

Building a global movement against genocide in Palestine

A global movement of solidarity has emerged in response to the barbarity of the new genocide against the Palestinian people. Despite intense repression, this movement is bringing together millions across the world.

For 77 years, imperialists have been trying to destroy and drive out the Palestinian people, exploiting the horrific genocide of the Jews in World War II to justify dispossession, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. Since October 2023, Israel has been trying to destroy Palestinian life in Gaza, to replicate the Nakba of 1948, committing itself in turn to a genocide without parallel in the 21st century. Meanwhile, settlers are stepping up their attacks in the West Bank, Palestinians inside the green line face greater discrimination than before and Israel has carried out military attacks against Lebanon, Syria, and Iran.

The direct participation or deep complicity of most of the Western imperialist powers is now clear, as is that of the Arab countries that are “normalizing” their relations with the genocidal state, while in many other countries, the ruling classes make polite criticisms but distance themselves from any real resistance. All this in the name of a sickening “right of Israel to defend itself,” which attempts to portray the aggressor as the victim and vice versa.

Resistance in the face of repression

Fortunately, in much of the world, millions have mobilized to demand an end to the massacres, the blockade of Gaza, and sanctions against Israel. They have faced ruthless repression, including bans, imprisonment, police and judicial attacks, and false accusations of antisemitism.

The March for Gaza and the Soumud Convoy attempted to break the blockade of Gaza and bring aid to the Palestinians. The repression they were met with in Egypt and Libya showed the appalling complicity of those regimes. Thousands were beaten, intimidated, arrested, and sent back to their countries of origin, with little response from their governments.

The Freedom Flotillas, carrying world-renowned personalities, also attempted, more symbolically, to break the blockade. It succeeded in further highlighting the Zionist state's total contempt for international law, its contempt for truth and any limit to its jurisdiction, symbolizing its unlimited colonialism.

In a number of countries, it is simply forbidden to express solidarity and assert demands, like in Algeria, where the government claims to support Palestine but prevents solidarity from being expressed.

In the United States and elsewhere, protests and occupations have been banned or attacked violently by the state. University teachers have been sacked for supporting the movement. Students and people of colour, especially anyone from the Middle East, have been particular targets of repression.

Criminalization of solidarity organizations is another key tactic. The British government declared the direct action movement Palestine Action to be a terrorist organization, support for which is a criminal offence – lawyers, vicars and other notables were all arrested at an immediate protest action. The French state has been threatening to dissolve Urgence Palestine since April but has not yet done so perhaps because of a major international campaign of objections.

In Germany, tens of thousands of people who have mobilized are facing relentless repression. False accusations of antisemitism are being used to ban demonstrations, shut down

media outlets, and discredit the entire movement. While the weaponisation of antisemitism is a particular problem in Germany, it is used against the movement everywhere – including against Jewish organizations asserting “Not in our name”.

In the state of Israel, even if a large majority of the Jewish population supports the action of the army, there is a reaction against the war crimes committed to the Palestinians, the actions of the settlers in the West Bank and the policy led by the far-right government of Netanyahu, in particular the criminal will to expel the population of Gaza.

Hypocrisy is rife as governments attack and criminalize all demonstrations of support and solidarity for the Palestinian resistance of whatever limited form – such as chants at a music festival – yet refuse to condemn and take sanctions against Israel.

But it is, of course, in Palestine that repression is most intense. In the West Bank, attacks have intensified in recent months, with daily attacks by settlers against Palestinians and the destruction of homes. It has also emerged that Israel has armed and financially supported Palestinian gangs and jihadist groups in order to undermine the resistance in Gaza from within.

The massacres in Gaza continue; in one month, more than 600 Palestinians were killed while waiting for food aid. Food distribution points are death traps. Several studies now suggest that hundreds of thousands of Gazans have died in the last two years.

Palestinian resistance is a key to the global situation

The Palestinian people are resisting the second Nakba and their expulsion from their territory with the means at their

disposal. So far, despite famine, terrible living conditions, and murderous attacks, they are standing their ground, refusing to disappear, and defending themselves.

The international solidarity movement has helped to expose the reality and scale of the genocide. It has mobilized millions, and the boycott divestment and sanctions campaign together with mass mobilizations can isolate this criminal regime as has happened before, for example for apartheid South Africa

This movement will not stop.

