturns’, especially when the latter – for example in the case of the ‘Great Depression’ of the 1920’s and 30’s – required a cataclysmic world war to finally resolve. In a similar vein, whilst there is no guarantee that any particular crisis will be the ‘final’ crisis of capitalism, it doesn’t follow that we can’t or shouldn’t talk in terms of an overall systemic decline.

Notwithstanding this, Holgersen’s overall thesis is thoughtful, important, and timely. We can’t rely on the crisis of capitalism to deliver the transition to socialism; on the contrary, it is only by finding the political resources to struggle effectively ‘against the crisis’ that we will find our way to a better society. Although crises typically and paradoxically strengthen the system, the ultimate challenge is, as Holgersen concludes, to definitively ‘falsify’ this very thesis.

[\[i\]](#) See 'L'État et la transition au socialisme. Interview de Nicos Poulantzas par Henri Weber', *Critique communiste* (the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire journal), no. 16, June 1977 translated to English as 'The State and the Transition to Socialism', in *The Poulantzas Reader*, ed by James Martin (Verso, 2008) pp. 334-360

Reviewed by Iain Gault, *Against the Crisis: Economy and Ecology in a Burning World* is published by Verso and is available [here](#)

There is a *Scotonomics* You Tube interview with Holgersen which outlines the main themes of the book and which is well worth a look. It can be accessed [here](#)

Ståle Holgersen is a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at Stockholm University, Sweden. He is a member of two research collectives: the Zetkin Collective (ecosocialist group working on political ecologies of the far right) published *White Skin, Black Fuel* on Verso in 2021 and Fundament (a housing research collective) published *Kris i Bostadsfrågan on Daidalos in 2023*.

Review – For the Earth to Live: The Case for Ecosocialism by Allan Todd

“For the Earth to Live” is a compelling and essential read for anyone seeking a radical and comprehensive understanding of the interconnected ecological and social crises facing our world. Written by Allan Todd, with a foreword by Professor Julia Steinberger, it emerges as an unapologetic and

passionately argued case for ecosocialism.

The book distinguishes itself by its direct and unwavering commitment to ecosocialist principles, boldly asserting the necessity of uniting ecological concerns with socialist solutions. In an era often characterised by cautious and diluted discourse, "For the Earth to Live" offers a bracingly clear analysis and position, advocating for a political direction that is uncompromisingly pro-ecology and pro-socialism. It actively seeks to combine "Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will," drawing on the wisdom of Antonio Gramsci to provide both a stark awakening to the realities of our situation and a powerful call to action.

A significant strength of this work lies in its well-informed and thoroughly cited analysis. Todd presents a treasure-trove of political, historical, and scientific evidence to contextualise the climate, biodiversity, and health threats we face within our prevailing political and economic systems. The book is structured logically, building from an exposition of ecological dangers to examining political and economic threats, culminating in a powerful argument for revolutionary ecosocialist politics as the necessary response. The extensive referencing provides readers with an excellent foundation for further exploration and independent understanding.

"For the Earth to Live" makes a significant contribution by aiming to articulate a majoritarian perspective for ecosocialism. It moves beyond the notion of ecosocialism as a fringe ideology, presenting it as the potential "political home of the majority of humans on planet earth" and of the rest of life on Earth. This book offers a more accessible pathway for arguing for ecosocialism as a vital project for the 99 percent.

Furthermore, the book actively seeks to counter the understandable despair that can arise when confronting the severity of the ecological and political challenges. By

promoting Gramsci's "optimism of the will," it encourages readers to see "horizons even in the darkest night," fostering the determination needed to continue the struggle for a better future. It explicitly states that ecosocialism offers the "best hope for replacing today's 'old order' with a new one".

The author doesn't shy away from highlighting the dire warnings from climate, ecological, and pandemic-health science reports, illustrating the interconnected crises facing our environment and the failures of current political responses. The book also touches upon the historical context of humanity's relationship with nature, including the more harmonious approaches found in Indigenous societies, suggesting important ways forward.

In conclusion, "For the Earth to Live" is a vital and inspiring contribution to the literature on ecosocialism. It combines a rigorous and well-researched analysis with a passionate and hopeful call to action. By directly confronting the crises of our time and offering a clear and compelling alternative, this book will likely be an essential resource for activists, scholars, and anyone seeking a pathway towards an ecologically sustainable and socially just world. It encourages readers to embrace "optimism of the will" grounded in a clear understanding of the challenges, ultimately arguing that our best chance for the Earth to live lies with ecosocialism.

Reviewed by Duncan Chapel, "For the Earth to Live" is published by Resistance Books and is available [here](#).

Allan Todd is an ecosocialist/environmental and anti-fascist activist. He is a member of Anti-Capitalist Resistance and Extinction Rebellion North Lakes (Cumbria), and is the author of *Revolutions 1789-1917* (CUP), *Trotsky: The Passionate Revolutionary* (Pen & Sword), *Ecosocialism Not Extinction* (Resistance Books), and *Che Guevara: The Romantic Revolutionary* (Pen & Sword).

Allan will speaking about the book at a free event in Glasgow at 7pm on 21st May 2025. For further details of the event and to reserve a copy of the book see [Mount Florida Books](#)

For a May Day of anti-fascist and anti-imperialist resistance

Declaration of the Executive Bureau of the Fourth International

On 5 April in the United States, 1,300 demonstrations involving 500,000 people expressed broad anger against Trump and his far-right government. These mobilizations, significant but still in their early stages, show that it is possible to respond to the violent attacks carried out around the world against the interests of workers, migrants, victims of racial oppression, women, and the LGBTI community.

In Serbia, Greece, South Korea, Turkey, Britain, Germany, Argentina and India, significant sectors of the population have also mobilized against their governments – putting them in a tight spot, and against the far right. The youth have played a fundamental role in almost all of these resistance movements. The broad movement of solidarity with the people of Gaza against the genocide imposed by the Zionist state, which has mobilized hundreds of thousands of young people, many of them from racialized backgrounds in imperialist countries (including anti-Zionist Jews), shows the way forward in the mobilization against imperialist and extreme right offensives. This movement strengthens solidarity with the Ukrainian resistance against the Russian invasion, the resistance of the

Kanak people against French imperialism, and all other forms of anti-fascist and anti-imperialist solidarity and resistance.

2025 May Day is an opportunity to demonstrate worldwide our international solidarity with the struggles against warmongering policies, the far right, against neoliberal policies, and for the democratic, economic, and social rights of the people. The Palestinian flag will fly as a symbol of resistance all over the world.

The world has become even more unstable, uncertain, and dangerous. We must confront the climate emergency and the economic, social, and political crises engendered by capitalism. The authoritarian and xenophobic-protectionist policies of Putin and Trump, and the imperialist and commercial wars they are waging are deepening the crisis of this system. Trump's measures worsen the economic crisis and cause more inflation, and layoffs, in addition to reinforcing ecocidal and imperialist extractivism. The authoritarian, imperialist or regional imperialist governments of Trump, Putin, Netanyahu, Meloni, Orbán, Erdogan, Modi, Xi Jinping and Marcos are leading these attacks. Their reactionary conservatism is simultaneously articulated through a multiplication of attacks on social and democratic rights, including women's reproductive rights, LGBTI rights, particularly those of trans people, against freedom of the press and expression, against migrants and all racialized people – who are increasingly subjected to discrimination, illegalization, family separation, imprisonment and deportation.

Faced with this situation, the Fourth International affirms the urgent need to fight for the broadest freedom of movement and settlement, with equal rights regardless of nationality, origin, gender, or sexuality. The Fourth International demands

a freeze on prices and an increase in wages, the cancellation of illegitimate debts, and the expropriation of banks and large energy companies.

The response to the warmongering policies of Trump and Putin, which are embodied in the invasion of Ukraine and the genocide in Palestine, as well as in their attempts to reach an agreement to divide up Ukraine's wealth, cannot be militarism. The European Union is trying to organize itself to form a third economic and military pole based on a headlong rush into warmongering and antisocial austerity policies. It uses the pretext of responding to Putin and Trump to increase military budgets. It claims that, to do so, drastic cuts in social spending are necessary – in hospitals, schools, pensions, public jobs, and, of course, aid to countries in the South, as Trump has done. This policy is fraught with threats to humanity, whether through the threat of war, including nuclear war or through the rise of neo-fascism around the world and their open rejection of the fight against the climate crisis.

The Fourth International calls for a global movement against wars, militarization, and against nuclear weapons. This movement does not clash with but instead strengthens support to the armed and unarmed struggle of the peoples against imperialist wars, particularly in Palestine and Ukraine, but also of all peoples subjected to imperialism and regional powers in the Congo, Sudan, the Sahel, Kurdistan, Armenia, Yemen, Myanmar. Because there can be no peace without justice.

There is an urgent need to build another world based on cooperation rather than violence, on socialization (of natural resources, transport, banks) and not competition, on democratic decisions about what to produce and what goods to circulate, on solidarity instead of the hatred encouraged by the far right. At the forefront of this struggle are these ones who fight against the far right, against liberal

governments, against war, for the liberation of Palestine and Ukraine. The Fourth International expresses this in its manifesto for the eco-socialist revolution, adopted at its 18th Congress.

This May Day, we call on workers, peasants, those living in poor neighbourhoods, and all oppressed peoples and sectors to mobilize massively to change the world. In the face of the rise of the far right and the authoritarian policies of all governments, the Fourth International calls for building unified campaigns in response to warmongering imperialism, neo-fascism, and neoliberalism. Let's change the balance of power!

- International solidarity against imperialism and authoritarianism on the 1st of May, historical day of international resistance and solidarity!
- Stop wars and militarization! Free Palestine! Russian troops out of Ukraine!
- Stop the far right all over the world!
- Defence of workers' demands, for an ecosocialist revolution!

28 April 2025

From [Socialist Politics, Sweden](#)

Manifesto for an Ecosocialist Revolution – Break with

Capitalist Growth

Introduction

This Manifesto is a document of the Fourth International, founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky and his comrades to save the legacy of the October Revolution from Stalinist disaster. Rejecting sterile dogmatism, the Fourth International has integrated the challenges of social movements and the ecological crisis into its thinking and practice. Its forces are limited, but they are present on every continent and have actively contributed to the resistance to Nazism, May 68 in France, solidarity with anti-colonial struggles (Algeria, Vietnam), the growth of the anti-globalization movement and the development of ecosocialism.

The Fourth International does not see itself as the sole vanguard; it participates, to the extent of its strength, in broad anti-capitalist formations. Its objective is to contribute to the formation of a new International, of a mass character, of which it would be one of the components.

Our era is one of a double historic crisis: the crisis of the socialist alternative in the face of the multifaceted crisis of capitalist "civilization".

The Fourth International is publishing this Manifesto now because we are convinced that the process of ecosocialist revolution, at different territorial levels but with a planetary dimension, is more necessary than ever: it is a question of not only of putting an end to the social and democratic regressions that accompany global capitalist expansion, but also saving humanity from an ecological catastrophe without precedent in human history. These two objectives are inextricably linked.

However, the socialist project which forms the basis of our

proposals requires a broad refoundation fed by a pluralistic assessment of experiences and by the major movements fighting all forms of domination and oppression (class, gender, oppressed national communities, etc.). The socialism we propose is radically different from the models that dominated the last century or from any statist or dictatorial regime: it is a revolutionary project, radically democratic, to which feminist, ecological, anti-racist, anti-colonialist, antimilitarist and LGBTQI+ struggles contribute.

We have used the term ecosocialism for some decades now because we are convinced that the global threats and challenges posed by the ecological crisis must permeate all struggles within/against the existing globalized order. The relationship with our planet, overcoming the “metabolic rift” (Marx) between human societies and their living environment, and the respect for the planet’s ecological equilibrium are not just chapters in our programme and strategy, but its common thread.

The need to update the analyses of revolutionary Marxism has always inspired the action and thought of the Fourth International. We are continuing this approach in writing this Ecosocialist Manifesto: we want to help formulate a revolutionary perspective capable of confronting the challenges of the 21st century. A perspective that draws inspiration from social and ecological struggles, and from the genuinely anti-capitalist critical reflections that are developing around the world.

The objective necessity of an ecosocialist, antiracist, antimilitarist, anti-imperialist, anticolonialist and feminist revolution

All over the world, far-right, authoritarian and semi-fascist forces are gaining power and influence. The lack of an alternative to the crisis of late capitalism is breeding despair which feeds misogyny, racism, queerphobia, climate

change denial and reactionary ideas in general. Frightened because the ecological crisis objectively threatens accumulation for profit, billionaires are turning to a new far right that offers its services to save the system through lies and social demagoguery. Authoritarian policies and oligarchs form a powerful alliance to safeguard the power of capital. They target environmental protection but also social programmes, and wage a war against workers and the poor, all the while claiming to represent them against the liberal establishment.

Capital triumphs, but its triumph plunges it into the insurmountable contradictions highlighted by Marx. Faced with these, Rosa Luxemburg issued her warning in 1915: "Socialism or barbarism". One hundred and ten years later, sounding the alarm is more urgent than ever, as the catastrophe growing around us is unprecedented. To the plagues of war, colonialism, exploitation, racism, authoritarianism, oppressions of all kinds, is added a new scourge, which exacerbates all the others: the accelerated destruction by capital of the natural environment on which the survival of humankind depends.

