

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

Stop Israel Now! Executive Bureau of the Fourth International, 13 June 2025

Israel's unprecedented attack on Iran is a direct result of the impunity it has enjoyed while carrying out a live-streamed genocide in Palestine over the past 20 months. Under the false pretext of "self-defense," Israel has escalated its long-

standing policy of Palestinian erasure into full-scale genocide. Now, it extends that aggression by bombing Iran, claiming to defend itself from a hypothetical nuclear threat—despite not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and remaining unaccountable for its own nuclear arsenal.

This impunity is made possible by the United States and other governments that continue to arm Israel—supplying weapons, funding, and political cover as it carries out mass atrocities across the region. The U.S. has emphasized that Israel acted unilaterally in its strike on Iran and has denied any involvement while being the primary supplier of the weapons used in this attack. Alongside other governments that arm and shield Israel, the U.S. is complicit in enabling Israel's expanding aggression across the region. They are all partners in atrocity.

This belligerence has not only claimed civilian lives, but it also threatens the long and courageous struggle of the Iranian people against a repressive regime, of which the latest high point was the movement "Woman, Life, Freedom". History shows clearly: there is no path to democracy under the shadow of war.

We stand firmly with the people of Iran—both in their ongoing resistance to dictatorship and in their right to live free from foreign military aggression. We denounce Israel's attack on Iran and demand international pressure to stop its reckless regional escalation now.

We urgently demand:

Hands off Iran!

An immediate end to regional escalation!

Solidarity with political prisoners and human rights defenders in Iran, and vigilance against further repression by the regime.

As we have done for months, we continue to demand:

Sanctions on Israel now!

An immediate end to all arms trade with Israel!

Global mobilization to stop the genocide in Palestine!

**Statement by the Executive Bureau of the Fourth International,
13 June 2025**

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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 demagogy. 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 21th 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

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Put an end to Macron and the

Fifth Republic!

After the vote of no confidence, let's finish with Macron and the 5th Republic!

The result was clear: 331 votes in favour of the no confidence motion. The Barnier government resigned and the austerity budget law fell. This illegitimate government, a symbol of Macron's decomposition of the Macron presidency, had no future. The promise of ever more austerity and authoritarianism has been rejected by the vast majority of the population.

The economic and social crisis is leading to a political crisis the like of which we have not seen in decades. The capitalists and their institutions no longer have the legitimacy to organise society. They have no workable parliamentary majority. Macron must therefore leave and resign without delay. The forces of the New Popular Front (NFP), the parties but above all the unions, the associations, those from below, must close ranks to change everything. We need to move towards a constituent assembly process and put an end to the presidential system. We need to turn the page on this 5th Republic, which allows every kind of authoritarian power grab.

Faced with the democratic impasse, we need to impose a constituent process where democracy is not limited to the electoral arena but extends to the right to decide in workplaces and neighbourhoods. Decisions on what we produce and the use of resources should be made by the people primarily concerned – employees and users.

This means building strike action in the coming days, on 5 December in the civil service and from 12 December in all sectors. After Macron, this is the only way to defeat the Rassemblement National (National Rally, Marine Le Pen -Tr), which is on the threshold of power. That's what the NPA, with

its partners in the NFP, will be working hard to build in the hours and days ahead.

More broadly, this means building an anti-capitalist, ecosocialist alternative that puts an end to the exploitation of human beings and resources and all forms of oppression.

NPA – Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste

4 December 2024

Montreuil, France

Translated by International Viewpoint from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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.

20 November 2024

Source: [Posle Media](#).

Catherine Samary (<http://csamary.fr>) is a feminist and alterglobalist economist and a leading member of the Fourth International. She has done extensive research on the former socialist and Yugoslav experiences and European systemic transformations.

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.

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Trump's Second Term – Now is the Time for a Global Fightback – Statement from Anti Capitalist Resistance

The following statement on the US Presidential Elections has been issued by the comrades of Anti*Capitalist Resistance and has been reproduced as a contribution to how we should respond to the Trump victory here in Scotland. For further information about Anti*Capitalist Resistance visit their website at <https://anticapitalistresistance.org/>

Donald Trump won a second US presidency on 6 November 2024. The Republican Party is now in almost total control of US establishment politics as they also made gains in the Senate, giving them control of the entire legislature, the presidency and the Supreme Court. It is a victory for the US Plutocrats and Oligarchs, Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, the crypto-fanatics and west-coast Tech Bros. Trumpism is part of the global counter-revolutionary wave we see with far-right populists, authoritarians, semi-fascists and libertarians taking power in countries around the world. What we are seeing is a process of a general shift to the far-right caused by neoliberalism and the collapse in the post-war liberal consensus that it has brought about. Trumpism is the same trend that produced Modi

in India, Duterte in the Philippines, Meloni in Italy and so on.

But this victory, in particular, is a disaster for billions around the planet. The power of US imperialism to act or not act is still a decisive factor in global politics.

A second Trump presidency will be as chaotic and vile as the first. Only now his key intellectual backers will be much clearer on what they want to get out of it. Project 2025 is a blueprint for an authoritarian USA; it includes the proposals to sack thousands of government employees and place the rest of the US government bureaucracy under central presidential control. Elimination of the Department of Education to allow state-level control of curricula. It involves Rolling back transgender healthcare and social rights, making trans existence almost untenable in some states. It means the elimination of federal protections for gender equality, sexual orientation and reproductive rights. It will almost certainly prevent abortion pills from being sent through the post, which is the number one way people get abortions in the USA. We will see the mainstreaming of “conversations” about disenfranchising women. It also involves slashing funding for renewable energy research and development, increasing energy production and scrapping targets for carbon reduction.

Whether Trump’s promise to be a dictator on day one and use the military against political opponents was hot air for electioneering or not is unknown. But that he ran such a reactionary campaign and got such a decisive vote reveals something about the growth of far-right populist ideas. We know that both he and his Vice President JD Vance recently endorsed a book called *Unhumans*, [a manifesto for the mass murder of left-wing activists](#) along the lines of Pinochet in Chile. This reveals the fascist kernel of neoliberal politics, which has come full circle.