The fate of the Palestinian people is intimately linked to that of all oppressed peoples and the fight against global imperialist ambitions. We are living in a period of growing inter-imperialist contradictions but one which has limits too. Russia for example did not back Iran when Israel launched military attacks against it. The Israeli and US attacks on Lebanon, Syria, and Iran, and the complicity of Arab states point to the fact that the imperialist powers, led by the US, want to strengthen their domination over every inch of the globe in a period of intense economic and ecological crisis. And the Middle East remains one of the – if not the central – strategic battlefield.

Preventing the continuation of colonization in Palestine, pushing back Israel and the United States, and liberating Palestine from imperialism are key points in the global shift in the balance of power that we must build to change the world. Therefore, the Fourth International calls for redoubled efforts to build a global movement against genocide and for the liberation of Palestine, through mass and workers' action in particular. We will work to ensure that, on the occasion of 7 October 2025, broad mobilizations contribute to changing the balance of forces.

Free Palestine, Palestine will free us all!

From Ukraine to Palestine occupation is a crime!

13 July 2025

Trump's first six months: A threat to our planet and its peoples

The election of Trump represents the coming to power of a neofascist leadership in the main imperialist country of the world, who is actively fuelling the genocide of the Palestinian people. This represents a further shift to the right in the international balance of forces, and strengthens the Orbans, Modis, Melonis, Bolsanaros and others.

Since assuming office on January 19, 2025, after winning a close election with a plurality of the popular vote, the Trump presidency has pursued a deeply reactionary agenda, threatening democratic rights in the US and aggression for the rest of the world. Trump also represents a particularly virulent threat to the US working class and oppressed communities throughout the world. One of his main fronts is his attacks on LGBTIQ*, particularly trans people, which is in line with large parts of the international far right including Putin. This is part of Trump's general reactionary social agenda with vicious attacks on racialized minorities, women's reproductive rights, migrants, climate change denial, hostility to democratic rights, readiness to use violence, a contempt for democratic processes and checks and balances, and a drive for total power.

The generalization of trade tariffs is an ideological

obsession of Donald Trump, and this announcement was a show of imperial force from the first days of his mandate. But fears of internal economic impacts and announced retaliations, notably from the BRICS, made Washington step back and contributed to the crisis of hegemony of US imperialism. The 50% tax on Brazil's imports in US, with openly political purposes "punishes" the Brazilian government to pave the way for Bolsonaro and others coup plotters to escape lawsuits. Contradictorily, the measure opened a new and positive political moment in the country.

His drive for total power aided and abetted by the Republican party and a section of the US judiciary makes him a would-be authoritarian and neo-fascist, and strengthens the hands of the far right worldwide. While opposition has not been banned and democratic rights not completely eliminated -indicators of neo-fascism- the tendency in that direction is clear.

The US has long been the biggest abuser of fossil fuels. Under Trump the US has left the ineffectual COP international climate change association, has given the green light to oil companies to increase fossil fuel extraction and use, and US regulatory documents have been scrubbed of all reference to climate change.

The Trump administration has launched a particularly cruel police-military campaign of persecution and deportation against millions of migrants, mostly Latin Americans and South Asians. With its cynical rhetoric equating all immigrant workers with criminals, it has turned El Salvador into a Guantánamo for hire. This campaign emboldens the most reactionary white supremacist forces.

Trump's attacks against elite US universities cynically accuse them of antisemitism for insufficiently cracking down on pro-Palestinian protests. This repression has chilled the Palestine Solidarity movement and the rights of free speech. The labelling of pro-Palestinian demonstrations as antisemitic

serves to cover up the real antisemitism nourished by Trump's racist speech and policy.

Trump and his allies recently passed a reactionary budget giving enormous tax benefits to the ultra rich paid directly by cuts to Medicaid, a program of government health insurance used by seventy-one million people, and food stamps for the poorest.

Trump's open threats to annex the Panama canal, Canada, and Greenland represent a return to naked nineteenth century imperialism. On Ukraine, Trump is seeking a predatory deal with Putin (with whom he shares many far-right ideological ideas) to share out areas of influence at the expense of the people who are the victims of the Russian state's colonial war.