Scientists identify nine global indicators of ecological sustainability. They estimate that danger limits have been reached for seven of them. Due to the capitalist logic of accumulation, at least six have already been crossed (climate, functional integrity of ecosystems, the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, ground- and freshwater, land use change, pollution by new chemical entities). The poor are the main victims of this destruction, especially in poor countries.

Under the whiplash of competition, big industry and finance strengthen their despotic hold on people and the Earth. The destruction continues, despite the warning cries of science. The craving for profit, like an automaton, demands ever more markets and ever more goods, hence increased exploitation of the labour force and plundering of natural resources.

Legal capital, so-called criminal capital and bourgeois politics are closely intertwined. The Earth is bought on credit by the banks, the multinationals and the rich. Governments increasingly strangle human and democratic rights through brutal repression and technological control.

The same causes underlie social inequality and environmental degradation. It is an understatement to say that the limits of sustainability have also been crossed on the social level.

Capitalism entails scarcity for billions of people and infinite wealth for a tiny number. On the one hand, the shortage of jobs, wages, housing and public services fuels the reactionary idea that there aren't enough resources to satisfy everybody's needs. On the other, with their yachts, their jets, their swimming pools, their exclusive massive golf courses, their many SUVs, their space tourism, their jewellery, their *haute couture* and their luxurious homes in all four corners of the world, the richest 1% own as much as do 50% of the world's population. The "trickle-down theory" is a myth. Wealth "trickles" towards the rich, not the opposite. Poverty is increasing even in "developed" countries. Labour income is squeezed ruthlessly, and social protections – where they exist – are dismantled. The world capitalist economy floats on an ocean of debt, exploitation and inequalities.

Within the working classes, the most vulnerable populations and racialized groups are hardest hit. Ethnic and racial communities are deliberately placed in areas contaminated by often toxic and hazardous waste, in more polluted, as well as in high-risk areas, lacking urban planning (hillsides, for example). Victims of environmental racism, these populations are also systematically excluded from the design and implementation of environmental policies.

Assigning women the duty of caring for others allows capital to benefit from cheap social reproduction and encourages the implementation of brutal austerity policies in public

services. Generally speaking, inequality and discrimination particularly affect women, who continue to provide most domestic and care work, whether free or paid. They receive only 35% of labour income. In some regions of the world (China, Russia, Central Asia), their share is declining, sometimes significantly. Beyond work, women are under attack on all fronts as women, from sexist and sexual violence – femicides, rapes, sexual harassment, sex and labor trafficking – to the right to food, to education, to be respected and to control their own bodies.

LGBTQI+ people, particularly transgender people, are the target of a global reactionary offensive that exacerbates their precariousness and discrimination, compromises their access to healthcare, and consequently, public health.

People with disabilities are discarded by capital because they cannot work for profit, or their work requires adjustments that reduce profits. Some are victims of forced sterilization. The spectre of eugenics is resurfacing.

While old people of the working classes are also discarded, the lives of future generations are generally mutilated in advance. Most working class parents no longer believe that their children will live better than they do. A growing number of young people observe the organized destruction of their world with dread, rage, sadness and grief, as it is raped, gutted, drowned in concrete, engulfed in the cold waters of selfish calculation.

The scourges of famine, food insecurity and malnutrition had receded at the end of the 20th century; they are now burgeoning again as a result of a catastrophic convergence of neoliberalism, militarism and climate change: almost one in ten people are hungry, almost one in three suffer from food insecurity, and more than 3 billion cannot afford a healthy diet. One hundred and fifty million children under the age of five are stunted by hunger. The vast majority of them have the

sole fault of having been born on the periphery of capitalism.

Hope for a peaceful world is evaporating. More than 30 countries are or have recently been in wars of considerable dimensions, including Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Syria, Ukraine, Libya, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Myanmar. The climate crisis itself, weather phenomena, and the resulting intense migratory flows are fuelling many conflicts around the globe. The suffering, displacement and death of populations is tremendous.

While imperialisms squabble, urgent measures for climate transition and a sustainable future are called into question. Wars, besides being calamitous in terms of human lives, attacking women's bodies, using rape as an instrument of terror and dehumanizing collective life, are harmful to the planet we live on. They destroy habitats, cause deforestation, poison the soils, the waters and the air, and are major sources of carbon emissions.

The brutal Russian war against Ukraine and the new level of ethnic cleansing perpetrated in Gaza and against the Palestinian people in general are major crimes against humanity. Both cases confirm the barbarian nature of capitalism. The Russian imperialist aggression against Ukraine has fostered geopolitical tensions on a global scale. It confirms the entry of a new era of inter-imperialist competition for global hegemony. Land, energy and mineral resources are an important stake of this inter-imperialist competition.

Everyone could have a good life on Earth, but capitalism is an exploitative, macho, racist, warlike, authoritarian and deadly mode of predation. In two centuries, it has led humanity into a deep ecosocial impasse. Productivism is destructivism. The overexploitation of natural resources, rampant extractivism, the pursuit of maximum short-term yields, deforestation and land-use change are leading to a collapse of biodiversity,

that is, of life itself.

Climate change is the most dangerous aspect of ecological destruction, it is a threat to human life without precedent in history. The Earth is in danger of becoming a biological wasteland uninhabitable for billions of poor people who are not responsible for this disaster. To stop this catastrophe, we must halve global carbon dioxide and methane emissions before 2030, and reach zero net greenhouse gases emissions before 2050. So, a priority is to banish fossil fuels, agribusiness, the meat industry and hyper-mobility... that is to say, produce less globally.

In this context, is it possible to meet the legitimate needs of 3 billion people living in appalling conditions, mainly in the countries of the Global South¹? Yes. The richest 1% emit nearly twice as much CO₂ as the poorest 50%. The richest 10% are responsible for more than 50% of CO₂ emissions. The poor emit far less than 2-2.3 tonnes of CO₂ per person per year (the average volume that must be reached in 2030 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 with a 50% probability). A dollar spent to meet the needs of the richest 1% emits 30 times more CO₂ than a dollar invested to meet the social needs of the poorest 50% of the world's population.

The climate impact of production aimed at satisfying human needs – especially when democratically planned and assumed by the public sector in a context of social equality – is much lower than that of production aimed at satisfying the needs of the rich through GDP growth and blind market competition for profit. It would be largely offset by the radical reduction of the carbon footprint of the richest 1% – they must divide their emissions by 30 in a few years in the North as in the South! – and sobriety for all. In fact, stopping the catastrophe needs a society that provides well-being and guarantees equality like never before. Yet the rich refuse to make even the slightest effort! On the contrary: they want ever more privileges!

Governments have pledged to stay below +1.5°C, to maintain biodiversity, to achieve so-called “sustainable development” and to respect the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities and capacities” in the ecological crisis, while producing ever more goods, using ever more energy. These combined promises will not be respected by capital. The facts show this: 33 three years after the Earth Summit in Rio (1992), the global energy mix is still completely dominated by fossil fuels (84% in 2020). The total production of fossil fuel has increased by 62%, from 83 000 Terawatt-hour (TWh) in 1992 to 136 000 TWh in 2021. Renewables add to the mainly fossil energy system, offering more capacities and new markets to capitalists.[2](#)

- With the energy crisis unleashed after the pandemic and deepened by the Russian imperialist war on Ukraine, all capitalist powers revived coal, oil, natural gas (including shale gas), and nuclear power.

- The promotion of artificial intelligence (AI) by Big Tech companies and capitalist governments poses a new threat. Data centres and crypto-mining already consume nearly 2% of the world’s electricity. This consumption will increase dramatically with the expansion of AI, which requires enormous amounts of energy and water. People’s lives will be affected in numerous ways. The capitalist use of AI threatens tens of millions of jobs, degrades and undermines artistic and cultural creation, reinforces systemic racism, and accelerates the spread of far-right lies. Moreover, AI and data centres accelerate the frenzy of restless capitalism, which monopolizes people’s attention, thus corrupting their free time and social connections.

- The main force historically responsible for climatic shift, US imperialism, has enormous means to fight against the catastrophe, but its political representatives criminally subordinate this fight to the protection of their world hegemony, when they do not simply deny the crisis.

· The measures big polluters implement under the label of “decarbonization” not only fail to address the magnitude of the climate crisis but also accelerate extractivism, mostly in the dominated countries, but also in the North and in the oceans, at the expense of both populations and ecosystems.

· This so-called “decarbonization” exacerbates imperialist land grabbing and exploitation of labour in the South, with the complicity of the local bourgeoisies (as illustrated by various projects using solar and wind energy in the territories of traditional communities, indigenous peoples, farmers and small-scale fishermen in the countries of the South as well as in “free zones”, in order to produce “green hydrogen” for industries in developed countries).

· “Carbon markets”, “carbon offset”, “biodiversity compensations” and “market mechanisms” based on the understanding of nature as capital weigh on the least responsible, the poor, in particular indigenous people, racialized people and the peoples of the South in general.

Valid in theory, abstract concepts such as “circular economy”, “resilience”, “energy transition”, and “biomimicry” become hollow formulas in practice as soon as they are used in the service of capitalist productivism. If there is no plan implemented by society as a whole for the conversion of production, then technical improvements (e.g. to make energy production cheaper) have a rebound effect³: a reduction in the price of energy generally leads to higher energy and material consumption.

The right blames global warming and the decline in biodiversity on “galloping” population growth. In this way, they seek to blame the oppressed for the crisis and their own misery, in order to impose population control measures on them. In reality, high population growth rates are a consequence rather than a cause of poverty. Income security, access to food, education, healthcare, and housing, gender

equality, and women's empowerment all contribute to the demographic transition because mortality rates, and then birth rates, decline.

The capitalist fetish for accumulation prevents recognition of this truth. In the face of the climate crisis, the fetish will ultimately leave only two options: deploy sorcerer's-apprentice technologies (nuclear, carbon capture/sequestration, geoengineering) or sacrifice billions of poor people in poor countries, saying that "nature" has so decided.

Politically, the impotence and injustice of green capitalism play into the hands of a fossil, conspiratorial, colonialist, racist, violently macho and LGBT-phobic neo-fascism, which is not put off by this second possibility. A sector of the wealthy is marching towards a huge crime against humanity, cynically betting that their wealth will protect them, letting the poor die.

World capitalism is not progressing gradually towards peace and sustainable development, it is going backwards and with great strides towards war, ecological disaster, genocide and neo-fascist barbarism.

In the face of this challenge, it is not enough to question the neoliberal regime and to revalue the role of the state. It would not even be enough to stop the dynamic of accumulation (an impossible goal under capitalism!). Global final net energy consumption must decrease radically – which means producing less and transporting less globally – while increasing energy consumption in poorer countries to meet social needs.

It is the only solution that makes it possible to reconcile the legitimate need of well-being for all, and the regeneration of the global ecosystem. Just sufficiency and just degrowth – ecosocialist degrowth – is a *sine qua*

non condition of rescue.

Getting out of the productivist impasse is only possible under the following conditions:

- abandon “techno-solutionism”, that is, the idea that the solution will come from new technologies (their impact on energy and resources is often underestimated, or not taken into account). In an ecologically wise way, decide to use the means we have – they suffice to meet the needs of all;
- drastically reduce the ecological footprint of the rich to permit a good life for all;
- put an end to the free market in capital (stock markets, private banks, pension funds);
- regulate markets for goods and services;
- maximize direct relationships between producers and consumers at all levels of society, and the processes of evaluating needs and resources from the perspective of use values and ecological and social priorities;
- determine democratically what needs these use values must satisfy, and how;
- include, at the centre of this democratic deliberation, taking care of humans and ecosystems, careful respect for living things and for ecological boundaries.
- consequently, suppress useless production and useless transport, rethink and reorganize all productive activity, its circulation and consumption.

These conditions are necessary but not sufficient. Social and ecological crises are one. We must rebuild an emancipatory project for the exploited and the oppressed. A class-based project which, beyond basic needs, favours being over having. A project that profoundly changes behaviour, consumption, the

relationship with the rest of nature, the conception of happiness and the vision that humans have of the world. An anti-productivist project to live better by taking care of living things on the only habitable planet in the solar system.

Capitalism has plunged humanity into such a bleak situation before, notably on the eve of the First World War. Nationalist hysteria gripped the masses and social democracy, betraying its pledge to respond to war with revolution, gave the green light to the greatest massacres in human history. Nevertheless, Lenin defined the situation as “objectively revolutionary”: only revolution could stop the slaughter, he said. History proved him right: the revolution in Russia and its tendency to spread forced the bourgeoisies to put an end to the massacre. The comparison obviously has its limits. The mediations towards revolutionary action are infinitely more complex today. But the same awakening of consciousness is necessary. In the face of the ecological crisis, an anti-capitalist revolution is even more objectively necessary. It is this fundamental judgement that must serve as a foundation for the elaboration of a programme, a strategy and a tactic, because there is no other way to avoid catastrophe.

The world we fight for

Our project for a future society articulates social and political emancipation with the imperative to stop the destruction of life and to repair as much as possible of the damage already done.

We want to (try to) imagine what a good life would be for everyone, everywhere, while reducing the consumption of matter and energy, taking into account differentiated responsibilities, and therefore reducing material production. It is not a question of giving a ready-made model, but of daring to think of another world, a world that makes us want to fight to build it by breaking with capitalism and

productivism.

