

COP27 (Climate) – Fossil victory in Sharm el-Sheikh: only the fight remains

Daniel Tanuro writes on the COP27.

A few days before the opening of COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, I wrote that this conference would be a “new height of greenwashing, green capitalism and repression”. It was a mistake. Greenwashing and repression were more than ever on the shores of the Red Sea, but green capitalism suffered a setback, and fossils won a clear victory.

In matters of climate, we can define green capitalism as the fraction of employers and their political representatives who claim that the disaster can be stopped by a market policy that encourages companies to adopt green or “low carbon” energy technologies, so that it would be possible to reconcile economic growth, growth in profits and rapid reduction in emissions, and even to achieve “net zero emissions” in 2050. This component, known as “mitigation” of climate change, is then supplemented by a so-called “adaptation” component to the now inevitable effects of global warming, and a “funding” component (mainly aimed at southern countries). On these two levels too, the proponents of green capitalism believe that the market can do the job – they even see an opportunity for capital.

From Copenhagen to Paris, from “top down” to “bottom-up”

The agreement reached in Paris at COP21 (2015) was typically a manifestation of this policy. It stipulated that the parties would commit to taking action to ensure that global warming “remains well below 2°C, while continuing efforts not to

exceed 1.5°C". It should be remembered that COP19 (Copenhagen, 2009) had buried the idea of a global distribution of the "2°C carbon budget" (the quantity of carbon that can still be sent into the atmosphere to have a reasonable probability of not exceeding 2°C during this century) according to the responsibilities and the differentiated capacities of the countries. Such a global distribution was (and remains) the most rational approach to combining climate efficacy and social justice, but this "top-down" approach involved settling the accounts of imperialism, which the United States and the European Union European did not want at any price. COP20 (Cancun, 2010) therefore adopted a "bottom-up" approach, more compatible with the neoliberal air of the time: each country would determine its "national contribution" to the climate effort, and we would see, in the course of the annual COP, 1) if the sum of the efforts is sufficient; 2) if the distribution of efforts complies with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" which is enshrined in the Framework Convention on Climate (UN, Rio, 1992).

As a reminder, this Framework Convention affirmed the will of the parties to avoid "a dangerous anthropogenic disturbance of the climate system". Six years after Copenhagen, twenty-three years after Rio, Paris finally came to clarify a little what should be understood by this. This is the formula that we recalled above: "stay well below 2°C while continuing efforts not to exceed 1.5°C...". But one ambiguity hits you in the face: at the end of the day, where is the threshold of dangerousness? At 2°C or 1.5°C? Asked to shed light on the answer to be given to this question, the IPCC submitted a specific report from which it is very clear that half a degree more or less leads to enormous differences in terms of impact. In the process, COP26 (Glasgow, 2021) gave satisfaction to the representatives of the small island states who are sounding the alarm bell: we must stay below 1.5°C of warming.

But how to do it? The gap between the "national contributions"

of the countries and the path to follow to stay below 1.5°C (or to exceed this threshold only very slightly, with the possibility of going back below quite quickly) is an abyss: on the basis of the national contributions, warming will easily exceed the objective. The drafters of the Paris agreement were aware of this “emission gap”. They therefore decided that the parties’ climate commitments would be subject to an “ambition-raising” exercise every five years, in the hope of gradually bridging the gap between the commitments and the objective to be achieved. Problem: six years later, the objective to be reached (1.5°C maximum) has become much more restrictive, and the time available to reach it has become ever shorter.

From Paris to Glasgow: “raising ambitions”?

In Glasgow, the message from scientists was crystal clear: a) global emissions reductions must start now, b) the global peak must be reached no later than 2025, c) CO₂ emissions (and methane!) must decrease by 45 per cent globally by 2030, and d) climate justice implies that the richest one per cent divides its emissions by thirty while the poorest 50 per cent will multiply them by three. All this, without mentioning the gigantic efforts to be made in terms of adaptation and financing, particularly in poor countries...