After the political shock in the European powers faced with the disengagement rhetoric from Trump on NATO, this alliance recovered its historical place – the scenario of European subordination – when Trump used it to show European obedience to US orders for the increase of arms expenditure.

While the America First policy guides Trump's bellicosity to its allies, the recent attack on Iran reminds us that the US will not hesitate to use military force where its interests are threatened.

Trump continues Biden's and all US presidents' military and political support for Israel. His threat to empty the Gaza strip of its inhabitants and turn the area into a luxury resort would be a crime of world historic importance.

The Democratic party has shown itself to be totally ineffective in opposing Trump. This is mostly because the Democratic party serves the same 1% as the Republicans.

The huge and enthusiastic rallies of AOC and Bernie Sanders reflect the depth of anti-Trump sentiment. The recent victory

of Mamdani in the New York City Democratic Party primary also represents a challenge to the Democratic Party establishment and his progressive social agenda shows the potential to elect progressive and anti-capitalist public officials A mass anti-Trump movement in the streets has arisen over the last few months. Millions have participated in thousands of anti-Trump demonstrations in thousands of cities and towns across the country. Immigrant workers have been at the forefront of this resistance. These demonstrations encourage those resisting far-right governments around the world.

The Bureau of the Fourth International solidarizes with the growing anti-Trump movement.

Down with the Trump regime!

Down with all US threats to other countries and peoples!

Hail the heroic protests in Los Angeles!

Stop US fossil fuel expansion!

Stop the war on migrants!

Self-determination for Ukraine!

Stop US support for the Israeli genocide in Gaza!

Executive Bureau of the Fourth International

13 July 2025

Progressing by Grassroot Networks – An Interview with Catherine Samary

Before we turn to the discussion of the war in Ukraine and prospects for left internationalism, let's talk about the recent developments in your home country. How do you analyse the current political situation in France and the role that left-wing politics might play in it?

– Michel Barnier's new government combines two core elements: racism and attacks on social rights. The latter is evident in the ongoing parliamentary debates over the 2025 budget and social security funding. Marine Le Pen's National Rally (Rassemblement National) has played a key role in these discussions, not least due to the fact that no single party has managed to achieve a stable majority in the French parliament. Even though the result of the New Popular Front (Nouveau Front Populaire) in the recent legislative election, which followed the dissolution of the Assembly last June, was unexpectedly high – and most welcome – it is still only a minor and relative victory.

This situation is unlikely to change unless the various forces within the New Popular Front come together, consolidate their victory, and start a large-scale mobilization. This could be achieved through the creation of local political alliances across the entire country that would be focused on concrete struggles. We should not forget that mass mobilizations against attacks on the social system are still possible – and so is the collapse of the government itself.

Against all evidence, the government wants people to believe that it has not introduced an "austerity budget" plan, but rather "a budget [plan] to avoid austerity" – at least, this

is what the Minister of Finance Antoine Armand [declared](#) on the 21st of October. National Assembly deputies have proposed over 3,500 amendments to this plan! And yet, disagreements between different political alliances in the parliament are obvious. At the moment, no single one of them has a stable majority – these political struggles are indicative of what awaits us during the 2027 presidential election. In the current situation, there is a strong chance that the government will once again resort to Article 49.3 of the Constitution to pass the budget without a parliamentary vote. Previously, this procedure enabled the French government under Élisabeth Borne to push through the pension reform bill. However, the decision to use it now would pose a risk of early collapse for the government both due to internal divisions among the ruling classes and the general unpopularity of these measures.

And what better way is there to “divide and rule” than by designating a scapegoat – immigrants? Valérie Pécresse, who has held numerous high-level positions for different right-wing political organizations, has become an emblem of the vile demagoguery that drives much of today’s right-wing factions. On the 14th of October, she had the audacity to declare: “How do you plan to explain to the French that you are going to ask for more sacrifices from them, to pay more taxes, to benefit from fewer and fewer public services, while allowing immigration-related expenses to keep rising?” She added: “When we are too generous, we end up attracting people we do not want to welcome.” Minister of the Interior Bruno Retailleau [shares](#) the same philosophy – his immigration bill is directly inspired by the National Rally’s ideas. It is the duty of the left today to take a strong stance on this front as well and to stand firmly against all forms of racism.