“Yes, it is bread we fight for, but we fight for roses too.”

A good life for all requires that basic human needs – healthy food, health, shelter, clean air and water – are met.

A good life is also a chosen life, fulfilling and creative, engaged in rich and equal human relationships, surrounded by the beauty of the world and human achievements.

Our planet (still) has enough arable land, drinking water, sun and wind, biodiversity and resources of all kinds to meet legitimate human needs while renouncing climate-damaging fossil fuels and nuclear power. However, some of these resources are limited and therefore exhaustible, while others, although they are inexhaustible, require for their human consumption materials that are exhaustible or even rare and whose extraction is ecologically damaging. In any case, as their use cannot be unlimited, we must use them carefully and sparingly, in an ecologically wise way.

Essential to our lives, they must be excluded from private appropriation, considered as common goods because they must benefit humanity as a whole both today and in the long term. In order to guarantee these common goods over time, collective rules defining the uses but also the limits of these uses, the obligations to take care of or repair, must be drawn up.

Because a mangrove is not cared for in the same way as an icecap, a wetland in the same way as a sandy beach, a tropical forest in the same way as a river, because solar energy does not obey the same rules, does not impose the same material constraints as wind or water power, the elaboration of rules can only be the fruit of a democratic process involving those immediately concerned, workers and inhabitants.

Our common good includes all the services that allow us to respond in an egalitarian way, and therefore free of charge,

to the needs of education, health, culture, access to water, energy, communication, transport, etc. They, too, must be managed and organized democratically by the whole of society.

Services that deal with people and the care they need at the different stages of life break down the separation of public and private, all the while respecting the privacy of all, and end the assignment of women to these tasks by socializing them, i.e. by making them the business of the whole of society. These services for social reproduction are essential tools, among others, to fight patriarchal oppression.

All these decentralized, participatory, community-based “public services” form the basis of a non-authoritarian social organization.

On the scale of society as a whole, democratic ecological planning allows people to reappropriate the major social choices relating to production, to decide, as citizens and users, what to produce and how to produce it, what services must be provided, and the acceptable limits for the use of material resources such as water, energy, transport, land, etc. These choices are prepared and enlightened by collective deliberation processes that rely on the appropriation of knowledge, whether scientific or derived from the experience of populations, on the self-organization of the oppressed (women’s liberation movements, racialized peoples, people with disabilities, etc.) to push back the barriers to development and to continue the conscious fight against discrimination and oppression.

This global economic and political democracy is articulated with multiple decentralized collectives/committees: those that allow decisions to be taken at the local level, in the city or neighbourhood, on the organization of public life and those that allow workers and producers to control the management and organization of their workplace, to decide on the way to produce and therefore to work. It is the combination of these

different levels of democracy that allows cooperation and not competition, a management that is fair from an ecological and social point of view, fulfilling from a human point of view, at the level of the workplace, the company, the branch ... but also of the neighbourhood, the city, the region, the country and even the planet!

All decisions on production and distribution, on how we want to live, are guided by the principle: Decentralize as much as possible, coordinate as much as necessary.

Taking charge of one's life, and participating in social collectives, requires time, energy, and collective intelligence. Fortunately, the work of production and social reproduction only takes up a few hours a day.

Production is exclusively devoted to the satisfaction of democratically determined needs. Production and distribution are organized in such a way as to minimize the consumption of resources and to eliminate waste, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. It constantly aims at sobriety and "programmed sustainability" (as opposed to the programmed obsolescence of capitalism whether planned or simply due to the logic of the race for profit). Producing as close as possible to the needs that are to be met allows for a reduction in transport and a better understanding of the work, materials and energy required.

Thus, agriculture is ecological, small-scale and local in order to ensure food sovereignty and the protection of biodiversity. Processing workshops and distribution channels ensure that most of the food is produced in short circuits.

The energy sector based on renewable sources is as decentralized as possible to reduce losses and optimize sources. Activities related to social reproduction (health, education, care of the elderly or dependent persons, childcare, etc.) are developed and enhanced, taking care not

to reproduce gender stereotypes.

Although work occupies less time, it occupies an essential place because, together with nature and by taking care of it, it produces what is necessary for life.

Self-management of production units combined with democratic planning allows workers to control their activity, to decide how to organize work and to question the division between manual and intellectual work. This deliberation extends to the choice of technologies according to whether or not they allow the work collective to control the production process. Giving pride of place to concrete, practical and real knowledge of the work process, to collective and individual know-how, and to creativity, makes it possible to design and produce robust goods that can be dismantled and repaired, reused and, if necessary, recycled, and to reduce the consumption of materials and energy from manufacture to use.

In all areas, the conviction of doing something useful and the satisfaction of doing it well are combined. As for tedious tasks, everyone pays attention to reducing the load and difficulty. However, there remains an essential part which is performed by everyone in turn.

A large part of material production, because the volume is greatly reduced, can be deindustrialized (all or part of clothing or food) and artisan skills, in which everyone could be trained, should be better valued.

Liberating labour from alienation allows us to abolish the boundary between art and life in a kind of "luxury communism". We can keep or share tools, furniture, a bicycle, clothes ... all our lives, because they are ingeniously designed and beautiful.

Being rather than having

"Only that which is good for all is worthy of you. Only that

is worthy of being produced which neither privileges nor demeans anyone.” (A. Gorz)

Freedom lies not unlimited consumption, but in chosen and understood self-limitation, defined against consumerist alienation. Collective deliberation makes it possible to deconstruct artificial needs, to define “universalizable” needs – i.e. not reserved for certain people or certain parts of the world – which must be satisfied.

True wealth does not lie in the infinite increase of goods – having – but in the increase of free time – being. Free time opens up the possibility of fulfilment in play, study, civic activity, artistic creation, interpersonal relationships and with the rest of nature.

So we are opening the way to a lot of activity because we have time to think about it and because we can do it keeping care for people and the rest of nature at the centre.

The places where we live, each space in which we socialize, belong to us for building other interpersonal social relationships. Freed from land speculation and the car, we can rethink the use of public spaces, bridge the separation between the centre and the periphery, multiply recreational, meeting and sharing spaces, restoring nature to cities with urban agriculture and community market gardening, restoring biotopes embedded in the urban fabric... And beyond that, implement a long-term policy aimed at rebalancing urban and rural populations and overcoming the opposition between town and country in order to reconstitute liveable, sustainable human communities on a scale that allows for real democracy.

Our desires and emotions are no longer things to be bought and sold, the range of choices is greatly enlarged for everyone, everyone can develop new ways of having sexual relationships, of living, working and raising children together, of building life projects in a free and diverse way, respecting each

person's personal decisions and humanity, with the idea that there is no one possible option, or one option better than the others. The family can stop being the space for the reproduction of domination, and stop being the only possible form of collective life. We can thus rethink the form of parenthood in a more collective way, politicize our personal decisions about motherhood and parenthood, reflect on how we consider childhood and the role of the elderly or disabled, the social relations we establish with them, and how we are able to break the logic of domination that we have internalized, inherited from previous societies.

We are building a new culture, the opposite of rape culture, a culture that recognizes the bodies of all cis and trans women, and their desires, that recognizes everyone as subjects capable of deciding about their bodies, their lives and their sexualities, that makes it visible that there are a thousand ways of being a person and of living and expressing our gender and sexuality.

Sexual activity that is freely consented to and enjoyable for all who take part in it is its own sufficient justification.

We must learn to think about the interdependence of living beings and develop a conception of the relationship between humanity and nature that will probably resemble in some respects that of indigenous peoples, but will nevertheless be different. A conception in which the ethical notions of precaution, respect and responsibility, as well as wonder at the beauty of the world, will constantly interact with a scientific understanding that is both ever more refined and ever more aware of its incompleteness.

Our transitional method

From our analysis of capitalism and specifically the policies of the ruling class in relation to ecological dangers and climate change, it follows:

First, that there is a need for an overall alternative and a social plan based on production and reproduction oriented towards the satisfaction of human needs and not towards profits (producing use values rather than exchange values). Adjusting this or that screw within the system without changing the mode of production will not avert or even significantly mitigate the crises and catastrophes we are facing and those to come, due to the permanence of the capitalist system. One of the important tasks of revolutionary politics is to convey this insight.

The understanding of the need for global revolutionary change is a task that cannot be solved directly and without difficulty in practice. That is why, second, it is important to combine the presentation of the global perspective with putting forward immediate demands for which mobilizations can really be developed or promoted.

Third, it must be emphasized that people cannot be convinced by argument alone. To win people to turn away from the capitalist system, to encourage them to resist, successful struggles are needed that give courage and demonstrate that partial victories are possible.

And fourth, successful struggles require better organization. This is always true in principle, but today – in times when trade unions have in many parts of the world largely disappeared politically and the left is fragmented – it is important to promote practical cooperation in a non-sectarian way, especially among the anti-capitalist left, and at the same time to support workers in their self-organization.

On the one hand, time is pressing if we do not want to go beyond crucial tipping points and see global warming accelerate beyond control. On the other, the vast majority of people are not ready to take up the fight for a different system, i.e. to overthrow capitalism. This is partly due to a lack of knowledge of the overall situation, but more to a lack

of perspective on what the alternative could or should look like. What is more, the social and political relationship of forces between the classes does not exactly encourage confrontation with the rulers and the profiteers of the capitalist social order.

However, a programme that wants to reform capitalism or overcome it piecemeal (especially if directed from above) also has no chance of success. Reforms that accept the rules of the capitalist system are unable to confront the challenges of the ecological crisis. And gradual changes in the economy and state have never led to a change of system. The owners and profiteers of capitalism will not peacefully watch as their wealth is confiscated and their way for enrichment is deprived of its basis bit by bit.

Time is short, and there is the need for urgent measures. Some opponents of ecosocialism argue for mild reforms “because we cannot wait for world revolution”. Well, partisans of ecosocialism do not propose to wait! Our strategy is to begin NOW, with concrete transitional demands. It is the beginning of a process towards global change. These are not separate historical stages, but dialectical moments in the same process. Each partial or local victory is a step in this movement, which reinforces self-organization and encourages the fight for new victories.

In the upcoming class struggles – a basis for the battle of hegemony involving broader layers of the working class, the youth, women, indigenous peoples etc. – it must become clear that ultimately there is no way around a real change of system and the question of power. The ruling class must be expropriated and its political power overthrown.

For an anticapitalist transitional programme

The transitional method was already suggested by Marx and Engels in the last section of the *Communist Manifesto*(1848).

But it is the Fourth International that gave it its modern meaning, in the *Transitional Programme* of 1938. Its basic assumption is the need for revolutionaries to help the masses, through the daily struggle, to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class; the aim being to lead social struggles towards the conquest of power by the proletariat.

Of course, revolutionaries do not discard the programme of the traditional old "minimal" demands: they obviously defend the democratic rights and social conquests of the workers. However, they propose a system of transitional demands, which can be appropriately understood by the exploited and the oppressed, but at the same time directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime.

Most of the transitional demands mentioned in the programme of 1938 are still relevant today: sliding scale of wages and sliding scale of hours; worker's control of the factories; open the "secret" business accounts; expropriation of private banks; expropriations of certain groups of capitalists; among others. The purpose of such proposals is to unite the broadest possible popular masses in struggle around concrete demands that are in objective contradiction with the rules of the capitalist system.

But we need to update our programme of transitional demands, in order to take into account the new conditions of the 21st century, in particular the new situation created by the ecological crisis and the imminent danger of catastrophic climate change. Today these demands must have a socio-ecological and, potentially, an ecosocialist nature.

The aim of ecosocialist transitional demands is strategic: to be able to mobilize large sections of urban and rural workers,

women, youth, victims of racism or national oppression, as well as unions, social movements and left parties in a struggle that challenges the capitalist system and bourgeois rule. These demands, which combine social and ecological interests, must be considered as necessary, legitimate and relevant by the exploited and the oppressed, according to their given level of social and political consciousness. In the struggle, people become conscious of the need to organize, to unite and to fight; they also begin to understand who is the enemy: not only local forces, but the system itself. The aim of transitional eco-social demands is, thanks to the struggle, to enhance the social and political consciousness of the exploited and the oppressed, their anti-capitalist understanding, and, hopefully, an ecosocialist revolutionary perspective.

Some of these demands have a universal character: for instance, free and accessible public transport. This is both an ecological and a social demand, and it contains seeds of the ecosocialist future: public services vs market, and free vs capitalist profit. However, their strategic significance varies according to the society and the economy. Ecosocialist transitional demands must take into account the needs and aspirations of the masses, according to their local expression, in the different parts of the world capitalist system.

Main lines of an ecosocialist alternative to capitalist growth

Satisfying real social needs while respecting ecological constraints is only possible by breaking with the productivist and consumerist logic of capitalism, which widens inequalities, harms the living and “ruins the only two sources of all wealth – the Earth and the workers” (Marx). Breaking this logic implies fighting for the following lines of action. They form a coherent whole, to be completed and broken down

according to national and regional specificities. Of course, in each continent, and in each country, there are specific measures to be proposed in a transitional perspective.