This defeat largely rests on the wretched politics and failed

strategy of the Democrats. It is clear that the Democrats are not even a dented shield against the growth of the far right; they actively feed the problem. They were business as usual in a period of anxiety and division.

They ran a campaign against a populist who was appealing to 'the common people' by instead focusing on the virtue of the establishment – constantly repeating that Trump was a felon as if there are not millions of felons in the USA in a corrupt and unfair judicial system who might see in him a persecuted martyr. The Democrats' fixation on the law courts to undermine him before the election failed utterly and added to his populist credentials. They preferred a campaign from the centre, focusing on celebrity endorsement, winning over middle ground Republicans, and parading with Liz Cheney. They appealed to the belief that the US is a country of equal opportunity and post-racism when it palpably isn't.

Trump and his supporters see through this. They know it is a lie. They prefer bullish, macho posturing, might makes right, freedom from consequence. The Democrats focussed in the last few weeks on labelling Trump a fascist – the response from his supporters was either a shrug or to embrace the fact that he wound up the liberals so much. Trump is a cypher for all the most selfish and reactionary views in US society, but the Democrats were no alternative. His movement crystallised a view of the USA that rejects equality and embraces domination. His movement is not foreign to the US body politics; it is rooted in it.

The global counter-revolutionary wave is largely a reaction to the gains of the post-war era – the advances made by women, Black people, the LGBTQIA+ community and others. Trump appealed especially to white people and young men, to Christian nationalist far right and tech bro supporters of Elon Musk. He also picked up votes from the Arab American community that turned on the Democrats for their funding of Israel's genocide in Gaza (although Trump will pursue the same

policy). But he also drew support from a [significant number of Black people](#) (meaning people of colour) and women, those who reject the liberal establishment and want to resolve the contradictions of American society by embracing its supremacist values. Some of the US Black population also backs mass deportations of recently arrived immigrants if it drives down prices and improves wages (as Trump claims). That is the point of populism; it combines contradictions and appeals to different people in different ways while claiming to provide simple answers to complex questions and denying meaningful change.

There will be considerable contradictions in his populist programme. Trump promised a carbon fossil fuel bonanza to drive down energy bill costs and tackle inflation, but he also wants tariffs on imports to strengthen US industry, which will drive up prices. He seems unlikely to deliver better living standards and more jobs for US citizens, especially with massive public sector cuts. But we also have to be wary of assuming that people primarily vote on economic grounds – the modern political landscape is far more complicated and riven by ideological divisions rather than simple financial calculations.

His indication that he will withdraw support from Ukraine and 'end the war there' almost certainly means that Russia's imperial annexation will be allowed to proceed. What this means for the broader region as Putin continues his expansionist project remains to be seen. Certainly, the emergence of a more multipolar world will propel us closer to a third world war at some stage. For the Palestinians, it also means more slaughter and defeat, Trump has been clear with Netanyahu that the far right leadership of Israel can "do whatever they need to do" to win.

The need for continued resistance goes without question. There will be many people feeling hopeless or full of despair right now, and that is exactly what the far right and fascists want.

They take sadistic pleasure in the defeats they inflict on the 'woke' and on the left. But politics is determined by struggles for power and counter-power, building mass coalitions of resistance, identifying the weak points in the enemy's side and mobilising forces to shatter their strength.

ACR is in total solidarity with those in the USA who reject this authoritarian turn and want to fight for a better world. We know the next few years will be difficult, but our movement has faced difficult times before. We know things will get worse before they get better. But we also know that we can argue for a world beyond capitalism, imperialism, and militarism, based on a society that provides for everyone and is sustainable with the environment. Runaway global warming is already with us, as is the worldwide strengthening of the far right; the two are linked. And politics does not end at the ballot box – that is another lie the Democrats relied on. Power comes from our organisation and resilience. We fight for a revolutionary change. Our role is to be part of the international fightback to change the world, to reclaim the future and build a better society for everyone!

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

Fatal Flaws in UK-Mauritius “Joint Statement” on planned Treaty on Chagos

The “Joint Statement” that Pravind Jugnauth and Keir Starmer have concocted is obviously riddled with fatal flaws for Mauritius’ future. It is dangerous on all the main issues: decolonization, closing the USA’s military base, the elementary right to free movement over all the land and sea for all Mauritians including Chagossians, and thus the right to return for Chagossians. It is even a blow to Mauritian sovereignty, itself. So, the Treaty must be opposed. LALIT now puts the following issue on the agenda for the general elections: Full sovereignty to be exercised democratically over Chagos, and a date for base closure and clean-up! No to militarism! No to prolonged occupation or colonization!

In fact, taken as a whole, the 3 October Joint Statement is one big booby-trap for Mauritius. It prolongs colonization of the Republic of Mauritius, it denies the right to free movement by all Mauritians, it denies the free right of return, it prolongs military occupation and even puts base closure and thus peace outside of Mauritius’ democratic control in our own land, it puts sovereignty up for bilateral negotiation outside the established norms of international law. So, it must be opposed. The victory of the historic ICJ judgment of 2019 would be shattered by such a Treaty. It is a blatant move by the UK-USA imperialists to steal a good part of Mauritius.

Perfidious Albion is at it again. Doing America's dirty work. And another fawning Mauritian leader is at it again, too, this time as leader of an independent State, while being egged on, it seems, by the Modi Government. And we deplore the inability of the Mauritian opposition to oppose the military occupation head-on as the prolonged colonization it is.

The Exact Wording

The Agreement purports to be the result of bilateral negotiation, yet the two signatories make a point of stating in the document, that they also have "the full support and assistance of our close partners, the United States of America and the Republic of India." Now we know the real reason India's Foreign Minister Jaishankar was here in July for a lightning visit that seemed, at the time, to be for reasons vague and ephemeral. The real reason was obviously to get Mauritius to agree to this Joint Statement. India is presumably getting its share in terms of American arms sales, use of Diego Garcia base for its navy, and cover for its secret Agalega base.