– During the elections this year some of the international issues – in particular, those related to the wars in Ukraine and Palestine – were included in the programmes of all political parties. Would you say that international issues are

politically divisive in France? Are they an important electoral factor in national political life?

– I would answer “yes” to the first question, but for the second question I am inclined to say “no.” Political divisions on international issues have never played a central role in the electoral campaign or had any impact on its outcome. As I mentioned earlier, domestic issues have overwhelmingly dominated the political scene, especially in the wake of the crisis triggered by Emmanuel Macron’s decision to call early elections. His choice to appoint Michel Barnier as Prime Minister in September – instead of [Lucie Castets](#), the candidate proposed by the New Popular Front, which came first in the legislative elections – highlighted the focus on domestic issues even more prominently. Macron’s choice had little to do with international matters: it was strictly about pushing forward his social agenda.

It is also worth noting that parliamentary decisions about the sums allocated to Ukraine were made back in March and did not generate much controversy during the elections. That being said, a lot of things regarding France’s foreign policy are up for debate. The country’s contributions to European and global aid packages to Ukraine are minimal. The current military budget is more allocated towards nuclear programs, furthering neocolonial interests in Africa (the “Françafrique” policy), and military support for Israel, rather than towards Ukraine. [1] The lack of real debate on these issues does not imply that they are of secondary importance; rather, it reflects the poor state of parliamentary “democracy” and the limited transparency around France’s foreign policy.

– And internally, within political organizations?

– I am not the best person to give a detailed answer here, as I don’t closely follow the inner workings of every party across the spectrum. However, what I can say at the very least is that their “political life” lacks democratic transparency.

Most of the time, the only thing we see are public “positions” taken by party leaders – and these sometimes shift in noticeable, even awkward ways.

This happened with the right-wing approach to the war in Ukraine. After the invasion, which was widely recognized as an act of aggression, Marine Le Pen, as a representative of the National Rally, had to readjust her public position to distance herself from Vladimir Putin. Macron had to do the same, although this shift did not result from internal debates among his supporters or within his party Renaissance (RE). The same goes for his recent, cautious criticism of Israel’s politics in Gaza and his call to recognize the rights of the Palestinians. Yet, overall, there is a consensus among the right on demonizing so-called “Islamism” as a tactic to discredit any form of support for Palestine.

As for the left-wing parties – from the communists and socialists to La France Insoumise (FI) – there are, of course, political disagreements on various international issues, including ongoing military conflicts, both between the parties and within them. Some people on the radical left, in France and abroad, frame the Russo-Ukrainian war as a clash between NATO (the United States, essentially) and Russia – thus overlooking Ukraine itself. They see it through the “main enemy” lens and reduce the equation to a single “imperialist enemy” – in particular, the United States and NATO. As Gilbert Achcar puts it, this view might eventually come down to the following conclusion: “The enemy of my (main) enemy is my friend.” This explains Jean-Luc Mélenchon’s (leader of La France Insoumise) once somewhat sympathetic stance toward Putin compared, for instance, to Raphaël Glucksmann’s active campaign against Kremlin’s politics in his role as a socialist deputy in the European Parliament.

Given this range of political sentiments and positions within the parties composing the New Popular Front, it was reassuring to see straightforward, positive statements on foreign policy

in their last program. They have taken a firm stance on “promoting peace in Ukraine,” specifically by “unwaveringly defending Ukraine’s sovereignty” through arms deliveries and asset seizures from Russian oligarchs. As far as Gaza is concerned, the New Popular Front has called for “an immediate ceasefire” and a “just and lasting peace,” condemning the “complicit support” of the French government for Benjamin Netanyahu’s policies. The program demands effective sanctions against Israel, along with official recognition of the state of Palestine in line with the United Nations resolutions. However, while these positions are important and encouraging, we have not seen much of a real political “battle” in the parliament or during the elections to make these statements more concrete.

– What do you think about the political situation in France in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022? What discussions took place within your organization, the New Anticapitalist Party?