Against disasters, public prevention plans adapted to social needs, under popular control

Some effects of the climate catastrophe are irreversible (rising sea levels) or will last for a long time (heatwaves, droughts, exceptional precipitation, more violent tornadoes, etc.). Capitalist insurance companies do not protect the popular classes, or (at best) protect them poorly. Faced with these scourges, the wealthy talk only of “adaptating”. “Adaptating” to warming, for them, serves 1) to divert attention from the structural causes, for which their system is responsible; 2) to continue their harmful practices focused on maximum profit, without worrying about the long term; 3) to offer new markets to capitalists (infrastructure, air conditioning, transport, carbon compensation, etc.). This technocratic and authoritarian capitalist “adaptating” is in fact what the IPCC calls “maladaptation”. It increases inequalities, discrimination and dispossession. It also increases vulnerability to rising temperatures, with the risk of seriously jeopardizing the very possibility of adaptation in the future, especially in poor countries. To capitalist “maladaptation” we oppose the immediate demand for public prevention plans adapted to the situation of the popular classes. They are the main victims of extreme meteorological phenomena, especially in dominated countries. Public prevention plans must be designed according to their needs and their situation, through dialogue with scientists. They must encompass all sectors, in particular agriculture, forestry, housing, water management, energy, industry, labour legislation, health and education. They must be the subject of broad democratic consultation, with the right of veto of the local communities and work forces concerned.

Share the wealth to take care of humans and our living environment, free of charge

Quality health care, good education, good care for young children, a dignified retirement and a care system that respects dependency, accessible, permanent and comfortable housing, efficient public transport, renewable energy, healthy food, clean water, internet access and a natural environment in good condition: these are the real needs that a civilization worthy of its name should satisfy for all humans, regardless of their skin colour, gender, ethnicity or beliefs. It is possible to achieve this while significantly decreasing the global strain in our environment. Why have we not got this? Because the economy is tuned to induce consumption created as an industrial byproduct by capitalists. They consume and invest ever more for profit, appropriate all resources, and transform everything into commodities. Their selfish logic sows misfortune and death.

A 180° about turn is required. Natural resources and knowledge constitute a common good to be managed prudently and collectively. The satisfaction of real needs and the revitalization of ecosystems must be planned democratically and supported by the public sector, under the active control of the popular classes, and by extending free access as much as possible. This collective project must harness scientific expertise to its service. The necessary first step is to fight inequalities and oppression. Social justice and a good life for all are ecological demands!

Expand commons and public services against privatization and marketization

This is one of the key aspects of a social and ecological transition, in many areas of life. For instance:

- Water: The present privatization, wasteful consumption and pollution of water – rivers, lakes and subterranean – is a

social and ecological disaster. Water scarcity and floods due to climate change are major threats for billions of people. Water is a common good, and should be managed and distributed by public services, under the control of consumers. Landscapes and cities should be made permeable to water and able to store water to avoid massive flooding.

- Housing: The basic right of all people to decent, permanent and ecologically sustainable housing cannot be guaranteed under capitalism. The law of profit entails evictions, demolitions and criminalization of those who resist. It also entails high energy bills for the poor and subsidized renewables for the rich. Public control of the real estate market, lowering and freezing of interest rates and profits of the banks, a radical increase in good, public, social and cooperative housing, a public process of climate insulation of houses and a massive programme of building energetically autonomous houses, are first steps of an alternative politics.

- Health: The results of the Covid-19 pandemic are crystal clear: privatization and cuts in the care sector fragilize the popular classes – in particular children, women and the elderly – and are strong threats to public health in general. This sector must be refinanced massively and the whole played into the hands of the collective. Investments priority must be in front-line medicine. The pharma industry must be socialized.

- Transport: Individual transport in capitalism privileges private cars, with dire health and ecological consequences. The alternative is a large and efficient system of free, accessible public transport, as well as a great extension of pedestrian and cycling areas. Commodities are transported great distances by trucks or container ships, with enormous gas emissions; reductions in wasteful consumption and relocalization of production and transport of goods by train are immediate necessary measures. Air transport should be significantly reduced. No air traffic for distances less than

1,000 km where operational rail systems exist.

Take the money where it is: Capitalists and the rich must pay

A global transition strategy worthy of the name must articulate the replacement of fossil fuels by renewable energy sources, protection against the already perceptible effects of climate change, compensation for losses and threats, assistance for reconversion (in particular guaranteed income for the workers concerned) and the repair of ecosystems. Between now and 2050 this needs several trillion dollars. Who should pay? Those responsible for the disaster: multinationals, banks, pension funds, imperialist states and the rich of the North and South. The eco-socialist alternative requires a broad programme of tax reform and radical reduction of inequalities to take the money from where it is: progressive taxation, the lifting of banking secrecy, a register of land assets, taxation of assets, exceptional single tax at a high rate on inherited wealth, elimination of tax havens, abolition of tax privileges for companies and the rich, opening of company account books, capping of high incomes, abolition of public debts recognized as "illegitimate" (without compensation, except for small investors), compensation by rich countries for the cost of renouncing exploitation of fossil resources by dominated countries (e.g. the Yasuni Park project). Above all, genuine ecosocialist democratic planning is not possible without the public socialization of banks. "Credit for the common good" means definitively eliminating profit in determining interest rates and transaction margins, supporting the public and popular function of credit, and guaranteeing the public and cooperative role of banks.

No emancipation without anti-racist struggle

Racial oppression is a structural and structuring element of the capitalist mode of production. It accompanied the

primitive accumulation of capital through colonization, the slave trade, and slavery. The forced displacement of millions of Africans, their commercialization in the Americas, and the exploitation of their labour ensured the enrichment of Europeans and still guarantees their privileges today.

Racism manifests itself centrally as a mechanism of oppression of sectors of the working class, the reservation of specific positions and socially determined access for whites (the supposedly universal subject) and for people perceived as racialized. It shapes social relations, reinforcing and complicating the mechanisms of bourgeois exploitation and wealth accumulation. Diversity that deviates from the norms of whiteness is transmuted into oppression.

Building a new world free from all oppression and exploitation requires a head-on struggle against racism. This is a central task of ecosocialist strategy. We must break with the genocidal logic against non-white groups and strengthen the anti-prison struggle against mass incarceration, imposed in particular through the liberal tactic of the so-called war on drugs.

The fight against police militarization must be at the heart of anti-racist struggle, as must access to decent living conditions in general. It is necessary to combat all austerity policies, which primarily and increasingly affect non-white people. They structure the environmental racism that unequally distributes the deadly consequences of capitalist production. It is necessary to confront all fiscal austerity policies, which deepen the precariousness of life for the working class as a whole and fall mostly and more heavily on non-white people. They structure environmental racism which, in this climate emergency, distributes the deadly consequences of capitalist production unevenly.

Freedom of movement and residence on Earth! Nobody is illegal!

The ecological catastrophe is a growing driving force for migration and displacement of populations. An annual average of 21.5 million people were forcibly displaced by weather-related events between 2008 and 2016. Most of them are poor people from poor countries who are displaced within their own countries or in poor neighboring countries. Climate migration is expected to surge in coming decades: 1.2 billion people could be displaced globally by 2050. Unlike asylum-seekers, “climate refugees” do not even have any status. They bear no responsibility for the ecological catastrophe but the capitalist system, which is responsible, condemns them to swell the ranks of the 108.4 million people worldwide who were forcibly displaced in 2020 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations. The basic rights of these people are under constant attack: the right to be protected against violence; to have enough water and food; to live in a safe house; to keep their family united; to find a decent job. A growing number of them (4,4 million, probably much more) are even considered stateless by the UNHCR. All this is contrary to the most basic justice. It feeds the fascists who scapegoat the migrants and dehumanize them. This is a huge threat for the democratic and social rights of all. As internationalists, we fight for restrictive policies against capital, not against migrants. We oppose the building of walls, confinement in centres, the building of camps, expulsions, deportations, and the racist rhetoric. Nobody is illegal on Earth, everybody must have the right to move and to leave everywhere. The borders must be open to all those who flee their country, whether it is for social, political, economic or environmental reasons.

Eliminate unnecessary or harmful economic activities

Stopping the climate catastrophe and the decline of

biodiversity necessarily requires a very rapid and significant reduction in net energy consumption at the global level. This discipline is unavoidable. First steps include drastically reducing the purchasing power of the rich, abandoning fast fashion, advertisement and luxury production/consumption (cruises, yachts and private jets or helicopters, space tourism, etc.), scaling down mass-produced meat and dairy and ending the accelerated obsolescence of products, extending their lifespan and facilitating their repair. Air and maritime transport of goods should be reduced drastically by relocation of production, and be replaced by train transport whenever possible. More structurally, energy constraint can only be respected by reducing economic activities that are useless or harmful as quickly as possible. The main productive sectors to consider are: arms production, fossil energy and petrochemicals, extractive industry, non-sustainable manufacturing, the wood and pulp industry, personal car construction, planes and shipbuilding.

Food sovereignty! Get out of agribusiness, industrial fishing and the meat industry

These three sectors pose serious threats to the climate, human health and biodiversity. Dismantling them requires measures at the level of production but also significant changes at the level of consumption (in developed countries and among the rich in all countries) and in our relationship with living things. Proactive policies are needed to stop deforestation and replace agribusiness, industrial tree plantations and large-scale fishing with small farmer agroecology, ecoforestry and small-scale fishing respectively. These alternatives consume less energy, employ more labour and are much more respectful of biodiversity. Farmers and fisherfolk must be properly compensated by the community, not only for their contribution to human food but also for their ecological

contribution. The rights of first peoples over the forest and other ecosystems must be protected. Global meat consumption must be drastically reduced, particularly in countries and among social classes that consume too much meat. The meat and dairy industry must be dismantled and a diet based mainly on local vegetable production be promoted. By doing that, we put an end to the abject treatment of animals in the meat industry and to industrial fishing. Food sovereignty, in line with the proposals of Via Campesina, is a key objective. It requires radical agrarian reform: the land should go to those who work it, especially women. Expropriation of big landowners and capitalist agribusiness who produce goods for the world market. Distribution of land to peasants and landless peasants (families or cooperatives) for agro-biological production. Abolition of old and new genetically modified crops in open field and elimination of toxic pesticides (starting with those whose use the imperialist countries prohibit but whose export they authorize in the dominated countries!).

Coexist with living things, stop the massacre of species

Respect for non-human life is fundamental to preserving the conditions for reproduction and evolution of the human species. Production methods must take into account relationships with other living things from the very beginning. Immediate action must be taken against the patenting of living things, the destruction of wetlands, and the exploitation of the seabed. Although partial and insufficient in the long term, the expansion of wildlife conservation areas must be encouraged, provided it does not lead to further social injustice, particularly to the detriment of indigenous peoples and rural communities.

Popular urban reform

More than half the world's population now lives in increasingly large cities. At the same time, rural regions are

becoming depopulated, ruined by agribusiness and mining, and increasingly deprived of essential services. So called "developing countries" have some of the largest megacities on the planet (Jakarta, Manila, Mexico City, New Delhi, Bombay, Sao Paulo, and others), a growing number of homeless people and slums where millions of human beings (around Karachi, Nairobi, Baghdad...) survive and work informally in undignified conditions. It is one of the most hideous wounds left by capitalist development and imperialist domination. In addition to violence, heat waves make survival increasingly difficult in slums and poor neighbourhoods, especially in humid climates. The ecosocialist alternative demands the launch of a vast social housing construction programme accompanied by a popular urban reform that changes the organization of large cities, designed in cooperation with homeless associations. This has to be combined, on the one hand, with labour legislation that protects workers and, on the other, the attraction of agrarian reform, in order to initiate a movement of rural counter-emigration.

Socialize energy and finance without compensation or buyback to get out of fossil fuels and nuclear power as quickly as possible

The energy multinationals and the banks that finance them want to exploit every last tonne of coal, every last litre of oil, every last cubic metre of gas. They initially hid and denied the impact of CO2 emissions on climate change. Now, in order to continue to exploit these resources despite everything, and while soaring prices ensure them gigantic surplus profits, they promise all kinds of phony techniques (greenwashing, exchange of "polluting rights", "emissions offsetting", "Carbon capture, sequestration and utilization") and promote nuclear energy as "low carbon". Have no doubt: these profit-hungry groups are taking the planet from climate catastrophe to cataclysm. At the same time, they are at the forefront of capitalist attacks on the working classes. They must be

socialized by expropriation, without compensation or buyback. To stop the social and ecological destruction, to determine our future collectively, nothing is more urgent than constituting public services of energy and credit, decentralized and interconnected, under the democratic control of the people.

Open the “black box” of data centres, socialize Big Tech

Data centers owned by Big Tech companies consume increasing amounts of energy and water. They are “black boxes”: what happens there is covered by trade secrets. In addition to the fact that these centres power surveillance capitalism, create algorithms for targeted advertising, and artificially generate new needs, a growing part of their activity involves supporting AI. This “black box” must be opened. People must be able to control energy usage and decide which functions are socially useful and which are not. Big Tech and social media giants must be socialized and democratically managed to create truly public digital spaces.

For liberation and the self-determination of peoples; against war, imperialism and colonialism

We defend an internationalist programme based on social justice, and an ecosocialist transition led by liberating and collective forces, and peace among peoples, confronting oppressive policies. We oppose NATO and other military alliances, which drive the world towards new inter-imperialist conflicts. We fight against increases in military budgets, for the dismantling of manufacturing and stocks of all nuclear, chemical and bacteriological armament and cyber weapons, for dismantling of all private military companies. Weapons must not be commodities; their use must be under political control for the purposes of defence and protection against aggression.