In this context, Glasgow could only note the accelerated obsolescence of the five-year strategy of “enhancing ambitions” adopted in Paris: no one could seriously claim that a round table every five years would make it possible to fill the emissions gap. In a very tense context, the British Presidency then proposed that the “mitigation” component be subject to review every year during the “decisive decade” 2020-2030, and this procedure was adopted. The presidency also proposed to decide on the rapid elimination of coal but, on this point, it came up against a veto from India, so that the participants had to content themselves with deciding on a

reduction (“phasing down”) rather than an elimination (“phasing out”) of the use of this fuel.

In Sharm el-Sheikh: place your bets, there’s no more time left

At the end of COP27, the results are quite clear: there is almost nothing left of these commitments made in Glasgow.

The annual raising of ambitions has not taken place. All the countries should have updated their “national contributions”: only thirty complied with the exercise, and even then, very insufficiently (see my article preceding the COP). It is very likely that this attempt will be the last and that we will henceforth be content with the process of five-year reviews provided for by COP21... while hypocritically pretending to ignore the impossibility by this means of respecting the 1.5°C limit!

COP26 had adopted a “mitigation work programme” which COP27 was supposed to implement. It was content to decide that the process would be “non-prescriptive, non-punitive” and “would not lead to new objectives”. Moreover, the objective of the 1.5°C maximum, adopted in Glasgow, came very near to being explicitly called into question (it was explicitly called into question, outside the plenary session, by the representatives of Russia and Saudi Arabia, not to mention the trial balloons launched by China and India at certain G20 meetings).

Nothing was decided to materialize the “phasing down” of coal. The Indian delegation, cleverly, proposed a text on the eventual phasing out of all fossil fuels (not only coal, but also oil and gas). Surprise: eighty countries, “developed” and “developing”, supported it, but the Egyptian presidency did not even mention it. The final statement says nothing about it. The term “fossil fuels” appears only once in the text, which calls for “accelerating efforts to reduce (the use of) coal without abatement and the elimination of inefficient

subsidies to fossil fuels". The formula is strictly identical to that which was adopted in Glasgow... (the expression "coal without abatement" refers to combustion installations without CO2 capture for geological sequestration or industrial use...). According to some leaks from the debates between heads of delegations, the Saudis and the Russians opposed any further mention of fossil fuels in the text. The Russian representative is said to have even declared on this occasion: "It is unacceptable. We cannot make the energy situation worse" (*Carbon brief*, Key Outcomes of COP27). It's the pot calling the kettle black!

We thought we had seen everything in terms of greenwashing, but no: some decisions taken in Sharm -el-Sheikh open up the risk that pollution rights could be counted twice. Paris had decided on the principle of a "new market mechanism" to take over from the CDM (Clean Development Mechanism, set up by the Kyoto Protocol). From now on, the rights market will have two speeds: on the one hand a market for emission credits, on the other hand a free market for "mitigation contributions", on which nothing stands in the way of the so-called emission reductions being counted twice (once by the seller and once by the buyer!). In addition, countries that conclude bilateral emission reduction agreements will be free to decide that the means implemented are "confidential"... and therefore unverifiable!

The very fashionable theme of "carbon removal" from the atmosphere considerably increases the risks of greenwashing on the emission credits market. Several methods and technologies could theoretically be used, but there is a great danger that they will serve as a substitute for reducing emissions. So, things have to be very strictly defined and framed. Especially when they involve the use of land areas for energy purposes, because this use obviously risks coming into conflict with human food production and the protection of biodiversity. A previously designated technical body was to look into the

problem. It is faced with such a mass of proposals which are contested, or which have never been tested, that the worst is to be feared, pushed forward by an alliance between fossil fuels and agribusiness.