– The invasion was certainly a major political shock that raised serious questions across all political organizations. As the war continued, these questions have only deepened, and no clear consensus has emerged. Many pre-war conceptions continue to be actively debated – though, unfortunately, many of these views have not been updated. Even the basic condemnation of the Russian aggression has not led to the development of a unified position and approach across the political spectrum, especially regarding NATO or the European Union’s planned expansions to Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and the Western Balkans.

Before the invasion, Macron (much like Putin!) had considered NATO a “brain-dead” organization. His conclusion was based on NATO’s withdrawal from Afghanistan as well as internal disagreements among member countries regarding Russia and its energy resources. Ironically, the war has led to NATO’s expansion, harsher sanctions against Russia, and the

legitimization of increased military budgets. At the same time, support for Ukraine has been hypocritically instrumentalized. As I said, a large share of the military budget in France (and in the United States, for that matter) is not actually directed toward Ukraine. There is also significant uncertainty around the United States' concrete international commitments, which Macron sees as an opportunity to promote France's arms industry in Europe and beyond. However, all this is not up for debate among the right.

On the left, including the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA), there has been limited debate around what Achcar calls the "New Cold War," even though it is a necessary discussion. The prevailing logic within the NPA has been the following: even without a clear understanding of the rapidly changing world around us, without understanding the connections between various crises, and lacking viable socialist, anti-capitalist alternatives at national, European, and global levels, we can still fight for grassroots internationalism grounded in the defense of universal equal rights. Echoing our comrades from Sotsialnyi Rukh (Social Movement) in Ukraine, we declared: "From Ukraine to Palestine, occupation is a crime!" We viewed and condemned the war in Ukraine as an aggression by Putin's Russia against Ukraine's very right to exist. We stand with our comrades from political organizations and labor unions in Russia and Ukraine, while maintaining independence from "our national governments" and disapproving of their neoliberal practices. We oppose Russian imperialism, shaped – among other things – by czarist and Stalinist legacies, while affirming our stance against "all imperialisms." We have also called for Ukraine's debt to be canceled and, alongside our Ukrainian comrades, we have condemned any attempt by Western powers or the Zelensky government to exploit Ukrainian resistance against the Russian aggression as a pretext for imposing anti-social policies.

Practically, the NPA has supported Ukraine's resistance, both

armed and unarmed. We have recognized its legitimate right to request weapons (from those who manufacture them) for self-defense. Since March 2022, we have been involved in the European Network in Solidarity with Ukraine and Against the War (ENSU), where we remain active both at the European level and through its French branch, working alongside progressive Ukrainian groups.

This does not mean there has been no debate or disagreement. While all of us agree on Ukraine's right to request weapons for self-defense, several questions and dissensions emerged immediately: Is it politically justifiable for an anti-capitalist organization like ours to request arms from "our own bourgeoisie" and for a bourgeois government? Is it practically possible to call for military aid while also opposing militarism and military alliances like NATO?

Personally, I answered "yes" to both questions, as did the majority of the NPA members. Alongside other comrades, I represent the NPA within ENSU and work directly with leftist, feminist, and student groups in Ukraine engaged in multiple struggles. But this activism requires us to differentiate our position from both "militarist" attitudes and "abstract pacifism." This is achievable by "politicizing" the arms debate, which entails nationalizing the arms industry so that military budgets and the use of weapons become an object of political debate.

To summarize: "yes" to arms delivery to Ukraine in solidarity; "no" to sales to dictatorships and oppressive regimes like Israel! ENSU recently discussed and adopted a statement on this issue, which will soon be available on its website.

– And what about Emmanuel Macron's statements regarding the potential deployment of French troops in Ukraine?

– Macron himself admitted there was "no consensus" – and that is an understatement – on this idea. His suggestion was met

with criticism, with many seeing it as dangerously escalatory, if not reckless. Still, Macron maintained that “in the face of a regime that excludes nothing, we must exclude nothing ourselves.” However, critics pointed out the discrepancy between Macron’s “commitment” to helping Ukraine and the limited aid that France has actually provided so far. They also highlighted the difference between “deploying troops,” which implies co-belligerency, and sending military personnel and technicians for support tasks, like managing foreign-supplied military equipment. Macron’s other semantic improvisations were heavily criticized as well, for example his statement that France and the European Union were entering a “war economy.” This notion doesn’t match reality, as current production systems haven’t undergone any such transformation.