It is pitiful when big empires begin to collapse. Their moral core rots publicly. Every decision they take is the wrong one. Let us explain. The USA and UK are supposedly the closest geopolitical allies in the world. Yet circumstances pit them against each other over Diego. The UK-USA were so isolated at the UN General assembly that they only got three countries to vote with them, once Maldives withdrew its vote: Israel, Hungary and Australia's previous right-wing government.

At the same time, Britain and the USA sound either half-witted or mad when they stand up and shriek in support of Ukraine's right not to be occupied by Russia. The exposure of the USA's genocide alongside Israel against the militarily occupied Palestine is also a source of mutual blaming – especially when at the ICJ the very same issues are cross-referenced in the

Mauritius' case against the UK for its colonization and military occupation and the Palestinian case (put in by Nicaragua) against Israel for the very same thing. So, the UK is in a corner, and the USA can't get it out of the corner. And they have difficulty coming to any consensus.

And, even on what seem small things, they fall out. Yes, the USA recently went ahead and denied a British judge access to Diego Garcia when she had to be there to judge a British Indian Ocean Territories (BIOT) Supreme Court case about 64 refugees being held illegally there. So, the UK state was cornered on this human rights issue that exposed its continued colonization and military occupation of Mauritius. Now, "Great" Britain's judiciary does not take kindly to this kind of thing. It is not up to Royal standards of a United "Kingdom", so to speak. So, the "special relationship" starts to fall apart. The UK Brexit vote was thoroughly tampered with by the USA's right-wing politicians like Trump's advisor Steve Bannon, and so US interference and Brexit have bankrupted the UK. As it is, the UK, like the rest of Europe, is suffering from a refugee crisis provoked by the USA. It is American wars that cause people to flee from bombed out societies and ruined infrastructure in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and also from Libya where nearly 2 million non-Libyan Africans worked. And this has led to a political crisis, in the UK. This crisis caused the Conservative Government to set up a far-fetched and illegal scheme in Rwanda to "out-source" the UK's refugee problem to another country.

The UK and USA rightly anticipated there would be a huge immigration crisis around the BIOT and the military base on Diego – just as there is on Lampedusa in Sicily and on Spain's Canary Islands, and in particular when the USA is busy sparking war against China via Taiwan. The 64 Sri Lankans were merely the early-warning signal of a "flood", to use the right-wing language, of refugees. So, in reality the American base is threatened not by China or Russia, as the UK and USA

pretend it is, but by 64 poor Sri Lankans, some of them children, shipwrecked there. It shows how every bit of protest against the imperialists, when their empires start to topple, counts. And it also shows what the UK-USA empire has come to. The Rwanda scheme – already billed to cost British VAT-payers some 4 billion pounds – was shut down by the new Labour Government for being against international law. But, the UK judiciary still had to deal with the 64 Sri Lankans without transferring them to Britain. This became the last straw.

So, dire circumstances lead to dire actions, like the UK trying to both “give” (to quote the international press) and “keep” its sovereignty over the place the USA, in fact, controls! It is this confusion that has produced this flawed “Joint Statement”.

Here are the flaws of the Joint Statement, concentrating on paragraph 3:

While the Joint Statement says at paragraph 3 that “Mauritius is sovereign over Chagos, including Diego Garcia,” we must remember that its first paragraph described the document as being about not “sovereignty” itself but about “the exercise of sovereignty”. The wording implies there are two different things: Who “is sovereign”? The document says Mauritius is. But who has “the exercise of sovereignty”? Are they one and the same? The two expressions seem, at first view, to mean the same thing. But in the Joint Statement they definitely do not. In any case, this kind of formulation is so bizarre, especially coming from the perfidious Albion, that it ought to set off alarm bells in our heads.

Here is the first problem: the meat of the third paragraph reads, “the United Kingdom will be authorised to exercise with respect to Diego Garcia the sovereign rights ... of Mauritius required to ensure the continued operation of the [US military] base”. Let us deal with this in grammatical terms. In black and white, it says “the UK will be authorised to

exercise ... the sovereign rights ... of Mauritius". So, Mauritius is sovereign, as the document has already said, but the UK is authorised to exercise this Mauritian sovereignty! What is this?

So, here we see the perfidy of the words "exercise of sovereignty" that we mentioned from the first paragraph, which declares what the Joint Statement is about: it is about the exercise of sovereignty, not about sovereignty. Yes, believe it or not, Mauritius is not "sovereign over Chagos, including Diego Garcia" as promised earlier in paragraph three, because the UK will be authorised to exercise the sovereign rights of Mauritius, and this is what the Joint Statement is about. No less.

And, to mask all this perfidy, the formulation is intentionally clumsy in another way. Not only is this authorization for the UK to exercise Mauritius' sovereign rights supposed to be only "with respect to Diego Garcia" (pretending to spare the other outer Chagos islands, and leave them to Mauritius' sovereignty) but also, added on afterwards to include we suppose literally "anything anywhere" concerning those sovereign rights "required to ensure the continued operation of the base". This means it may be "with respect to Diego Garcia" or it may also include anything "required to ensure the continued operation of the base".

We know that the USA has always objected to Mauritius controlling not only Diego Garcia, but any of the other islands. But now, in respect to Diego Garcia, any form of sovereignty that is "required to ensure the continued operation of the base" will be exercised by the UK. Of course, what exactly this means will be decided later by ... none other than the USA. Just like the USA decided to kick the British judge out of BIOT. So Mauritius has what is left of sovereignty when Britain has exercised any sovereignty "required to ensure the continued operation of the base", and the USA will decide on the meaning of the bland "with respect

to Diego Garcia" en temps et lieu.

Other oddities in this paragraph must now also be looked at. Where it says, "the UK will be authorised to exercise ... sovereign rights ...", after the word "rights", there are the two words "and authorities". This, we can only guess, is to ensure all the "rights" Mauritius has, as well as all the "authorities" it has, meaning all the powers it has, "powers" flowing from sovereignty, will be authorised to be exercised by the UK.

The next oddity is the frank, "For an initial period of 99 years." Let's deal with the word "initial", it means that what Britain means is that its exercise of sovereignty will last for "ONE CENTURY", but that is only to begin with. This formulation is a synonym for "forever" – unless we are talking geological time, and the first lap lasts, as it is, "... well into the next century".