“Loss and damage”: the tree that hides the forest

The media made much of the decision to create a fund for “loss and damage”. This is a demand that poor countries and small island states have been putting forward for thirty years: the climatic disasters that they are experiencing are costing them dearly, whereas they are the product of the warming caused mainly by the developed capitalist countries; those responsible must therefore pay, through an ad hoc fund. The United States and the European Union have always opposed this demand, but in Sharm el-Sheikh, the pressure from “developing” countries was too strong, it was no longer possible to quibble: either a fund was created, or it was the end of the COP process and a deep split between North and South. You should know that this “South” includes countries as different as the oil monarchies, China, and the so-called “least developed” countries.... To prevent all this little world from forming a bloc supported by the “anti-Western” discourse of the Kremlin, Western imperialism could not afford to do nothing. The EU unblocked the situation by setting the following conditions: 1°) that the fund be supplemented by various sources of financing (including existing sources, and others, “innovative”); 2) that its interventions benefit only the most vulnerable countries; 3°) that the COP “enhances the ambitions” of mitigation. The first two points have been met, not the third.

The creation of the fund is undoubtedly a victory for the poorest countries, increasingly impacted by disasters such as the floods that recently hit Pakistan and Niger, or the typhoons that are increasingly ravaging the Philippines. But

it is a symbolic victory, because COP27 only took a vague decision of principle. Who will pay? When? How much? And above all: to whom will the funds go? To the victims on the ground, or to the corrupt intermediaries? On all these issues, we can expect tough battles. Saudi Arabia, the Emirates and Qatar will refuse to pay, citing the fact that the UN defines them as “developing countries”. China will most likely do the same, arguing that it is contributing through bilateral agreements, as part of its “New Silk Roads”. It is not tomorrow or the day after that capitalism will take its responsibilities in the face of the catastrophe for which it is responsible and which is destroying the existence of millions of men and women, in the South, but also in the North (even though the consequences there are, for the moment, less dramatic)...

The cries of victory over the “loss and damage” fund are all the less justified since the other promises in terms of financing are still not honoured by the rich countries: the hundred billion dollars a year are not paid into the Green Fund for the Climate, and the commitment to double the resources of the adaptation fund has not materialized.

A victory for fossils, acquired in the name of... the poorest!?

This is not the place to go into more detail, other publications have done it very well (*Carbon Brief*, *Home Climate News*, CLARA, among others). The conclusion that emerges is that the climate policy of green capitalism, with its three components (mitigation, adaptation, financing) suffered a failure in Sharm el-Sheikh. Champion of green capitalism, the European Union almost walked out and slammed the door behind it. On the other hand, COP27 ended in a victory for fossil capital.

This victory is first and foremost the result of the geopolitical context created by the exit (?) from the pandemic

and accentuated by the Russian war of aggression against the Ukrainian people. We have entered a conjuncture of growing inter-imperialist rivalries and all-out rearmament. The wars, so to speak, are still only local, and not all have yet been declared, but the possibility of a conflagration haunts all capitalist leaders. Even if they do not want it, they are preparing for it, and this preparation, paradoxically, implies both the acceleration of the development of renewable energies and the increased use of fossil fuels, and therefore a considerable expansion of the possibilities of profit for the big capitalist groups of coal, oil, gas... and the finance capital behind it. It is no coincidence that, a year after Glasgow, the balloon of Mark Carney 's GFANZ (Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero) is deflating: banks and pension funds are less willing than ever to comply with UN rules ("Race for Zero net") on the banning of fossil fuel investments...

Secondly, it is the result of the very nature of the COP process. From Paris onwards, the capitalist sponsorship of these summits has experienced explosive growth. In Sharm el-Sheikh, it seems that quantity has turned into quality. Of the twenty corporate sponsors of the event, only two were not directly or indirectly linked to the fossil fuel industry. The industrial coal, oil and gas lobbies had sent more than 600 delegates to the conference. To this must be added the "fossil moles" in the delegations of many countries (including representatives of the Russian oligarchs under sanctions!), not to mention the official delegations composed solely of these "moles", in particular those of the fossil monarchies of the Middle East. All this fossil scum seems to have changed tactics: rather than denying climate change, or its "anthropogenic" origin, or the role of CO₂, the emphasis is now on "clean fossils" and technologies of "carbon removal". The delegation of the Emirates (one thousand delegates!) thus organized a "side-event" (on the sidelines of the official programme) to attract partners to collaborate on a vast