The sole road to peace is through the victorious struggles for

the right to self-determination, the end of occupation of lands and ethnical cleansing. As internationalists, we are in solidarity with the oppressed people fighting for their rights, notably in Palestine and in Ukraine.

Guarantee employment for all, ensure the necessary retraining in ecologically sustainable and socially useful activities

Workers engaged in wasteful and harmful fossil fuel activities, in agribusiness, big fishing and the meat industry should not pay the price of capitalist management. A green job guarantee must be instituted to ensure their collective retraining, without loss of income, in the activities of the public plan to meet real needs and restore ecosystems. This green jobs guarantee will overcome the legitimate fears of the workers concerned. Thus, there will be an end to the cynical instrumentalization of these fears by the capitalists, in the service of their productivist/consumerist interests. On the contrary, the green jobs guarantee will encourage and motivate workers in condemned sectors to train and mobilize to actively take charge of carrying out the plan, in dialogue with the public benefiting from it, by investing their knowledge, their skills and their experience in an activity rich in meaning, emancipatory, truly human because concerned with the lives of future generations.

Work less, live and work better, live a good life

Radically reducing energy consumption by eliminating useless and harmful production/consumption logically has the effect of reducing the time of salaried social work. This reduction must be collective. Capitalist waste is of such magnitude that its suppression will undoubtedly open up the concrete possibility of a very significant reduction in weekly working time (about a half-day's work) and a significant lowering of the retirement age. This trend towards reduction will be partly offset by the necessary reduction in work rhythms and increase

in social and ecological reproduction work necessary to take care of people (including by socializing part of the domestic work carried out for free mainly by women) and ecosystems. Democratic planning will be essential for the articulation over time of these movements in various directions. The ecosocialist break with capitalist growth implies a double transformation of work. Quantitatively, we will work much less. Qualitatively, it will create the conditions for making work an activity of the good life – a conscious mediation between humans (therefore also between men and women), and between humans and the rest of nature. This deep transformation of work and life will more than compensate for the changes in consumption affecting the best paid layers of the working class, mainly in the developed countries.

Reduce, reuse, recycle

The concepts of product life cycle, recycling, repair, and circularity are essential. Their consistent application requires production focused on meeting real human needs. However, the production of organic and solid waste is an unavoidable reality of life in society. It is therefore essential to have adequate means for its disposal, treatment, and reuse. Therefore, alongside drastically reducing consumption, it is necessary to implement adequate methods for treating organic waste (such as composting) and to develop techniques for recycling and reusing solid waste, based on the knowledge accumulated by science and workers collectively organized in waste collection and recycling. Ecosocialist policies will promote the adequate collection and treatment of hospital, contaminated, and toxic waste, aiming for the lowest possible socio-environmental impact.

Guarantee the right of women to control over their own bodies and a life without violence

Humanity will not be able to consciously manage its relationship to the rest of nature without consciously

managing its relationship to itself, that is to say its own biological reproduction, which passes through the body of women. It is not by chance that patriarchal attacks on women's rights are intensifying everywhere: these attacks are an integral part of political projects that seek to establish strong powers at the service of the rich and the capitalists. They are most often carried out in the name of a reactionary "pro-life" ideology, which incidentally denies anthropogenic climate change. But, alongside these reactionary forces, there are also technocratic currents that blame the ecological crisis on "overpopulation" and thereby attempt to impose authoritarian policies of birth control. Faced with these two types of threats, we maintain that no morality, no higher reason, even ecological, can be invoked to deny women their elementary right to control their own fertility. The denial of this right is consubstantial with all other mechanisms of domination, including "human domination" over the rest of nature, for the benefit of patriarchy and its current capitalist form. Human emancipation includes the emancipation of women. This implies as a priority that women must have free access to contraception, abortion, education on how to use them, and reproductive care in general. This also involves the fight against all forms of physical, psychological, social or medical violence against women and LGBTQI+ people.

Knowledge is a common good: Reform of the education and research systems

Knowledge is a common good of humankind. Implementation of the ecosocialist emergency programme has a crying need for decolonized and decapitalized knowledge, embodied by numerous and competent teachers and researchers in all disciplines. For reform of the education system, expansion of public schools and universities, an end to discrimination in education, of which girls are particularly victims in certain countries. For recognition and integration of indigenous knowledge and know-how. Deep reform of research in order to put an end to its

submission to capital. Research to be directed primarily towards repairing ecosystems and meeting the needs of the working classes, and determined in consultation with them.

Hands off democratic rights! Popular control and self-organization of struggles

Powerless to curb the ecological catastrophe it has created, the ruling class is toughening its regime, criminalizing resistance and picking on scapegoats. Its policies pave the way for nihilistic, nationalist, racist and macho neo-fascism. Faced with the bourgeoisie unmasked, ecosocialism raises the flag of extending rights and freedoms: right of association, of demonstration, right to strike; free election of parliamentary bodies in a multi-party system; a ban on private financing of political parties; legalization of popular initiative referendums; abolition of non-democratic institutions (such as an autonomous Central Bank); prohibition of private ownership of major means of communication; abolition of censorship; a fight against corruption; dissolution of militias serving leaders; respect for the rights and territories of indigenous communities and other oppressed peoples, etc. Ecosocialism is a societal alternative that requires the broadest democracy. It is being prepared now through the democratic self-organization of popular struggles and the demand, at all levels, for transparency and popular control, with the right of veto.

Foster a cultural revolution based on respect for the living and “love for Pachamama”

A radical break with the ideology of human domination of nature is essential for the development of both an ecological and a feminist (an ecofeminist) culture of “caring” for people and the environment. The defence of biodiversity, in particular, cannot be based solely on reason (the human interest properly understood): it requires just as much empathy, respect, prudence and the kind of global conception

that the first peoples sum up by the phrase “love of Pachamama”. Maintaining this global conception or reacquiring it – through struggles, artistic creation, education and production/consumption alternatives – is a major ideological challenge in the ecosocialist struggle. Western modernity has systematized the idea that human beings are divine creatures whose mission is to dominate nature and instrumentalize animals, which are reduced to the rank of machines. This non-materialist conception, intimately linked to colonial and patriarchal dominations, is completely disqualified today by scientific knowledge. We are part of the living Earth; human life would be impossible in the absence of the network of life on this planet.

Self-managed ecosocialist planning

The ecosocialist transition needs planning. In particular, the transformation of the energy system (exit from nuclear and fossil fuels, energy savings and development of renewables) needs to be planned. Contrary to what is often claimed, planning is not contradictory to democracy and self-management. The disastrous example of the countries of so-called “really existing socialism” shows that self-management is incompatible with authoritarian, bureaucratic planning, imposed from above in contempt of all democracy. What does democratic ecosocialist planning mean? Concretely, that the whole of society will be free to democratically choose priorities for production and the level of resources which must be invested in education, health or culture. Far from being “despotic” in itself, democratic ecosocialist planning is the exercise of freedom of decision-making of the whole of society, at all levels, from local to national to global. It is a necessary exercise to free oneself from “economic laws” and “iron cages” that are alienating and reified within capitalist and bureaucratic structures. Democratic planning associated with the reduction of working time would be a considerable step forward for humanity towards what Marx

called “the kingdom of freedom”: the increase in free time is in fact a condition for the participation of workers in the democratic discussion and self-management of the economy and society. Ecosocialist democratic planning is about key economic choices and not about local restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, small stores, craft businesses. Likewise, it is important to emphasize that ecosocialist planning is not in contradiction to the self-management of workers in their production units. Self-management therefore means democratic control of the plan at all levels – local, regional, national, continental and planetary, since ecological issues such as climate change are global and can only be addressed at that level. Ecosocialist democratic planning is opposed to what is often described as “central planning” because decisions are not taken by a “centre” but determined democratically by the populations concerned, according to the principle of subsidiarity: responsibility for public action, when necessary, must be allocated to the smallest entity capable of solving the problem itself.

Material global degrowth in the context of uneven and combined development

There will be no national solution. A just ecosocialist alternative can begin in one country but its full implementation requires the abolition of capitalism at the global level. From now on, the exploited and the oppressed therefore need a consistent anticapitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-racist and internationalist strategy, aiming at a global outcome. This strategy must articulate the struggles that unfold in very different contexts. It means that the main lines of an ecosocialist programme breaking with capitalist growth have general relevance but they apply differently in different countries. Some demands are more important in some countries than others, according to their place in the uneven and combined development of capitalism under imperialist rule.

After centuries of slavery and colonial plunder, the

populations of so-called “developing” countries are victims of a new monstrous injustice. While their responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions is small, almost nil in the poorest countries, the climatic shift caused by two hundred years of imperialist capitalist growth places 3.5 billion women, men and children in the front line of catastrophes that are hitting them harder and harder.

The populations of the dominated countries have the basic right to access dignified living conditions. Imperialist governments, international institutions and the governments of the peripheral countries themselves claim that capitalist growth will enable people in the South to “catch up” with the standard of living of the developed capitalist countries. All it would take is “good governance” to “adjust” societies to the needs of the global market. But this is a dead end, as shown by the fact that inequalities continue to grow (between countries and, more and more, within countries), while the “carbon budget” compatible with 1.5°C is vanishing rapidly.

In reality, the imperialist model of development keeps the dominated countries in a neocolonial position of subordination, as suppliers of raw materials and low-cost labour power, producers of plant and animal goods for export, places for storing waste – among others carbon sinks appropriated by capitalists for their profit – and the chief victims of the ecological crisis. Added to this now are the scandalous policies of developed countries to pay dominated countries to play the role of border police. The local corrupt “elites” carry a major responsibility. Instead of promoting an alternative development, based on alternative social values, they have come to serve imperialism.

The discourse of the “the South catching up with the North” is a chimera, a smokescreen to conceal the continuation of capitalist and imperialist exploitation, which widens inequalities. With the increase in ecological disasters, this discourse is losing all credibility.

The multipolar world of the BRICS is not an alternative to imperialism, as shown by the politics of Russia and China, the two main leaders of this bloc. Their autocratic leaders do not oppose the imperialist and oppressive practices of “classic” Western imperialism – they want to have the same rights. Likewise, what they object to is not the gap between rights and realities in the practices of Western societies, it is the rights themselves (of workers, women, LGBTQ+, etc.). Putin wants to rebuild a colonial empire by force and coercion. Taking advantage of the huge fossil fuels reserves, he seeks alliances with oil monarchies, other dictatorships and powerful interests in the energy and crime industry to prolong the exploitation of fossil fuels as long as possible. The Chinese Communist Party claims to show the countries of the South that they can escape domination and develop by entering the New Silk Roads, but its project of global capitalist hegemony is one of the main drivers of ecological destruction and accumulation by dispossession.

Now is not the time for “catching up” but for planetary sharing. The great mass of the working people, of women, of youth, of the ethnic minorities in the “North” and in the dominated countries are victims of climate change. According to scientific analysis of current climate policies, the richest 1% will emit even more CO₂ by 2030; the poor 50% will emit a little bit more but remain largely under the level of individual emissions compatible with 1.5°C; the intermediate 40% will support the greatest part of the emissions reduction (with the proportionally greatest effort imposed on low incomes in rich countries). This is the basis for an international struggle for justice and equality. The meagre carbon budget still available must and can be shared according to historical responsibilities and capacities, not only between countries but more and more between social classes. Mineral resources and the wealth of biodiversity must be harvested carefully, according to the real needs of all.

The capitalists of the imperialist countries are by far the most responsible for the ecological crisis and they must pay the consequences. The bill must be paid, too, by countries like the “oil monarchies”, Russia, and China, although their historical responsibility is not the same. The industrialized countries of the “North” – Europe, North America, Australia, Japan – must make the greatest efforts in terms of a rapid degrowth in useless and/or harmful productions. They are also responsible for giving the dominated countries access to alternative technologies, and to provide funding for an ecological transition and real reparation for the loss and damage. The abolition of patents must allow the peoples of the South to freely access technologies that can meet real needs without using even more fossil energy.

To satisfy their needs, the people in dominated countries need a development model radically opposed to the imperialist and productivist one, a model that prioritizes public services (health, education, housing, accessible transport, sewage, electricity, drinking water) for the mass of the population, and not the production of goods for the world market. This anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist model expropriates the monopolies in the sectors of finance, mining, energy, agribusiness, and socializes them under democratic control.

Especially in the poorer countries, the necessity to meet the needs of the population will require increased material production and energy consumption over a period of time. Within the framework of the alternative development model and other international exchanges, the contribution of these countries to global ecosocialist degrowth and respect for ecological balances will consist of:

- Imposing just reparation on imperialist countries.
- Cancelling the conspicuous consumption of the parasitical elite.

- Fighting ecocidal megaprojects inspired by neoliberal capitalist policies, such as giant pipelines, pharaonic mining projects, new airports, offshore oil wells, large hydroelectric dams and immense tourist infrastructures appropriating natural and cultural heritage for the benefit of the rich.
- Ecological agrarian reform to substitute industrialized agro-business.
- Refusing the destruction of biomes by breeders, palm oil planters, agribusiness in general and the mining industry, “forest compensation” (REDD and REDD+ projects) as well as “fishing agreements” which offer fishery resources to industrial fishing multinationals, etc.