The third oddity is ensuring that Mauritius, the weak partner, will agree with the strong partner, the UK to submit to the exigencies of the really big masked partner, the USA. Read this paragraph hidden in the middle of paragraph 3: "At the same time, both our countries are committed to the need, and will agree in the treaty, to ensure the long-term, secure and effective operation of the existing base on Diego Garcia which plays a vital role in regional and global security." Decisions about what will ensure the "secure and effective operation of the existing base" will be made presumably by the USA.

The blood money in exchange for the war machine on our land

There are two paragraphs mainly about money. They are vague and humiliating for Mauritius. "The treaty will address wrongs of the past", the Joint Statement says. How? An apology for stealing the land? An apology for hounding out the Mauritians

living there on that Mauritian land? Or are they talking about money? Who knows?

And it goes on “and demonstrate the commitment of both parties to support the welfare of Chagossians. Mauritius will now be free to implement a programme of resettlement on the islands of the Chagos Archipelago, other than Diego Garcia, and the UK will capitalise a new trust fund, as well as separately provide other support, for the benefit of Chagossians.” No mention of free movement for anyone. No mention of all the ordinary aspects of sovereignty. Can Mauritius build ports or an airstrip? Or will this affect the “secure and effective operation of the existing base”? The wording is absurd.

“It will also herald a new era of economic, security and environmental partnership between our two nations. To enable this partnership the UK will provide a package of financial support to Mauritius. This will include an indexed annual payment for the duration of the agreement and the establishment of a transformational infrastructure partnership, underpinned by UK grant funding, to deliver strategic projects generating meaningful change for ordinary Mauritians and boosting economic development across the country.” This is the bribe. This is the blood money. This is what aims to draw the Mauritian people into moral degradation by agreement to it!

Then the Joint Statement goes on, “More broadly, the UK and Mauritius will cooperate on environmental protection, maritime security, combating illegal fishing, irregular migration and drug and people trafficking within the Chagos Archipelago, with the shared objective of securing and protecting one of the world’s most important marine environments. This will include the establishment of a Mauritian Marine Protected Area.” This is Mauritius will “cooperate” with the UK to do all this, including a “Mauritian” MPA, as opposed to Mauritius doing all this independently and in a sovereign way.

Conclusion

Let us end with a simple quote from the Mauritian Constitution. Section 1 reads “Mauritius shall be a sovereign democratic state”

and Section 111 reads,

“Mauritius includes:

“(a) The islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agalega, Cargados Carajos, Tromelin, and the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia and any other island comprised in the State of Mauritius;

“(b) the territorial sea and the air space above the territorial sea and the islands mentioned in section (a);

“(c) the continental shelf; ...”

LATIT, Wednesday 9 October 2024

<https://www.lalitmauritius.org/>

Reposted from International Viewpoint

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), preluding 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?

Gilbert Achcar

Translated from the Arabic original published by [Al-Quds al-Arabi](#) on 24 September 2024 and posted at <https://gilbert-achcar.net/strategic-reflections-on-lebanon>

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

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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.

Anti-Fascists Demand Freedom for Zaragoza Six

Jennifer Debs writes for [Heckle.Scot](#) about the campaign to free anti-fascist activists in the Spanish state.

If the Scottish independence movement has a sense of internationalism, then events in that blob of disgruntled nations called ‘Spain’ tend to loom largest in our minds. [Heckle](#) readers are aware, I’m sure, of how the cause of Catalunya is eagerly identified with the cause of Scotland – one need only attend any independence march to see that evidenced in the Catalan colours among the mass of flags. In a way, this is a kind of Scottish modification of the traditional “philo-hispanism” of the left, our movement’s continuing identification with the history of the Spanish Republic, the international brigades, workers’ power in Barcelona, and the long clandestine struggle against Franco and his regime.

Even so, for all our sympathy with the brave crowds who confronted the Guardia Civil during the 2017 Catalan referendum, our support for persecuted pro-independence politicians, and our disgust at the zombie Francoism of the Spanish government, there are some urgent causes from the peninsula that could do with greater awareness among Scottish workers. Take the case of the Zaragoza Six, a group of anti-fascist activists arrested and imprisoned on trumped-up charges after a protest against the far-right Vox party in 2019.

Just for taking to the streets to oppose the rising threat of fascism in the Spanish state, the Zaragoza Six are facing prison sentences. Theirs has been a years-long battle for

freedom since the initial arrests, a story of trials, verdicts, appeals, and yet more trials, with three of the group now having entered prison as of April 16th, and one more set to enter prison on April 24th. These four comrades will each be serving a sentence of four years and nine months, and that on top of heavy fines.

As anti-fascists facing punishment, the cause of the Z6 demands the enthusiastic support of the Scottish left. Not only have we witnessed fascist political organisations making a comeback in the anti-refugee protests at Erskine, but far-right public order and culture war politics lead the way in the Conservative Party, with the government taking aim at refugees, climate protesters, striking workers, Palestine activists and transgender people. The danger is in the streets, but also in the halls of government. The Spanish context, with the role played by both Vox and by state repression, therefore warrants our close attention – our national situations are two facets of a wider phenomenon.



In order to find out more, I reached out to the Z6 campaign to see if I could interview anyone and bring their story to an audience over here. They were happy to speak to [Heckle](#), and so

Javitxu Aijon, one of the Six, got in touch with me to speak over a video call. My discussion with Javitxu took place when he was still free, but I am sad to say that as you are reading this now, he is behind bars.

I began by asking Javitxu who the Zaragoza Six are, and about their case. Essentially, Javitxu said, they are just six people who were arrested following a demonstration against a meeting of the far-right Vox party at Zaragoza's auditorium on 17th January 2019. Just one month prior to the demo, Vox had entered the Andalusian parliament, "so there was a popular impression of the rise of the far right, and the danger of that- machismo, racism, xenophobia," Javitxu explained. "In that protest there were a lot of people who weren't in formal political movements," he continued, including himself among their number. Javitxu said he had previously been in the Podemos party in 2018, and had left-wing views, but that he wasn't really organised at that point. In all, 200 young anti-fascists protested against Vox on the 17th, facing violent attacks from the police in the process.