project of “green oil” consisting (stupidly, because the technology is known) of injecting CO₂ into the oil deposits, to bring out more oil... the combustion of which will produce more CO₂. The *Financial Times*, which is, it will be agreed, above all suspicion of anti-capitalism, was not afraid to go to the heart of the problem: the grip of fossils on the negotiations has grown so much that COP27 was in fact a trade fair for investments, in particular in gas (“green energy”, according to the European Union!), but also in oil, and even in coal (*Financial Times*, 26/11/2022).

A third factor came into play: the role of the Egyptian presidency. During the final plenary, the representative of Saudi Arabia thanked it, on behalf of his country and the Arab League. The dictatorship of General Sissi has indeed achieved a double performance: establishing itself as a country to be visited despite the fierce repression of all opposition, on the one hand; and on the other portraying himself as the spokesperson for peoples thirsty for climate justice, especially on the world’s poorest continent...even when he was in fact acting in collusion with the most relentless of fossil exploiters, so wealthy that they no longer know what to do with their fortunes. In his final speech, the Saudi representative added: “We would like to emphasize that the Convention (the UN Framework Convention on Climate) must address the question of emissions, and not that of the origin of the emissions.” In other words: let us exploit and burn fossil fuels, no need to remove this energy source, let’s focus on how to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere, by “offsetting” the emissions (capture and geological sequestration, tree plantations, purchases of “rights to pollute, etc.).

Only the mass struggle remains

The Europeans, Frank Timmermans in the lead, are weeping and wailing: “the possibility of staying below 1.5°C is becoming

extremely low and is disappearing”, they say in substance. In effect. But whose fault is it? It would be too easy to unload the responsibility on others. In reality, these heralds of green capitalism are caught up in their own neoliberal logic: do they swear by the market? Well, fossils, which dominate the market, have dominated the COP... Time will tell if this is just a hiccup of history. COP28 will be chaired by the United Arab Emirates, so there is nothing to expect from that side. The answer, in fact, will depend on the evolution of the global geopolitical conjuncture, that is to say, ultimately, on social and ecological struggles. Either mass revolts will make the powerful tremble and force them to let go; in this case, whatever the source of the struggle (inflation? one assassination too many, as in Iran? a police confinement, as in China?), a space will open up to unite the social and the ecological, therefore also to impose measures in line with another climate policy. Or else the race to the abyss will continue.

Nobody, this time, dared to say, as usual, that this COP, “although disappointing”, nevertheless constituted “a step forward”. In fact, two things are now crystal clear: 1°) there will be no real “steps forward” without radical anti-capitalist and anti-productivist measures; 2°) they will not emerge from the COP, but from the struggles and their convergence.

27 November 2022

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Rising Clyde 8: latest issue of Scottish Climate Show on “COP27”

The latest issue of Rising Clyde, the Scottish Climate Show hosted by Iain Bruce, is now available on YouTube via the Independence Live video service.

In this episode Iain is with Sabrina Fernandes in Rio and Nathan Thanki in Ibagué, Colombia, talking about the few signs of hope among the failures of COP27 – the agreement on Loss and Damage, the return of Lula, and the blistering critique from President Gustavo Petro. .

Watch the programme here:

Previous Issues

Previous Rising Clyde shows on Independence Live can be found here:

[\(1035\) SHOW: Rising Clyde – YouTube](#)

Radical Independence Campaign statement on UK Supreme Court ruling against a Scottish Independence referendum

**This is a dark day for democracy
and signals clearly the rotten,
undemocratic nature of our broken,
union state.**

The unelected judges of the UK Supreme Court are saying that the Scottish Parliament is permanently vassalled to Westminster and its undemocratic parliament, government and state – that the democratic rights of the Scottish people do not matter and can be ignored.