As I mentioned earlier, another crucial issue is the need to politicize and increase transparency around military budgets. This requires analyzing what the military industry is really producing and sending to Ukraine, alongside the financial and material aid needed to support Ukraine’s actual “war economy.” If Ukraine’s economy remains state-run and dependent on Western aid tied to neoliberal conditions, it is bound to fail. This is why I support the “internal” strategy of the Ukrainian leftist organization Sotsialnyi Rukh, which criticizes the current trajectory of Zelensky’s government and instead prioritizes the popular and democratic resources of independent Ukraine itself.

– How have people reacted to Vladimir Putin’s repeated nuclear threats?

– Reactions have been mixed and have changed over time. Putin clearly knows that he is spreading fear this is exactly what he wants – and we cannot exclude the risk of a catastrophe. However, it is hard to imagine what “effective” use of nuclear weapons could look like from Putin’s perspective. So far, each of his “red lines” has shifted back in response to the Ukrainian military operations, including those on Russian

territories, without triggering the nuclear retaliation he promised. Another reassuring factor has been China's explicit veto against any use of nuclear weapons by its Russian ally.

Still, some "pacifists" continue to instrumentalize the fear of nuclear escalation as an argument against sending more weapons to Ukraine to avoid further "provoking" Putin!

– Are there ongoing discussions and debates in activist circles about France's nuclear deterrent and its possible strategic uses?

– No, these debates are not – yet – taking place among activists, who are not necessarily in a position to have such discussions. There is justified political distrust toward our government, especially given France's post- and neo-colonial history. Both this distrust and our necessary independence from the government make it hard to imagine how a radical, anti-capitalist organization like ours would ask Macron to use "his bomb" in the name of vaguely defined common interests. Journalists have questioned Macron about the French nuclear deterrent in a context of growing uncertainties surrounding the United States' commitments: while he has not "ruled out" a form of European "mutualization" of France's nuclear arsenal, he has insisted that command would remain under French control.

However, current discussions about "security" should extend far beyond nuclear deterrence. For instance: How should the military and police forces evolve? How can we exercise civilian, democratic control over their actions? The growing influence of far-right ideas within the French police force is particularly alarming. Likewise, the European left urgently needs to consider what a progressive, "alter-globalist" approach to "European defense" might look like. The ongoing crisis in global and European social forums has caused significant delay in this area, but there are efforts underway to revive a "European alternative public sphere." This

movement is essential, and we must support it to address these multidimensional “security” issues. I am a participant of a newly formed working group in France comprising left-wing “alter-globalist” activists working on these questions and committed to defending equal social and political rights – both individual, collective, and across national borders.

– Security issues do not solely concern international relations: the ultra-right, for instance, resort to threats, “attacks on the Arabs,” and even murders. What options does the left have to counter the rise of the far-right, which is one of this decade’s most serious challenges?

– Here too, it is crucial to examine how such factors as state structures of “legal violence,” the justice system, and the rise of fascist private militias interact in each country. Much depends on who is in power and the nature of current social struggles. Historically – and likely in the future – the key factor has been the ability of mass organizations, involving both men and women, to self-organize and unite in self-defense while conducting information and denunciation campaigns in the media. This topic is a central point of discussion within the “European alternative political space” that is currently being (re)built.

– What does it mean for the contemporary left to engage in international politics?

– Environmental threats are just as serious as attacks on social rights, with the poor being the most affected. The “contemporary left” is diverse and currently grappling with issues that weaken its capacity to respond to urgent problems. These issues stem from a series of crises: the crisis of countries that once pursued a socialist project – if not a reality – and those who identified with it, be that in Europe, China, or Cuba; the crisis of social-democratic movements, which have largely given up on transforming capitalist societies; and the crisis within the radical left, which often

struggles, for diverse reasons, to offer viable alternatives to the system it criticizes and sometimes indulges in dogmatic, sectarian “vanguard” positions.