After the demonstration was over, six young people, four adults and two minors, all of them under 24 years of age, were arrested at random in the surrounding area. The police made their choices based on the look of their targets' clothing – indeed, one of the six did not even attend the anti-Vox protest. Four of the six, Javitxu alongside them, were detained when police entered a bar close to the site of the demonstration. In Javitxu's case, he simply saw a minor being arrested in the bar, and when he tried to point this out to the police officer and tell him to be careful, he was grabbed and detained too. He asked the officers why he was being arrested, but didn't get much of a response: "Their only answer was that I was in the protest, so maybe I had done something." This was an arrest on pure suspicion, on assumed guilt.

And the crimes for which this haphazard bunch of arrestees,

one of whom wasn't even present at a protest, stood accused? Public disorder, and assaulting a police officer. These were the charges on which the Z6 faced trial in the Provincial Court of Zaragoza, with a sentence of six years in prison for the four adults, one year of probation for the two minors, and a fine of €11,000 being handed down in January 2021. This conviction was, however, based on the sole evidence of the testimony of the police officers, with witnesses and evidence that could prove the innocence of the Z6 being ignored. Crucially, security footage caught by University of Zaragoza CCTV cameras shows the violence at the protest, but the footage does not show any of the Z6 involved in fights with the police at any point. However, this footage was not admitted as evidence by the judge.

Following the initial judgment, the sentence was then increased by the High Court of Justice of Aragon to seven years for the four adults in October 2021. Javitxu explained that a sentence of this length for anti-fascist activism is unheard of; typically, arrested anti-fascists receive sentences of two or three years. The Z6 appealed this decision to the supreme court, and the appeal process dragged on with no decision until this year, when the supreme court finally decided on the aforementioned sentence of four years and nine months, plus fines. Even if the jail-time has been reduced, the fact that innocent anti-fascists are being imprisoned at all is a tremendous blow to the left, and a victory for both the far right and the repressive apparatus of the state.

“Francoism never went away. There is no real democracy in Spain.”

Beyond the police narrative of events, I wanted to get Javitxu's perspective on the reasons for the arrests and the sentences, and to discuss the significance of the

criminalisation of his and his co-defendants' political activity. In Javitxu's opinion, "they want us in jail because we have a problem with police hierarchy and far-right movements. They are linked." Indeed, Javitxu contends that the police are very close to far-right movements in the Spanish state. Furthermore, he feels that the Z6 have been hit with such heavy jail-time specifically to send a message to other protest movements. Javitxu pointed out that the protest in 2019 was the first anti-fascist protest he had seen in Zaragoza with new people who weren't just part of the pre-existing movements of the left, fresh people who saw a danger in far-right ideas – and of course, fresh layers of society taking part in protests is dangerous to the status quo, dangerous to the capitalist state. Adding to this, Javitxu outlined a repressive wave in motion throughout the Spanish state in recent years, with the arrest of the Catalan rapper Pablo Hasel for criticism of the monarchy serving as a prime example.

Javitxu dates this repressive wave from late 2017 and the state backlash against Catalan independence referendum. He argues that the Spanish government is afraid of the number of people who took to the streets to fight for Catalan independence, and that it wants to try and clamp down on future mass movements. In the context of this, abnormally harsh sentences for protesters opposing the far right appear as a weapon for dispersing and defusing a protest movement before it can cohere. Indeed, when I spoke of the courts as a capitalist class weapon, Javitxu agreed with me. "Francoism never went away. There is no real democracy in Spain."



The situation now is bleak. This means that the question of how the movement fights back against the convictions is crucial, so I naturally wanted to know what Javitxu thought about the issue. His answer was keeping up pressure, continuing the fight: "If you want to stop the repressive machine in, for example, the housing movement, and the bank are going to throw you out of your house, then there must be a movement to avoid the eviction. So if you want to end the repression of this movement, you need to stop more evictions. If you want to stop the repression of the workers' movement, you need to strike more, protest more."

For Javitxu, there is no solid border between the struggle in the courts and in the streets – indeed, for him the question of liberty is a political one, which requires an organised response. "I think if you want to fight back against repression, you need more of a political movement." He pointed to the example of the Z6 solidarity campaign so far, which has gathered the support of the political parties, trade unions and movements of the left, as well as musicians and actors, and which has continued to protest and agitate for a total amnesty.

Of course, with the dire turn events have taken, the need for a political support campaign has only deepened, as has the necessity of internationalising the campaign and getting

support from workers' and popular movements across the world. If pressure can be brought to bear on the Spanish government on multiple fronts, it will be to the benefit of the Z6.

The question of the movement's response naturally entails another: What next for the anti-fascist movement in the Spanish state? Javitxu felt that the main problem of anti-fascism currently is that "there are not enough people involved. The anti-fascist movement needs to do more to influence popular opinion." He also pointed out a problem with how the anti-fascist movement has traditionally operated: "I think there are people that still think the far right are just skinhead Nazis who are in the streets with knives and so on. It's really different, the way the far right are organising themselves right now. There are Nazis with a skinhead aesthetic, but they are not the majority of the far-right movement right now. They are not the imminent danger. Vox for example, I think there is a difference in how they do politics."

Javitxu pointed out that while Vox might hate groups like LGBT people and immigrants, the party is much more careful in how it expresses its ideas about these groups. It does not call for violence openly in the way a neo-Nazi gang would, but rather Vox seeks to influence and sway public opinion, to bring in parts of the traditional conservative voter base. In Javitxu's view, the anti-fascist movement needs to find a way to combat this more "official" form of fascism. This dilemma is reminiscent of our own situation here in Scotland and the wider UK, where our anti-fascists may be able to outnumber and kick the fascists out of towns and cities on a good day, but where far-right ideas spur government policy regardless and receive silence, or even approval, from the Labour Party.