The court is saying that a parish or district council in England has the right to call a referendum on any issue, but what was claimed to be the “most powerful devolved parliament in the world” cannot.

The collaboration of both the UK government and the official opposition in thwarting democracy needs to be answered with a rising tide of protest by the Scottish people, starting at [the 15 rallies called in Scotland today](#).

If the UK government refuses to now give the referendum a legal basis and continues to try to thwart the Parliament, we call for massive and escalating protests across Scotland

against this denial of democracy.

Let the People Decide – not the judges!

The UK now has a prime minister and a head of state who are not prepared to subject themselves to a democratic vote, yet deny the people of Scotland their democratic rights.

The UK government's refusal to countenance democracy also has a profound impact on rights not just in Scotland but across all parts of the UK state – especially for the people of Cymru/Wales and of Ireland in determining their own future.

When governments reject democracy, it is time for the people to rise up and say: enough is enough!

The UK government is not only denying democracy by the Scottish people, but for all the citizens of the UK state in refusing to put its austerity plans and wage restraint to a vote in an election.

We therefore also call for full support for the battles of the people to win decent pay awards through strike action over the coming months and call for defence of public services against all cuts.

Make the rich companies and individuals who have benefited from profiteering from the crisis pay for it, not force ordinary people to choose between eating and heating over this winter!

RIC will support a campaign of mass direct action – strikes, protests, rallies, civil disobedience – against this rotten undemocratic Tory government.

We call on the Scottish Government and the Westminster opposition to support such protests.

We welcome the SNP's backing for protest rallies in Scotland this evening over the Supreme Court, but also call on them to support the massive strikes voted for by workers that are due in Scotland over the coming weeks and months and to secure the resources to pay workers the inflation-related pay award they deserve.



Furthermore, following the dreadful rolling back at COP27 of international commitments on climate change and 1.5 degrees from the Glasgow COP last year, we call for an end to all new exploration licenses for fossil fuels in the North Sea, and for massive public investment in renewables, funding for a just transition for workers and for a massive publicly-funded programme of home insulation and other reduction measures on energy instead. We support direct action to achieve these goals.

Calls for the Scottish Government to press on with a non-

sanctioned referendum in light of today's ruling are inarguably complicated by the necessary role of local authorities in organising the voting process, which could not be guaranteed in those circumstances.

Similarly, the SNP's suggestion that the next UK general election could be used as a proxy referendum may falter in a cost of living crisis and would certainly undermine the broad, non-partisan coalition of the grassroots independence movement – as well as putting us up against the [troubling introduction of voter ID](#) for Westminster elections.

It is now time for a mass independence movement to mount the most effective challenge possible to the present Conservative UK government, not just on its undemocratic blocking of an independence referendum but also on its right-wing economic policies and their devastating impact on Scotland's people, which need to be opposed in the here and now not just in the future.

Reprinted from the Radical Independence Campaign:
<https://ric.scot/2022/11/ric-statement-on-supreme-court-ruling/>

23 November: Rallies called across Scotland and Europe over UK Supreme Court decision

Rallies in support of Scottish Independence and self-determination have been called across Scotland and Europe for

Wednesday 23 November, the day of the decision by the UK Supreme Court on whether to allow the Scottish Parliament the right to hold a second independence referendum.

The Scottish rallies have been called by an ad hoc group [Time for Scotland](#) in conjunction with local independence groups and will feature speakers from the independence movement reacting to the decision of the UK Supreme Court. A pro-EU campaign, Europe for Scotland will also hold meetings/rallies in five cities across the EU.

ecosocialist.scot will have a representative inside the UK Supreme Court in the morning (the judgement starts at 9.45am UK time) and you can follow our coverage on [Twitter](#) and [Mastodon](#). A full analysis of the implications of the verdict will follow on this website.