These widespread crises have also impacted the global and continental social forums working to invent new transnational modes of operation and action in a rapidly changing world-system. All these difficulties have led to significant political concessions and, at times, acceptance of a “lesser evil” logic. However, valuable assets persist across all the leftist currents I mentioned and beyond. From the radical left to the new social, feminist, eco-socialist, and antiracist movements, there is a wealth of accumulated experience and past struggles. While criticizing “vanguardism” is important when it attempts to substitute itself for social movements, it is equally important to reinforce pluralistic, democratic, international cooperation among anti-capitalist groups. These connections are currently limited, but they are vital for achieving a broad, pluralistic understanding of past challenges and mistakes we made.

It is crucial to progress forward by building strong grassroots international networks that focus on concrete issues. The European Network in Solidarity with Ukraine and the [BDS \(Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions\)](#) campaign in support of the Palestinian cause demonstrate that this is possible. Likewise, we need campaigns that address feminist, anti-racist, social justice, and environmental issues, which are essential to reestablishing a multi-issue, alternative space for rethinking globalization. This vision is taking shape in Europe, and while there is no magic solution, it is clear that failing to move in this direction will only leave us vulnerable to the rising threat of the far-right.

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Source: [Posle Media](#).

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Strategic Reflections on the Escalation of Israeli Intimidation in Lebanon

Not even an hour had passed after I wrote my article of a week ago (“Lebanon and the Israeli Strategy of Intimidation”, 17/9/2024) when the Israeli intelligence agencies launched a mass terror operation in Lebanon by blowing up individual communication devices in two successive waves over two days, killing more than 40 people and wounding more than 3,500. These two waves of mass terrorism were followed by an escalation in the exchange of shells across the border, between Hezbollah and the Israeli Aggression Forces (aka IDF), prelude to the intense violent bombardment that poured down on Monday on southern Lebanon and other areas where Hezbollah is present, killing nearly 500 people and wounding more than 1,600. The bombardment is still ongoing as these lines are written.

The question that imposed itself on everyone, starting with those targeted in Lebanon, is whether this sudden escalation in what we called the “Israeli strategy of intimidation” is paving the way for a full-scale aggression against Lebanon that would include indiscriminate heavy bombing of all areas where Hezbollah is present, including the densely populated

southern suburb of Beirut, with the aim of making it “look like Gaza” in the words of one of Benjamin Netanyahu’s close associates. It is indeed feared that the Zionist state will carry out a brutal aggression on parts of Lebanon, similar to the aggression that targeted the entire Gaza Strip, in line with what one of the overseers of the Israeli aggression on Lebanon in 2006 called the “Dahiya doctrine” (a reference to the southern suburb of Beirut, the Arabic word *dahiya* meaning “suburb”). This doctrine aims at achieving deterrence against anyone who has the intention of confronting Israel, by threatening to inflict a high level of violence on areas inhabited by the civilian population to which those who nurture that intention belong, like what happened to the southern suburb of Beirut in 2006, which is the main area where Hezbollah’s popular base is concentrated.

It is a fact that the 2006 aggression that followed an operation carried out by Hezbollah fighters across the southern Lebanese border against Israeli soldiers, killing eight of them and capturing two, had a deterrent effect, which was acknowledged by the Hezbollah’s Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah in declaring his regret, when he famously said on television in the aftermath of that war: “If I had known for one percent that this abduction operation would lead to a war of this magnitude, we certainly would not have done it for humanitarian, moral, military, social, security and political reasons.”

What the Western media, which are quick to condemn war crimes when they are committed by the West’s enemies, such as the Russian regime in Ukraine, do not say, is that the “Dahiya doctrine” is not an instance of military genius and a doctrine worthy of being taught in the military colleges of civilized countries, but rather a blatant violation of the laws of war, which consist in the practice of war crimes on a large scale, up to a genocidal level in Gaza, through an explicit intent to target civilians in order to deter combatants. It is, in other

words, a terrorist strategy formulated by a terrorist state par excellence, which constitutes a stark confirmation that state terrorism is much more dangerous than the terrorism of non-state groups, as it applies the same logic, i.e. the killing of civilians for a political purpose, but with immeasurably greater potential for lethality and destruction.