I ended our call by asking what the Scottish workers' movement can do to support the Z6. Javitxu felt that the best way for people in Scotland to support the Z6 is, first and foremost, to spread the word: "It's really important at the moment for

this to be known about.” The campaign for an amnesty for the prisoners will be continuing, so Scottish workers need to keep up to date and show solidarity where they can. If you can bring up the cause of the Z6 in your trade union and organisational branch meetings and encourage them to contact the campaign and get involved, then please do so. And of course, there is currently [a fundraiser](#) to cover both the fines and the legal costs of the Z6 case. Please donate if you can, and spread it in your groups and networks.

Javitxu also wanted to underline to my readers that “if they know someone who is in some kind of trial, not to let him or her fight this alone. The most important support they can give to any victim of repression is emotional support.” We have cases here in Scotland that are in need of this kind of comradeship, like the Starmer Two, a pair of Palestine protesters arrested for demonstrating against Keir Starmer in December last year. Comrades bearing the brunt of police repression could always use a friend and a helping hand.

When we raise the call of freedom for the Zaragoza Six, the old struggles live anew in our words. We remember the names of friends and martyrs, class war prisoners old and new: John Maclean, Nicola Sacco, Bartolomeo Vanzetti, George Jackson, Angela Davis, Abdullah Öcalan. We remember the love, hope, rage and solidarity that fired, and fires, hearts in streets all across the world in cause of their liberty. And we fondly recall the words of the great American socialist Eugene Debs, another victim of capitalist persecution, who said: “While there is a lower class I am of it, while there is a criminal class I am of it, while there is a soul in prison I am not free.”

As for Javitxu himself, he remains defiant. Throughout our conversation he was adamant that he will continue to participate in anti-repression movements, and that his experience with the courts has only made him firmer in his resolve. He wants to show others what the judicial system does

to people, and to express himself to others who are facing repression from the state.

“I had passed from a lot of states of depression because of this. I think that these are thoughts that are normal. After the second trial, I really wanted to abandon social movements, to go away, to disappear. And it’s this that they want. They want us to surrender, give up, and not to fight for a better world, a better situation for our comrades, friends, family. I think if someone is living this kind of thing, like trials for fighting for a better world, maybe, maybe, they are on the right side of history. I did nothing wrong, my conscience is peaceful. For now, I have no problems. If I go to jail, it will be years to study politics, to form myself, to be a better militant for the movement, to change this shit, this judicial system, this political system.”

All that remains to be said is that Javitxu Aijon and the Zaragoza Six are comrades in need. They deserve our support and assistance.

For them, for all political prisoners – tenacity, courage and fury!

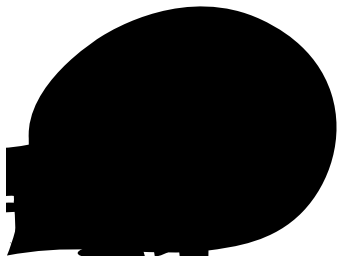
Free the Zaragoza Six!

You can keep in touch with the Z6 campaign at these links:

- [Fundraiser campaign for the Z6.](#)
- Campaign email address: contacto@libertad6dezaragoza.info
- [The campaign’s website](#) has a manifesto with a section for signatures from supporters at the bottom of the page.

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Kurdistan: Scottish activist interviewed on Turkey's local elections

From a polling station in the Şirnak mountains – an interview with Hazel, an election observer from Scotland for the 31 March local elections in Turkey.

Sarah Glynn talks to one of two Scottish women who came to

observe the elections at the invitation of the DEM Party [*Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party – see note 1*]. Hazel describes the militarisation of the region and the psychological pressure on voters. She witnessed the mass voting by soldiers brought in from outside the region, and saw the anger and worry in Şirnak (Şirnex) after their election was stolen by imported votes. And she emphasises the power of Kurdish resistance.

Hazel was observing the election at the invitation of the DEM Party, and was sent to village polling stations in the Şirnak (Şirnex) mountains. She describes a heavily militarised region, and militarised police and armoured vehicles outside the polling stations. Despite having become accustomed to the constant military presence, voters described feelings of intimidation and psychological pressure on account of the people outside the polling stations, who included families of AKP members.

Hazel saw a military helicopter that they were informed had brought soldiers to vote, and witnessed a long line of soldiers in civilian dress waiting to cast their ballots. But the observers were restricted in where they could go, and in inspecting voter lists.

She contrasted the victory celebrations in Diyarbakir (Amed) with the anger and worry in Şirnak – at the stolen election due to the votes of thousands of soldiers brought from outside, and at the prospect of the coming years of AKP control. And she described the immediate post-election repression and arrests in Şirnak.

Hazel attended protest statements in Amed, following the government's refusal to recognise the elected mayor of Van, and observed the importance of the presence of the Saturday Mothers.

She finished by trying to convey the sense of powerful resistance that she could feel in the Kurdish region and that she was reluctant to leave behind.

Below is the full transcript of the interview:



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So, Hazel, obviously a lot has happened since the actual election itself, but you were there to observe the election, so I think we should start with that. And I wondered, for the benefit of people who've not been to a Turkish election, if you could just describe – well, describe where you went, where you were – but also what the polling station is like, who's allowed in, what sort of privacy you get for voting, what sort of security there is to protect the ballots themselves, and whether there's pressure on the voters from people outside.

Yeah, so I've also been to the general election last year, which was a little bit different to this year's municipal elections, and I think it's also a little bit regional. So, all over Kurdistan region, also Turkey, it's generally in schools that people go to vote, and there are certain laws pertaining to the schools. So, for example, police shouldn't have weapons with them if they're actually inside the polling booth, like the room that people are voting in. And last year, there was a proper booth inside the polling stations that did afford people a bit more privacy, but I didn't personally see that at this one, but we were in quite a remote village in Şîrnak province, and it was called Beytüşşebap in Turkish, or İlkê in Kurdish. And yeah, there wasn't actually really any privacy, to be honest, in the rooms, but people will make their vote, and there's a sort of desk that people from each party – so DEM Party, AK Party, CHP – they all also sit in the room as well, and they're kind of responsible for overseeing the process. So, there's a bit of a collective management of the day, and there's quite a lot of people from each political party there as well, and also outside the schools, and I'm sure we'll get into this more later. It does depend on the region, so what we saw in İlkê or Beytüşşebap is, there's the Jandarma outside the schools, which is like militarised

police, and there's also plainclothes police, and also uniformed, but there's the militarised and armored vehicles outside.