Through their struggles, the popular classes of the dominated countries can contribute in a decisive way by engaging the exploited of the whole world in this path, the only one compatible with both human rights and with terrestrial limits.

Against the tide, make the struggles converge to break with capitalist productivism. Seize the government, initiate the ecosocialist rupture based on self-activity, self-organization, control from below, and the broadest democracy

The economy, the state, the politics of the bourgeoisie and its international relations are deeply affected by the eco-social impasse in which capitalist accumulation and imperialist plunder have plunged humanity. Around the world, the exploited and the oppressed are gripped by deep anguish.

Movements of resistance are developing against the tide. Even in extremely difficult contexts, people stand up for their social, democratic, anti-imperialist, ecological, feminist, LGBTQI, anti-racist, indigenous, and peasant rights. Significant struggles have been waged and sometimes remarkable

victories have been won: the Yellow Vest movement and the movement to defend pensions in France, the ecosocialist struggle of the GKN factory workers in Italy, the struggle of the auto workers union in the United States, the closure of a copper mine owned by First Quantum in Panama in 2023, the victory of the Indian peasants against the Modi government, the victory of the “zadists” in France against the airport of Notre-Dame-des-Landes, the victory of women in the fight for abortion in Argentina, and of the Sioux in the United States against the XXL pipeline... But the enemy is on the offensive and many struggles are defeated. Our task, as activists of the Fourth International, is to help organize and extend the struggles, bringing our ecosocialist and internationalist perspective to bear.

While the history of the labor movement is rich in struggles for workers’ health and environmental protection, the productivism of the hegemonic forces of the left, parties and trade unions, is a serious obstacle on the road to an ecosocialist response commensurate with the objective situation. Most of the leaderships have abandoned any anti-capitalist perspective. Social democracy and all other variants of reformism have become social-liberal, their only ambition being to bring some social correction to the market within the limits of the neoliberal framework. Most leaderships of the big trade union organizations limit themselves to accompanying neoliberal policies with the illusion that capitalist growth will improve employment, wages and social protection. Instead of organizing an awareness of the ecosocial impasse, these policies of class collaboration deepen it and conceal its gravity.

Fortunately, some political forces and trade union currents – notably in Europe, the United States and Latin America – are beginning to distance themselves from productivism and neoliberalism. In the trade unions, activists aware of the ecological challenge have advanced the concept of a “just

transition". Social democracy and ITUC trade union leaders have hijacked this in the direction of supporting productivism and business competitiveness. The dominant class is expert in manipulation. This is how "just transition" has joined "sustainable development" in the discourse of governments that trample on justice and organize unsustainability.

In the "developed" capitalist countries, the ranks of the traditional forces have been reinforced by the green parties. It took four decades for the vast majority of these parties to join the layer of the political managers of capitalism. Their pragmatism based on the individual responsibility of consumers is extended in civil society by numerous environmental associations. It has allowed social democracy and traditional labour leaderships to disguise their class collaboration in defence of the "lesser social evil" in the face of ecotaxes and other so-called "realistic" solutions of "neither left nor right" ecology.

In other parts of the world, although still in a minority, ecosocialism is beginning to gain an influence on social movements and the radical left. Some important local experiences – in Mindanao, Rojava, and Chiapas, among others – have affinities with the ecosocialist perspective. However, capitalist growth still falsely appears to most as the only way to improve social conditions.

Given the depth of the crisis and disarray, there is a real risk of seeing a growing tendency in sectors of the working classes to sacrifice ecological objectives on the altar of development, job creation and increased income. This trend would only accelerate the catastrophe of which these same classes are already the first victims and would deepen the loss of legitimacy of the unions. It would also create fertile ground for neo-fascist attempts to greenwash racist, colonialist and genocidal projects. The migrants fleeing their devastated lands are the main targets of these hate campaigns.

The socialist project is deeply discredited by the record of Stalinism and social democracy. It is from struggles that we must reinvent an alternative, not from dogmas.

Who is today on the front lines of the real ecosocial movement? Indigenous peoples, youth, peasants, racialized people who pay a heavy price for the social and ecological destruction. In these four groups, women play a decisive role, in connection with their specific, ecofeminist demands, for which they fight and organize themselves autonomously.

The international peasant alliance Via Campesina offers numerous examples that demonstrate that it is possible to combine the defence of the rights of poor peasants and indigenous peoples, the fight against extractivism and agro-industry, the fight for food sovereignty and the preservation of ecosystems with feminism.

The vast majority of wage-workers is absent or standing back from anti-productivist struggles. Some then infer that the class struggle is outdated, or must be waged by an “ecological class” that exists only in their imagination. But stopping the catastrophe is only possible by revolutionizing the mode of production of social existence. This revolution is not possible without the active and conscious participation of producers, who also form the majority of the population.

Others, on the contrary, deduce that it is necessary to wait for the moment when the mass of workers in struggle for their immediate socio-economic demands will have reached the level of consciousness that allows them to participate in the ecological struggle on a “class line”. However, how would the level of consciousness of the mass of employees integrate ecological issues in time if no major social struggle comes to shake up the productivist framework within which they, increasingly on the defensive, spontaneously raise their immediate socio-economic demands? Moving beyond the productivist framework requires a logic of public initiative

and planning of the necessary reconversions, with guaranteed employment and income.

The class struggle is not a cold abstraction. "The real movement that abolishes the current state of things" (Marx) defines it and designates its actors. The struggles of women, LGBTQI people, oppressed peoples, racialized peoples, migrants, peasants and indigenous peoples for their rights are not simply adjacent to the struggles of workers against the exploitation of labour by the bosses. They are part of the living class struggle.

They are part of it because capitalism needs the patriarchal oppression of women to maximize surplus value and ensure social reproduction at a lower cost; needs the discrimination against LGBTQI people to validate patriarchy; needs structural racism to justify the looting of the periphery by the centre; needs inhuman "asylum policies" to regulate the industrial reserve army; needs to submit the peasantry to the dictates of junk food-producing agribusiness to compress the price of labour power; and needs to eliminate the respectful relationship that human communities still maintain within themselves and with nature, to replace it with its individualistic ideology of domination, which transforms the collective into an automaton and the living into dead things. In particular, indigenous peoples and traditional communities are at the forefront of the struggle against the destructive domination of capitalism over their bodies and territories. In many regions, they are even the vanguard of new revolutionary movements of the subaltern classes. Therefore, we recognize that they are a fundamental part of the revolutionary subject of the 21st century.

All these struggles and those of workers against capitalist exploitation are part of the same fight for human emancipation, and this emancipation is only really possible and worthy of humanity in the awareness of the fact that our species belongs to nature while at the same time having,

because of its specific intelligence, the responsibility, now unavoidable and vital, of taking care of it. Such is the strategic implication arising from the fact that the destructive force of capitalism has ushered the planet into a new geological era.

This analysis is the basis of our strategy of convergence of social and ecological struggles. Whenever possible, this convergence should also be coordinated at the international level through democratic forums. The struggle is global, and our movement must be too.

This convergence of struggles should not be limited to the search between social movements, or between apparatuses of social movements, for the greatest common denominator in terms of demands. This conception can imply the disregard of certain demands of certain groups – to the detriment of the weakest among them – that is to say, the opposite of convergence.

The convergence of social and ecological struggles includes all the struggles of all social actors, from the most seasoned to the most hesitant. It is a process of dynamic articulation, which raises the level of consciousness through action and debate, in mutual respect. Its goal is not the determination of a fixed platform but the constitution of the unity in combat of the exploited and the oppressed around concrete demands opening a dynamic aiming at the conquest of political power and the overthrow of capitalism in the whole world.

In practice, the ecosocial convergence of struggles implies above all that those sectors most aware of ecological threats address themselves to the sectors most aware of social threats, and vice versa, in order to overcome together the false capitalist opposition between the social and ecological.

In this approach, the defence of an eco-unionism that is both class struggle and anti-productivist plays an essential role, based on the concrete concerns of workers for the preservation

of their health and safety at work and on the role of whistle-blowers about [\[1\]](#) the damage to ecosystems and the danger of production that they are best placed to play.

As ecosocialist activists, we encourage resistance in the workplace through strikes and all initiatives that promote the organization and control of workers. We work to strengthen mobilizations by combining the extension of strikes, building ever greater demonstrations, by promoting all forms of self-organization and self-protection in the struggle against repression, as well as its popularization to counter the lies of the dominant media and the government apparatus.

We are also inspired by forms of civil disobedience, from blocking sites to boycotting rent payments, which have also proven their effectiveness.

Experiences from struggles help to feed the strategic debate.

Anti-productivist struggles are diverse, but generally their starting point is very concrete, often local, in opposition to new transport infrastructure (motorway, airport, etc.), commercial or logistical infrastructure, extractivist infrastructure (mines, pipelines, mega-dams, etc.), the grabbing of land or water, the destruction of a forest or a river, etc. It is, first, the threat to daily life, to livelihoods and health that mobilizes people, not a generalizing discourse. By confronting political decision-makers, capitalist groups and the institutions that protect them, by forging alliances between actors with different histories and commitments, the struggle becomes more and more global and political.

These combinations of struggles anchored in a specific territory with a precise objective and general combat exist throughout the world and form a new political reality which may be called "Blockadia".

The formation of an ecosocialist class consciousness also

implies a convergence in struggles in which (young) scientists can contribute by using and sharing their knowledge (agronomic, climatic, naturalist).

Strike committees, community health centres, company takeovers, land occupations, self-managed living spaces, repair workshops, canteens, seed libraries, etc., allow the experimentation of a social organization free of capitalism. They allow those who are deprived of political and economic power to experience their collective power and intelligence. Contradicting the illusions about possibly bypassing or simply adjusting the system, they sooner or later come up against the state and the capitalist market, showing that it is impossible to do without political power and the necessary overthrow of the system. In industrialized countries, the general political strike will be a decisive instrument. However, by establishing, even temporarily, another legitimacy that is popular, democratic and based on solidarity, the concrete alternatives allow the oppressed to become aware of their own power and to work towards the construction of a new hegemony.

More globally, the construction of self-organized organs of popular power is at the heart of our strategy.

The systemic crisis of "late capitalism" dominated by transnational finance nurtures both a disgust in the face of the phenomena of the decay of the bourgeois regime and a feeling of helplessness in the face of the profound deterioration, both quantitative and qualitative, of the balance of power between classes. In this context, the question of government takes on increased importance. The seizure of political power by the working classes is a prerequisite for the implementation of a plan initiating a policy of rupture. At the same time, recent years have shown the deadly illusions of political projects which exploit popular aspirations, channel mobilizations, even stifle them in the name of realpolitik, and thus strengthen the far right.

There is no shortcut. An ecosocialist strategy of rupture involves the struggle for the formation of a popular power, fighting for a transition plan, emanating from the self-activity, control, and direct intervention of the exploited and oppressed at all levels of society. No consistent measures against exploitation, oppression, and the destruction of ecosystems can be imposed without a balance of power based on this self-organization. Self-emancipation is not only our goal; it is also a strategy for overthrowing the established order.

New institutions must be built to deliberate, to decide democratically, to organize production and the whole of society. These new powers will have to confront the capitalist state machine, which must be broken. The overthrow of the social order, the expropriation of the capitalists, will inevitably come up against the violent, armed response of the ruling classes. Faced with this violence, the exploited and the oppressed will have no choice but to defend themselves, it will be a question of democratically self-organizing legitimate violence while refusing virilism and substitutionism.

Everything depends on the outcomes of the struggles. No matter how deep the disaster, at every stage, the struggles will make the difference. Within them, everything depends on the ability of ecosocialist activists to organize in order to orient themselves in practice according to the compass of a historically necessary option. Reflecting and acting, building struggles and tools of struggle, comparing experiences and learning from them: the international implementation of this immense task requires a political tool, a new International of the exploited and oppressed. Through this Manifesto, the Fourth International expresses its readiness to help meet this challenge.

[Adopted by the World Congress February 2025](#)

Notes

1 We use the term “Global South” to describe dependent countries, dominated countries, and peripheral countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We use all these expressions to refer to the same reality. We do not include in the Global South countries like China, Russia, the oil monarchies, or substantially autonomous middle powers like India, etc., which occupy a specific place in the global capitalist system of domination and cannot be considered “dominated”.

2 Terawatt-hour (1 TWh = 1 billion kWh). This energy unit is used to measure the electricity production of a power plant (a few TWh) or a nation state. A kilowatt hour is equivalent to a steady power of one kilowatt running for one hour and is equivalent to 3.6 million joules or 3.6 megajoules.

3 This rebound effect is also known as “Jevons’ paradox”.

Leónidas Iza (Pachakutik, Ecuador): ‘Our election campaign is an extension of the people’s struggle’

In conversation with Iain Bruce, Ecuadorian Indigenous leader and presidential candidate Leónidas Iza analyses the profound economic, social and institutional crisis the country is going through, marked by the advance of neoliberal policies, state repression and the precariousness of living conditions.

Iza reflects on the impact of popular demonstrations on the

upcoming general elections, with the first round to be held on February 9, and the need to build a political project from the grassroots that defends plurinationality, the public sector and national sovereignty. He also addresses the tensions and challenges facing the Ecuadorian left, the role of the Citizen Revolution led by former president Rafael Correa, and his strategy for the elections.