Hezbollah learned two lessons from the 33-Day War in 2006. The first translates in that it has since then taken into account what it sees as a red line that, if crossed, would give the Zionist state a new pretext to attack Lebanese civilians. In order to ward off its popular base in the first place, Hezbollah did not carry out any bold operation like the one that sparked the 2006 war – or the one carried out by Hamas about a year ago, igniting the war to destroy Gaza and exterminate its people. The second lesson led Hezbollah to acquire a huge arsenal of missiles that established a counter-deterrent by threatening civilian areas inside the Zionist state, thus achieving what is called in the vocabulary of nuclear deterrence a “balance of terror”.

This equation is what explains Hezbollah’s initiative of starting a limited war of attrition with the Zionist state the day after Operation “Al-Aqsa Flood”, in response to Hamas’s call for it to join what it had initiated. That call came in a message from the military leader of the Islamic movement in the Gaza Strip, Muhammad al-Deif, broadcast at the start of the operation: “Oh our brothers in the Islamic resistance, in Lebanon, Iran, Yemen, Iraq and Syria, this is the day when your resistance will merge with your people in Palestine so that this terrible occupier will understand that the time in which it rampages and assassinates scholars and leaders has ended. The time of plundering your wealth has ended. The almost daily bombing in Syria and Iraq has ended. The time of dividing the nation and scattering its forces in internal conflicts has ended. The time has come for all Arab and Islamic forces to unite to sweep this occupation from our holy

sites and our land.”

However, Hezbollah was smarter than to be overcome by euphoria to the point of believing that the day of victory over Israel and liberation of Palestine had come. It decided therefore to enter the battle as a supporter rather than a full participant, a decision that translated into the limited war of attrition. The party wanted to express its solidarity with the people of Gaza, but without exposing its popular base to a fate similar to that of the residents of the Strip. However, this calculation is now backfiring on Hezbollah, as the Zionist aggression army, having finished its intensive large-scale operations in Gaza, is now focusing on its northern front, launching what we called the “strategy of intimidation”, which is a gradual escalation in attacks with a threat to shift to implementing the “Dahiya doctrine”.

This Israeli behaviour demonstrates the effectiveness of Hezbollah’s counter-deterrence, as the Zionist government is forced to be cautious about igniting a full-scale war that it knows will be costly to Israeli society, even if the cost to Hezbollah’s base will be much higher given the great superiority of Israeli military capabilities. The Zionist government hence resorted first to escalation through “asymmetric warfare”, a term that usually describes the actions of an irregular force against a regular army. Here, it is the Zionist state that is dealing a devious and painful blow to Hezbollah and its civilian milieu by blowing up communications devices. This was followed by an escalation of conventional war that began on Monday, constituting a dangerous escalation of pressure on Hezbollah to force it to surrender and accept the conditions set by Washington with the approval of the Zionist government, the most important of which is the withdrawal of the party’s forces to north of the Litani River.

Confronted with this escalating pressure, the party finds itself trapped in mutual, but unequal, deterrence. It does not

possess the capabilities of waging “asymmetric warfare” deep inside Israel and cannot strike there in a way that would cause hundreds of deaths, like what the Zionist army inflicted on Lebanon on Monday, for fear that the response would be overwhelming, knowing that Israel is fully capable of responding at a much higher level. The Zionist government is wholly aware of the conditions of the equation. While it wishes to dismantle Hezbollah’s deterrent capacity, it cannot initiate a comprehensive war without ensuring full US participation in it, similar to Washington’s participation in the war on Gaza during several months, the most deadly and destructive months, to the point of countering all calls for a ceasefire. The Zionist government needs such full US complicity in the event of launching a full-scale aggression on Lebanon, the political conditions of which have not yet been met. It is working to achieve them, however, and may well issue a warning with a limited deadline to Hezbollah for that purpose, as we mentioned a week ago.

From all of this, it appears that Netanyahu has begun to fear that his friend Donald Trump might well fail in the upcoming US presidential elections in about a month and a half. It seems that he therefore decided to escalate matters, taking advantage of the last months of presence of his other friend, the “proud Irish-American Zionist” Joe Biden, in the White House. The question now is: will Biden pressure Netanyahu firmly enough to prevent a war that is likely to negatively affect the campaign of his party’s candidate, Kamala Harris, or will he once again go along with his friend’s criminal endeavour, even if accompanied by an expression of regret and resentment meant to deflect the blame in his and his Secretary of State Blinken’s usual hypocritical way?

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