So, did you get a sense that there was pressure on voters?

So, this is what we asked people, actually, who were there, and they did tell us that they did feel quite a bit of pressure, and I think that also, one thing to keep in mind is that, actually, there's a normalisation of the militarisation of the region, because there's checkpoints, there's military checkpoints when you move inside or outside of the cities in Kurdistan region. You can see the Jandarma (Gendarmerie), or the military – there's military bases all over the place, inside cities, etc. So, I think that there is a desensitisation, actually, as well; but of course, it does also create the psychological pressure, and for example, there was big families from the AK Party outside in the school grounds that we saw ourselves, and it was like an extended family. And people were also telling us this is also a type of psychological pressure, and they also felt intimidated. And it was also reported that – not where we were, but at another location – that some of the police did have weapons with them inside the schools, as well.

And anyway, they're allowed weapons just outside the schools.

Yes, they're allowed weapons outside of the schools, including the military vehicles themselves, which were literally parked right outside the gates, literally right opposite the entrance to the schools, multiple ones, actually. And also, one thing that we saw too is a military helicopter actually landing directly next to the school, which we were told was bringing soldiers in from Şirnak, like central, the actual city. And then, you know, we were in quite a remote area up the mountains, and we went to the first school, and then we went to two others, and then we were told, oh, go back to the first school, because now a lot of soldiers have just come. And you

know, in the region, it's occupied militarily, so there are soldiers around, but people know who are the local soldiers. You know, there's not thousands and thousands of soldiers in each place, usually. And when we went back to the first school, there was this long line of soldiers in plain clothes who were waiting to vote, and it was a very, very tense atmosphere, and we basically were quite abruptly asked to leave.

They wouldn't actually let us be present inside the polling station on that occasion. And yeah, we saw the helicopter, because it wasn't there when we first arrived, and then when we went to the schools, and then it had arrived, and then it left when we were there.

And were people able to see the voters' lists there? Were all these soldiers' names on the voters' lists?

So, one of our friends who was with us – one of our colleagues who was with us, who was also doing the observations, she has a press card, she's a journalist, she was allowed to look, but we were not allowed, and we were barred from looking at the lists. But there is many, many areas that people have had more access to the lists, and Şirnak is one of them, Şirnak Central, that has shown hundreds and hundreds of male names who – and no women at some addresses at all – but just hundreds and hundreds of male names, which aren't normal military bases. And what we were told is that this is basically soldiers coming from outside, who have been sent here by the state, and they are using other people's addresses to be able – because you know it's municipal, so you have to have like a specific local registered address to be able to vote in that district. And yeah, there's been like a lot of this military people coming and voting.

Over 6,000 in Şirnak, I think.

I know at the general election there was a lot of concern

about guarding the ballot boxes, and then there were also problems about changes made when the votes were transferred onto the final system. Were either of those issues this time around, or not?

Yeah, so this was definitely a thing last time. There was really clear evidence, for example, of votes getting transferred from DEM Party to MHP last time – well it was Yeşil Sol (Green Left) Party last year, but to MHP – and then they even ended up being transferred back in the appeals process at points, but I haven't heard of that myself this time. But also, it's one of those things that, you know, I think it's really hard sometimes to catch the ways that manipulation happens. And there's been really widespread observation amongst the independent observers about this practice with the soldiers, and this is something that – it's in specific areas, it doesn't happen in every single area, obviously – but it's, yeah, it's very difficult to appeal this process. And it didn't really seem like the ballot box issue was something that was really focused on this year, but they were already aware of the extra people signing up in the municipalities this time, so that has been the main focus this year.

I heard calls for guarding the ballot boxes, but I didn't hear of any actual concerns, I think.

I haven't heard of any myself.

And what immediately afterwards, as the results started coming in – I mean, before things started happening in Van – what was the general view of the elections from the DEM Party, because I think you were with people in the party after the elections as well.

Yeah, so I mean, I was in two different places – in Şırnak at first, and then I went back to Amed. And it was really different in both places, because, you know, in Şırnak, people

were really hurting, because AK Party, for the central area, was elected again. And people were pretty furious, and also worried. People are really worried about their future, and they're very angry, because they feel it's a very, very undemocratic process. And straight afterwards, on the same day as the elections, there was an attack on the party office by the police, and they arrested at least a dozen people, I think two dozen people – so two of the responsables in DEM Party, and then also quite a few youth as well. And when we were leaving the next day, we heard that the DEM Party members had been released, but a lot of the local young people were still being detained. And this is just like a kind of – I think that that's very symbolic, actually, because straight away, there's repression. And I mean – you just mentioned Van already, but even when there is a secure vote for the DEM Party, it doesn't mean that repression doesn't come. But when people don't have control of their own municipality, and that really affects, you know, funding, that affects education, that affects all of these different things. It affects also, you know, state propaganda. It affects state control, it affects state access to the border – for example, going south and east, and Şirnak is a really strategic location for the state's war policies. All of these things are affected in people's everyday lives. And somebody – not a DEM Party member, but just like a local person – was saying to me – he was saying, I'm really worried about my child's future. She's only three years old, but again, and again, and again, this keeps happening. I don't know what I can do. And then for DEM Party, people were really exhausted, but they were just busy the entire time. They were saying, we're going to appeal this, we're not going to stand for this, you know, they have cheated the system. And there was this feeling of loss.

But there wasn't much, I've seen in Western media. There's been a lot of dialogue around – oh, CHP, they've done so well; oh, this is such a win for democracy, because AKP have done really badly in this election. But people don't talk about the

Kurdistan region, and don't see that AK Party can't even – they can't even keep hold of their own seats in the West. But still, they try and coup them, basically, from the Kurdish regions, for their war policies, and for political reasons.