Faced with a political scenario dominated by the right, the rise of drug trafficking and the fragmentation of progressive forces, the Indigenous leader reaffirmed his commitment to an alternative that does not abandon street protests, but rather integrates the electoral dispute into a broader social and political struggle to transform Ecuador.

Over the past year, Ecuador has faced a series of difficult situations – rising levels of gang violence and state repression, drought and an electricity crisis, deepening poverty and mass migration. Could you describe what the context was like at the start of this campaign, a little over a year after Daniel Noboa became president in November 2023?

Ever since the idea of a “bloated state” and excessive bureaucracy was introduced, the model imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – successively implemented by the [Lenin] Moreno, [Guillermo] Lasso and now Noboa governments – has resulted in a fragile state lacking in social policies to strengthen key sectors of the Ecuadorian economy and society. Education, health and employment have been seriously neglected, as has support for the grassroots and solidarity economy. This has led to a drastic deterioration in living conditions for ordinary Ecuadorians.

As a consequence, in the most impoverished areas, many have ended up seeing drug trafficking, organised crime or illegal activities as their only way out. For the majority of Ecuadorians, this represents a problem; but for the political and economic elites, for the oligarchies, it is an opportunity

– they have exploited this suffering to promote their usual projects.

We now find ourselves in [a painful situation](#). After [President Noboa's declaration](#) of a “state of war”, which is now a year old, these elites have managed to establish their hegemony over public consciousness and discussion. The so-called [Phoenix Plan](#) to tackle gang-related violence does not really exist and there is no real intention to put an end to crime; instead, what we are seeing is the use of this crisis as a mechanism of control.

In economic terms, the declaration of war has hit the country hard. It has scared off investment and affected strategic sectors, such as tourism, which has declined on the coast, in the highlands and the Amazon. Furthermore, due to the energy crisis, we have recorded losses of more than \$8 billion, according to estimates by concerned business groups.

On the other hand, we are experiencing serious violations of human rights. Cases such as that of the four children in Maldivas [where four Afro-Ecuadorian boys were detained by the army and later found dead] are just one example of a systematic policy. It is estimated that under the state of war, more than 20,000 young people have been prosecuted but data indicates that only between 350-500 of them had any real involvement in illegal activities. What happened to the rest? We do not know.

Added to this is a climate of structural racism. In Ecuador today, if a white or mestizo person sees someone of African descent, they assume they are a criminal. If they see an Indigenous person, they label them a terrorist and a “Quito arsonist” [in reference to the Indigenous-led uprisings of 2019 and 2022]. If they see a poor person, they stigmatise and racialise them. This is the scenario that the Ecuadorian right has been able to take advantage of, and it is one that we have to confront.

Today we face systematic violations of human rights, a state that operates with a monarchical logic, the breakdown of basic conditions for democratic coexistence, and the failure to comply with the Constitution and Code of Democracy. The four branches of government have subordinated themselves to the executive, and the latter, in turn, is subject to the conditions imposed by the IMF.

In the past year, Ecuador has agreed to a new loan of \$5.5 billion, not yet disbursed, but destined exclusively to pay previous debt. Meanwhile, the economic and political elites continue to control national politics, deepening a crisis that increasingly affects the majority of the Ecuadorian people.

Last month there was a major mobilisation in the Amazon against the construction of a super prison. Do you think this marks a reactivation of the social movement after the impact of Noboa's security policy? And, in that sense, do you think this has influenced the campaign, generating a new political climate?

Look, Ecuadorians are, by nature, a fighting people. Throughout history, all governments have tried to curb this rebelliousness and dismantle organisational processes in different ways: criminalising and persecuting leaders, inventing parallel organisations, or trying to link us to organised crime and drug trafficking. We have seen these strategies time and time again. But popular resistance is stronger, and they will never succeed in breaking it.

When we have mobilised, we have done so forcefully, as happened in 2019 and 2022. Leading up to the uprising of June 2022, there were 28 protest events; leading up to October 2019, there were 38. Currently, we have already had between 5 and 10 mobilisations, which indicates that concrete actions from different sectors are accumulating. First, there are scattered struggles, then they are articulated and, finally, they lead to social outbursts. This is a cyclical process, so

I am not worried: governments can continue trying to repress us, but sooner or later the issues come together and the struggle arises again.

What happened in the Amazon is a blow to Noboa's government. He governs arrogantly, with a monarchical vision, as if he were the landowner on a big estate. This time, he had to back down because the resistance affected him electorally. He did not suspend the construction of the prison due to concerns about life in the Amazon – for him, the region represents only 3% of the national electorate, it does not interest him – but because he feared this would impact his image in other parts of the country.

For now, the project is suspended and they have promised not to resume it. However, they have not provided any official document to confirm this. We will continue to pay close attention to what happens.

How have these protests influenced the mood of the campaign?

I think that all mobilisations force people to have to take a stand. The first thing we must understand is that the political and economic elites have managed to implant the idea that politics is something negative for popular sectors and their leaders.

They have constructed a discourse that if we participate in politics, we do so for our own individual interests, that we are “taking advantage” of mobilisations to run for office. They say, for example, “There they are again, the golden ponchos, using the struggle to get into elections.” But when they stand for election, then it is democratic, it is legitimate. Unfortunately, many people have fallen into that trap.

We, on the other hand, have been clear: without abandoning the streets, we are going to contest elections as a further extension of the struggle. We are not abandoning mobilisation,

but complementing it with electoral participation. That is why the organised rank and file who have been on the streets are now taking a stand in this election.

I will give you a concrete example: our comrades who have been defending the hills and highland moors from extractivism. Yesterday I saw a statement from them that said: "We're backing Leónidas Iza". Not because they believe that the elections are an end in themselves, but because they understand that the electoral arena is another tool for channeling the strength that they have built up in the streets.

Our struggle is not reduced to electoral politics; it is another dimension within a broader process. We fight in the streets, in national and international courts, in the drafting and reform of laws, in local governments. What we have not yet fully achieved is consolidating all these struggles under a unified project. We are on our way to doing that.

That is why I firmly believe that, in time, we will succeed in aligning the struggle towards a proposal that represents the interests of the people in this process.

And what are the main planks of your program for government?

Well, when I am asked about "my" government platform, we end up going back to the same old stories that I have been fighting against these days. "What is Leónidas Iza's government program?" No, that is to individualise politics, to make people believe that it is about personal interest. It is not my program, but the government program of the people, the program of the Indigenous peoples, the cholos, the Indians, the mestizos, the stigmatised Afro-Ecuadorians.

Our government program has not been produced from behind a desk, but out of grassroots struggle. It is the result of what we stood up for in 2019, of what we took to the streets for in 2022. And that was clear: financial relief for the people; no

mining in watersheds and fertile areas; genuine and deep implementation of plurinationality; and total rejection of privatisations.

In our government, we will strengthen the productive capacity of Ecuadorian state-owned companies and defend national production. What does this mean? That we are going to promote policies to support small farmers – those whom the state has abandoned but who were the first to take to the streets when the crisis hit. This is a government program built from the people and for the people.

One of the central issues is crime. They have led us to believe that the solution is to put more weapons and more police on the streets. No. In our government plan we have been clear: yes, there are some young people who have fallen into criminal networks and who we may not be able to rehabilitate socially, and we will have to face up to that. But crime cannot be combated with repression alone; we need a solid social policy linked to neighbourhoods, communes and territories.

We need to strengthen education and healthcare and create minimum employment conditions. Why? To prevent 12- or 13-year-olds, whose parents work in precarious conditions and cannot look after them, from being recruited by organised crime. This is the vision of the popular sectors, not of those who think that crime can be solved with a warmongering mentality, with more weapons and repression.

And what has happened? The state has been deliberately weakened, its capacity reduced under the pretext of combating its supposed “bloatedness”. But when you dismantle the state, you dismantle the basic policies that sustain any society, be it in the First, Second or Third World.

In terms of institutional framework, we are going to respect democracy. Why do we write democracy in the Constitution if

each government then interprets it as it pleases, turning us into a monarchy? No! Democracy cannot be a concept manipulated by political and economic groups as they see fit. It must be a democracy rooted in the people, not in the interests of an elite that uses it as an instrument to perpetuate its power.

Halfway through last year, in Pachakutik, in CONAIE, I believe you tried to unify or at least bring together the different left-wing currents and groups. I understand that at least a minimum agreement was reached: not to attack each other and to support whoever reaches the second round. Is that agreement, even if minimal, still in place? How do you see the current situation and what is your position towards a possible second round?

Yes, there is a general government program that some sectors accepted, assuming that it should be the basis for an agreement. However, there are central issues that many of those who call themselves progressive are still not willing to stand firm on. Issues such as mining, bilingual education, redistribution of wealth, defence of national production and the public sector continue to be points of contention.

For example, on the mining issue, some people ask: "Where are we going to get the money from?" The answer is clear: we have to collect it from those who are not paying what they should. But many sectors lack the necessary determination to face these debates. These are pending issues that remain open and which, in the event that we are an option in the second round, could serve to unify the struggle even more from the perspective of the popular sectors.

Now, why have more pragmatic and long-term agreements not been achieved? Precisely because of the history of how certain sectors have governed. They have not understood what plurinationality really means, nor have they accepted that the rights of Indigenous peoples are not a concession from the state or a favour from governments, but fundamental collective

rights.

Free, prior and informed consent, the application of Indigenous justice, bilingual intercultural education, defence of food sovereignty, of our culture and our languages ... all these issues have been left at the mercy of the political will of the government in power, without any real commitment. This historical debt has held back genuine unification through this process. These are issues that still need to be resolved in any space for debate.

Until now, the non-aggression pact has been respected. But in political and ideological terms, we must take as a reference point the structural problems that any government must overcome, regardless of who comes to power.

At the moment, there are candidates who claim to represent the left and others who present themselves as right-wing. They all try to present themselves as "new". But the real question is how much sensitivity and how much memory people have to recognise who can genuinely be a real option for Ecuador.

Sorry, Leónidas, but specifically, if you make it to the second round, you are obviously going to want the other left-wing parties to support you. Now, if the scenario were different and the final contest were between Luisa González [the presidential candidate of the Citizen Revolution movement] and Noboa, would you call for a vote for the Citizen Revolution?

At the moment, I cannot say what will happen in the second round. We are focused on building support for our option in the first round. If we start discussing hypothetical scenarios now, people might end up voting in this first round for an option they do not really agree with. That is why the responsible thing to do at the moment is not to speculate about the second round, but to consolidate our proposal and our strength at this stage.

Now, if we reach the second round, and I am sure we will be one of the options in that round, at that point we will have to assess our capacity to integrate the different sectors of Ecuador and move forward based on that scenario

First published in Spanish at [Jacobinlat](#). Translation by Iain Bruce, which was edited by [LINKS](#) International Journal of Socialist Renewal for clarity.

Why do socialists organise internationally?

[Dave Kellaway](#) examines the arguments for eco socialists to be part of a revolutionary international

‘I mean you guys have less than a thousand members in most countries and you want to build an International? Esperanto has more chance becoming an international language than you lot building an International with any relevance.’

How often have revolutionary Marxists heard this retort? Mind you the same objection is often made to attempts to building a revolutionary socialist party just in one nation. Members of Anti*Capitalist Resistance are meeting in the New Year to decide whether to fully join up to the [Fourth International](#). So what is the point of building a revolutionary International?

1. An International is the historical legacy of our movement

Marx himself set up the First International, if you read the [Communist Manifesto](#) it is written as a draft programme for an international party – the Communist League, precursor of

the International – for its Congress in 1848. Already in that year it was translated into a number of European languages. It was never a document for one nation. Given that at that time capitalism was at quite an early state of globalisation it is remarkable how far sighted Marx and Engels were. Since then capitalism has come to dominate the planet, even recapturing societies like the Soviet Union that had begun a transition to socialism to its rule. If capitalism is a global system since corporate investment and imperialism knows no borders then workers of all the world have to unite. The Manifesto ends with that slogan. It states that workers have a ‘world to win’. The chains of nationalism had to be broken.

Lenin, Trotsky and Rosa Luxembourg broke from the Second International over the capitulation of the German Social Democrats and their co-thinkers elsewhere to their own bourgeoisie’s support for the inter-imperialist First World War. At that time the revolutionary internationalist position was a very small minority. However the victory of the Russian Revolution and its impact among workers and peasants worldwide enabled Lenin and Trotsky to set up the Third International. This functioned as a revolutionary force for change with its parties having a real mass base. It did not get everything right, but if you read the documents of the [first four congresses](#) there are rich debates about revolutionary tactics and strategy that still have some relevance today.

Stalin’s rise to power in the Soviet Union and the physical repression of Trotsky, the Left Opposition and any other challenge to his rule resulted in the destruction of the democratic Third International. Thereafter Stalin set up the Comintern which was totally controlled from Moscow and defended the interests of the bureaucratic dictatorship rather than those of the international working class.

In the Spanish Civil war, for example, the Comintern’s role included dividing the anti-Franco forces. Independent revolutionary parties like the POUM were repressed. Its

leader, Andres Nin, and other fighters, were murdered by Stalin's agents. Trotsky, before his assassination by a Stalinist operative, set up the Fourth International in 1938 with the few revolutionary currents which were both anti-Stalinist, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist.

2. Ecological crises make international organisation even more relevant today

Over the last few decades we have become increasingly aware that capitalism does not just exploit the majority of people for profit but threatens all human, animal and plant life because of its never-ending need to grow and exploit the natural world. Marxists, revolutionaries and eco activists are more and more seeing themselves in practice as ecosocialists. Pollution does not recognise borders. Extractive and fossil fuel companies operate indiscriminately throughout the globe.

Such an eco-socialist international is a change from the one that Marx, Lenin, Luxembourg, Trotsky envisaged. Even the new post-1968 New Left was slow to see the importance of the ecological struggle. A new revolutionary international does not just aim for working people to own and control the means of production. We also need an ecological plan to remodel production in harmony with Mother Earth. The bureaucratic dictatorship in the former Soviet Union polluted and destroyed nature just as much as the capitalists in the west. For example industrialised cotton farming destroyed the Aral Sea.

A revolutionary international today has to interrogate traditional notions of growth and abundance put forward by our movement. So the need for a revolutionary International does not just depend on some sort of ritualistic bow to our Marxist or Leninist forebears. It has to respond to today's conditions and how they affect workers and peasants.

3. Forming internationalists

Building international parties helps to break down ingrained nationalist/imperialist reflexes that can even affect Marxist radicals who proclaim themselves internationalists. Centuries of empire, colonialism and imperialism will leave deep ideological and psychological traces, just as sexist behaviour can persist among radicals. Actively building an international party can lesson these risks.

It is interesting how the experience of some currents building internationals can replicate this ideology as the strongest section with funds that support the smaller groups becomes the motherboard of these currents. The self-designated centre essentially decides the political line at all times, intervening in its satellite groups if they go off message. Getting real input and balanced leadership that includes the global south is difficult although the extension of new technology can help.

Class struggle parties emerged to the left of reformism such as Syriza (Greece) or Podemos (Spain) in recent decades. They were not part of an international current and therefore more likely to succumb to pressures to join 'national unity' governments. Look at the *Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht* (BSW) in Germany, led by Sahra Wagenknecht, which split from Die Linke on a nationalist, anti-migrant line.

Groups and individuals who are inside revolutionary international currents can also do the same – this happened in Brazil and Sri Lanka with the Fourth International (FI) in the past. However by establishing structures and education that consciously operates to develop an internationalist culture you can try and minimise such losses.

4. Do you need a major breakthrough in one country first before building an International?

Some people on the left may accept the need for an international abstractly but say it is premature to set one

up now or to give it too much priority. Don't we have to concentrate on making an anti-capitalist breakthrough in one country which can then provide a resource and a model for revolutionaries everywhere? Look at how the victory of the Russian revolution really boosted the structures of the Third International. The period covering the first four congresses of the Third International was the only time we saw mass parties structured in an International.

Isaac Deutscher, the great biographer of Trotsky, argued it was premature to set up the Fourth International in 1938. But it is difficult to argue that it was any easier after the Second World War when Stalinist parties became stronger given the role of the Soviet Union in fighting Hitler and the CPs in the resistance movements.

Once you recognise that the revolutionary continuity is fatally broken you have to start again as Lenin did in 1914 with meagre support. The fact that some continuity through the Fourth International was maintained through to the post-1968 New Left meant that that generation was able to have access to an anti-Stalinist, revolutionary tradition going back to classical Marxism.

This argument is a bit like people saying in a national context that it is premature to set up a revolutionary organisation before there is a class struggle mass movement and a higher consciousness among masses of workers. The problem here is that you cannot leave it all to the last minute. Revolutionary crises will not provide the basis for a revolution if you have not achieved a specific weight of revolutionary cadre who can provide leadership to take the revolution forward.

How many times have we seen mass upsurges shake bourgeois states only to evaporate due to a lack of a conscious vanguard? It is also true that we should not get ahead of ourselves and have small groups proclaim that we already are

the revolutionary nucleus and people should just join us.

5. Why an International is useful for revolutionary activists

It is useful both for political discussion and for taking action that has a political impact. Revolutionary consciousness benefits from regular structured debate with others throughout the world. A functioning international provides that training, the opportunities to regularly talk and discuss. Debates documented inside the FI on women's liberation, socialist democracy and ecosocialism have often been useful for wide layers of activists. Sometimes these issues were taken up before they became more mainstream in the wider movement. Books and publications sponsored by the IIRE (International Institute for Research and Education) and International Viewpoint/Inprecor help diffuse these ideas.

International structures are not just about generating political analysis or even communiques on the issues of the moment but can help coordinate actions internationally. The FI was rebuilt partly through its solidarity with the liberation movements in Cuba, Algeria and Vietnam. Later it made huge efforts to build solidarity with Nicaragua (in its radical phase), Solidarnosc in Poland and the 1982 British miners strike to just cite a few examples. Today comrades in Italy are at the centre of solidarity with the GKN factory occupation/cooperative. We have organised international meetings to share the experiences of organising in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

An international can quickly disseminate practical information about certain struggles. Tours of comrades involved in exemplary battles can be set up in a number of countries. Another useful activity is to bring together young activists in an annual youth camp that has a different country as the venue each year. Groups or individuals from the global south can be subsidized to a degree by sections in the more advanced capitalist countries. This applies also to the international

educational schools that are run in Amsterdam with its dedicated base. These schools are open to activists who are not members of the FI.

We can benefit too from sharing articles written by comrades across the world and published in the International Viewpoint [website](#). One thing that can be very irritating is when people from Britain pontificate about events in other places without giving voice to the activists in those countries. For example some people on the left here reduce the invasion and occupation of Ukraine to an inter-imperialist conflict provoked by US pressure on Russia. Contacts with sympathisers inside Ukraine allow us to counter such simplistic analyses and restore agency to Ukrainians.

With a functioning international structure, you can build a political culture that starts from understanding the conditions and interests of workers and peasants in different countries first hand. This is particularly important given the influence of campist sentiments today on the left. For campists revolutionary action is mainly determined by the conflict between the imperialist powers. If the main and only task is to weaken US interests that the needs and interests of workers in countries on the wrong side of this divide are sacrificed. So some left wing people defended Assad as a lesser evil since the US was attacking him. Russian bombing and war crimes there were downplayed or ignored because Putin was supporting a regime that supposedly was part of an axis of resistance against the US and Israel. They see the overthrow of Assad as a massive defeat for workers.

6. An International that does not sound or look weird

Listening to Aaron Bastani on Novara media's [review of the year](#) (well worth watching) I was impressed by his final comment about the need for the left to build an anti-capitalist current that is not 'weird'. I think he is absolutely right about the need for the left to be accessible

and approachable for people outside the left bubble. This applies to our championing of the need for an International.

The first maxim must be: do not pretend to be the world party of the international proletariat, particularly do not proclaim this on your publications. Talk like that puts you in the weirdo camp.

We must accept where we are. While we say we must not put off building an International today we see ourselves as a possible component of a much bigger one. Regrouping with currents coming from within or outside the Trotskyist tradition is essential. Indeed officially the FI does not define itself as Trotskyist and there are sections that come from Maoist or other traditions.

In Britain both the Socialist Party with the CWI (Committee for a Workers International) and the SWP with the IST (International Socialist Tendency) organises with its co-thinkers internationally. Neither is as present internationally as the FI or as structured, but we do not rule out working towards a convergence with such currents.

An international has to reject any pseudo Leninist idea that some sort of centre has to determine the political line to take in each country. Each section has to determine its own strategy and tactics. It is only when a section in a country decides to cross class lines by for example joining a bourgeois government or breaking a strike that the International leadership would take action repudiating it. Just to give an example of democratic functioning today in the FI. There are nuances today on the line to take on Ukraine. While all groups call for the withdrawal of Russian troops not everybody agrees with Ukraine getting arms from Western governments. Publications of the International reflect that pluralism while making clear when positions are actually taken by international bodies.

Finally we should also keep in mind another reason for international organisation. The far right are organised internationally and they have a lot more resources than we do. Steve Bannon and others are always organising international meetings and funnelling money from their rich backers to groups around the world. Money from Putin's Russia also finds its way into the coffers of the far right. The left should organise on an international level, whether this is us as revolutionary ecosocialists or broader mass organisations like trade unions or Labour parties.

Dave Kellaway is on the Editorial Board of Anti*Capitalist Resistance, a member of Socialist Resistance, and Hackney and Stoke Newington Labour Party, a contributor to International Viewpoint and Europe Solidaire Sans Frontieres.

Originally posted as [Why do socialists organise internationally? – Anticapitalist Resistance](#) by Anti*Capitalist Resistance on 30th December 2024

Fund drive for the Congress of the Fourth International

The Fourth International is organizing its world congress in February 2025. This will be an opportunity for around 200 delegates from all over the world to meet and exchange views.

We note that the world is particularly complicated to grasp at the moment, with the multiple crises that capitalism is experiencing, combining economic, social, political and ecological crises, the rise of the far right, and so on.

Comparing the situations in different countries, as we are doing by exchanging texts and organizing discussions in all the countries before we meet for the congress, is extremely useful for better analysis and action.

To meet these challenges, we are discussing a new Manifesto for the Fourth International based on our ecosocialist orientation and outlining the world we want to build. We will also discuss the state of the world as it is around our international resolution with two specific focuses on Palestine and Ukraine, our activity in the social movements of the exexploited and oppressed where we build class struggle forces, and of course strengthening our own International.

Organizing a congress costs a lot of money, because we have to have a residential centre where the delegates are housed, a full team of interpreters and secretariat, and subsidize comrades from the Global South – from Asia, Africa, Latin America – for their transport tickets, which have become much more expensive since the covid pandemic.

If you can contribute financially, please make your transfers to

Account Name: A.F.E.S.I.

(Association pour la Formation, l'Education, la Solidarité Internationale)

IBAN: BE03 0013 9285 0884

BIC/SWIFT code: GEBABEBB

And of course, take part in the discussions in your country!

A video :

<https://fb.watch/vD3eKIZ8Gk/>

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DB6ABV0Kxyw/?utm_source=ig_web_

[copy_link](#)

<https://youtu.be/SbNvi751B6I?feature=shared>

Documents of the Fourth International

[Manifesto of Revolutionary Marxism in the Age of Capitalist Ecological and Social Destruction](#)

[International Situation; Social Movements; Role & Tasks; Minority Texts](#)

Texts submitted for discussion at the 18th World Congress of the Fourth International by the International Committee of the Fourth International

Portugal: Deadly forest fires

Seven people have died and 118 have been injured in the fires that have been raging since September 15 in the north and centre of the country. In just three days, 2024 has become the year with the fourth-largest area burned in the last decade.

Seven people have died and 118 have been injured in the fires that have been raging since September 15 in the north and centre of the country. In just three days, 2024 has become the year with the fourth-largest area burned in the last decade.

Between Sunday and late Tuesday afternoon, more than 71,000 hectares burned in Portugal, compared to 22,500 hectares previously, including the 5,000 hectares of the Madeira fires. In just three days, what was supposed to be a quiet year in terms of burned areas has become the fourth-worst year of the last decade. The figures are published by *Público* , but the newspaper warns that they are based on satellite images and therefore may be excessive. But even if we do not take into account 15 per cent of the burned area, this year's figures are only exceeded by those of 2016, 2017 and 2022.

In the north and centre of the country, the fires have spread due to weather conditions considered to be the most severe, particularly the easterly wind with strong gusts. On Wednesday, the National Emergency and Civil Protection Authority (INEM) counted five deaths and 118 injured , including ten in serious condition, stressing that the number of deaths was transmitted to it by the INEM and does not include the two civilians who died of a sudden illness. The maximum risk of fire affected 50 municipalities on Wednesday and the government decided to extend the state of alert until Thursday.

More than 100 active fires

On Wednesday morning, there were more than 100 active fires, with restarts and wind changes during the night, which made the situation in Águeda “uncontrollable” and approached urban centres. The firefighters who fought the Albergaria a-Velha fire , which has entered the resolution phase, are also fighting these fires. During the night, the Castro Daire fire progressed towards Arouca , reaching the Paiva footbridges and confining several villages, after people with reduced mobility had been evacuated. In Covilhã, the night was spent fighting a fire in a pine forest area in Gibraltar that had escaped the Serra da Estrela fire two years ago.

Very complicated traffic

Several fires are also raging in the Porto district and some villages have evacuated their inhabitants . In Mangualde and São Pedro do Sul, it is reported that homes and businesses have been destroyed by fire. By late morning, Civil Protection reported 142 fires, 58 of which were in the final stages, with more than 5,500 agents on the ground, accompanied by 1,700 land resources and 37 air resources.

At the same time, the government reported that rail traffic on the Douro line between Marco de Canaveses and Régua and on the Vouga line had been interrupted, with several trains suspended. The A43 motorway between Gondomar and the A41 and the A41 between Medas and Aguiar de Sousa were also closed on Wednesday morning, as was the A25 between Albergaria and Reigoso (Viseu), as well as several national roads.

Bloco de Esquerda

Monday 27th September 2024

Republished from International Viewpoint:
<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article8682>

Bloco de Esquerda is a radical left political party in Portugal formed in 2000 as a coalition of the formerly Maoist UDP; Política XXI, a current that had left the Communist Party; and the PSR, Portuguese section of the Fourth International. Today it is a recognised political party with elected representatives in the national and European parliaments.

**On-Line Event: Ecosocialism
or Extinction? An
Introduction to Ecosocialism**