But when I went back to Amed – so I didn't see it myself, because we're in Şirnak, but I did see a lot of videos that showed there was a big celebration. People were really happy, but there was this focus on the other regions, it wasn't cut off. I think the first day, people were dancing in the streets, big, big celebrations, but by the time we got back, people were just really focused on Şirnak, and then also the other regions where AKP had sent soldiers, or just where they'd also just done well, you know. And then, also what happened in Van after. So, yesterday, all day, there was just announcements, protests. The people in DEM Party were incredibly busy, I have to say, from morning until evening, just full-on organising: visiting the family of the martyr, the shaheed [the DEM Party election official who was killed in a polling station dispute]; organising announcements, where police also repressed people, and two people were arrested from that – nothing like what we've seen in the further east regions, where people have been really being attacked viciously by the police, and, you know, there's a bigger answer, I think, there – but still, people were then focused on that...

It's not clear what's going to happen now. I was asking people. I was saying, do you think that... will come again, is this going to be the policy of the state this time, because it happened so much last municipal election. And people's answer was just, we just don't know. We just don't know what's going to happen. It's just very unclear.

Which is frightening in itself, of course, the not knowing. So, I don't know when you had to leave that area. Were you able to see any of the protests about what was happening in Van?

In Amed. Yeah.

Reactions to the removal of the mayor, of the elected mayor in Van – were you able to see any of the reactions to that?

Yeah, in Amed, I went to a couple of the announcements and protests, and the thing is, like, even just an announcement, which is what it actually was – or announcement is maybe not quite the right translation, but a kind of, like a statement against what happened – like, even these things, when they're made publicly, are very, very, criminalised by the police. So, maybe in Western Europe you could make a statement saying, oh, the state did this, and it wasn't good, blah, blah. But, in Bakur [North Kurdistan/southeast Turkey] you're surrounded by armed police, armoured vehicles. Lots of people already have criminal cases or have spent a significant time in prison, and these are the kind of things that can certainly get people arrested again and sent to prison. So, there's quite high stakes, even with just standing up and denouncing ...

And there was one protest outside one of the legal centres, and that was made by DEM Party members, and two of the MPs, so one person was Abbas Şahin, and then also Pınar as well. They're both MPs in Amed region. And then also, directly after that, there was another announcement in a park in Amed, and that was by the Democracy Platform, which is particularly, like a labour platform.

And there were people from other parties or from...



Yeah, I mean, in general, the people who attended, it wasn't only DEM Party members who were there. It's just people in the community, basically, people who agree with the fact that what happened in

Vigil for forced disappearances

Van was extremely undemocratic and unfair, and it didn't reflect the will of the people. And the second event, I'm not sure, I would need to find out exactly which groups it was present, actually, and yeah, but there was, like, a kind of mix of people from, like, various groups, and also non-affiliated people as well. Not everyone was specifically a member of a specific organisation who was present. There was, oh, and the Saturday Mothers as well, the mothers of the martyrs, and also of the missing people who had disappeared in the 90s. So, when everyone was going to this court in the first announcement, the first denunciation, some people tried to enter. And they weren't allowed, of course, they weren't allowed to go in, but there was this big crowd of people, maybe a couple hundred people, and the mothers who, you know, they were walking as a group, and they have the

white veils on their head, they're very, very distinctive. And they're really, really, really strong embodiments of the principles of the struggle there, and what people sacrificed, and what people continue to do as well, despite such a deep and painful struggle. They tried to get in, and when they first came, everyone started clapping and applauding, and people were chanting. It was really, really beautiful to see how people reacted to their presence as part of that struggle, and part of the wider statement. And they were also at the second denunciation as well, which was in the park. They didn't speak at it, but there was – yeah, like I said, it was kind of a mix of people present, and – just one second, I'm just gonna check something... I had a thing where I wrote down the chants that people were making, but I'm just struggling to find it...

You were looking for the chants that were said at these

demonstrations, so do give us some examples.

Yeah, so, well, one chant that people were chanting is, long live the resistance of Van, so, “Biji Berxwedana Wanê”, and also, “Resistance is Life”, and also, “Kurdistan will become a grave for fascism”, and, yeah, I thought it was just a very – like, every time somebody would make a speech, the young people in the crowd would start leading the chants. Yeah, that was all.

So, is there anything else you want to add before I let you go and catch your plane?

It's really hard to – I thought there is something that I want to add, but it's really hard to put into words. And I feel really, like I really wish that I wasn't leaving now, because the different layers of society that say, and one of the other chants, the translation in English is, “we will win by resisting”. I think that that is just such a present spirit and energy, and that is something that is really beautiful and inspiring; and yeah, I'm sure that people really will resist. And if it really is the case that the mayor has, again, been reappointed, I think that that really just shows like that chant, that we will win by resisting, is completely true. And whatever happens now, because I think that the democratic process is completely – it's not respected in Kurdistan region especially. And I think that we need to stop invisibilising the politics there, when we talk about Turkey as a whole, and the democratic process in Turkey as a whole, and, you know, not see CHP as this kind of – oh great, everything's answered now, blah, blah, blah. I think that, yeah, the struggle is really alive, and we also need to find ways to support it, that's all.

Thank you, and bring that spirit of struggle back to Scotland with you. Thanks very much.

Thank you for having me.

Sarah Glynn is an activist from Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan who writes for Medya News.

For a full report of the local election results and the successful resistance movement to the annulment and subsequent reinstatement of the successful DEM candidate in the municipality of Van, see Sarah Glynn's article 'Resistance Works!'

<https://medyanews.net/resistance-works-a-weekly-news-review/>

*Interview originally published by Medya News:
<https://medyanews.net/from-a-polling-station-in-the-sirnak-mountains-an-interview-with-hazel-an-election-observer-from-scotland/>*

*Note by Ecosocialist.scot: [1] **DEM Party – Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party** is a pro-Kurdish political party in the Turkish state. It is the legal successor of the Green Left Party (Yesil Sol) and with the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) handing over its work to this party in 2023, it has become the latest iteration of Kurdish interests in Turkey. It won 10 provinces and 2.6 million votes (5.7%), the fourth highest vote in the elections of 31 March.*

Photo: DEM Party Election Rally, Medya News