Rally locations

The rallies are in the following locations (as at Monday 21 November 14:00) and full details can be found at the [Time for Scotland website](#).

**Edinburgh (main rally) – Holyrood
Parliament 5:30pm – 7:30pm**

**Aberdeen – St Nicholas Square
5:30pm**

**Borders – Selkirk Square and on to
Kirk o Forest 6.30pm**

Dumfries – Midsteeples area in the town centre. Beside the Planestanes 5:30pm

Dundee – City Square, in front of the Caird Hall 5:30pm

Glasgow – Concert Hall steps Buchanan Street 5:30pm

Greenock – Lyle fountain in Cathcart Square 5:15pm for 5:30pm

Inverness – Inverness Townhouse Starts 6:30pm

Inverurie – Inverurie Town Hall 5:30pm

Lochgilphead – Front Green Lochgilphead 12noon

Orkney – St Magnus Cathedral, Kirk Green 5:15pm

**Perth – Concert Hall Plaza
(outside Horsecross) 5:30pm**

**Skye – Portree Sheriff Court,
Portree Square (plus street stall
in square depending on weather
conditions) 5:30pm**

The rallies/protests in Europe will be in the following cities, full details from <https://twitter.com/ScotlandEurope> and on the [Europe for Scotland Facebook page](#)

**Berlin – Sinti-und-Roma-Denkmal,
Simsonweg, 10117 Berlin, Germany
17:30 UTC+01**

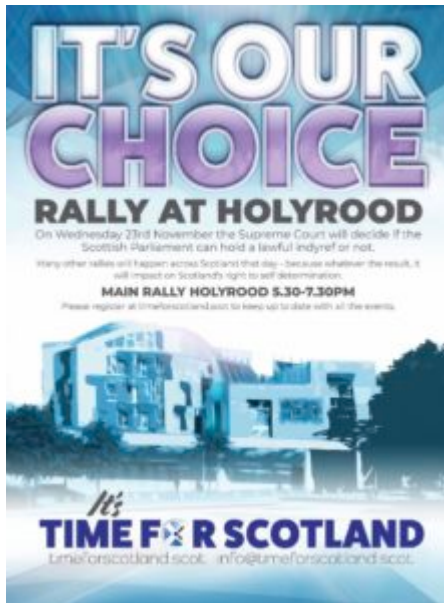
**Brussels/Bruxelles – Coté Schuman,
Parc Du Cinquantenaire 19:45
UTC+01**

**Munich/München – Café am
Glockenspiel Marienplatz 28
5.5tock 18:30 UTC+01**

Paris – The Auld Alliance 80 Rue

francois Miron 19:00 UTC+01

Rome/Roma – Metro Colosseo Via dei
Fori Imperiali 19:30 UTC+01



Statement: The rich make us pay for their profits! Let's mobilize against the rise in the cost of living

The following statement on the cost-of-living crisis across Europe has been prepared by sections of the [Fourth International](#) and is signed by ecosocialist.scot.

The rich make us pay for their profits! Let's mobilize against the rise in the cost of living

For several months now, strike movements and popular mobilizations have been developing in Europe – both inside and outside the European Union – to resist the explosion in the cost of living.

The price of energy, food, rents, transport has increased over the past two years in all countries, aggravating the living conditions of the working classes already under heavy attack in recent years by precariousness, job cuts with Covid and a fall in real wages and benefits.

After inflation in the EU-27 and the UK of respectively 2.6% and 2.5% in 2021, in August 2022, the CPI year-on-year inflation rates reached at 10.5% and 9.9%, with 12.0% and 13.1% for food, 37.5% and 32.0% for fuels (44.6% and 48.8% in 15 months), (sources STATISTA and ONS). Electricity prices began to rise last autumn across Europe, with gas prices exploding during the same period (well before the Russian military invaded Ukraine), tripling over a year in Germany and the Netherlands, while energy prices doubled for households in Britain. In the all-Ireland energy market, prices have risen across the board, north and south, including in the important cost of heating oil, with government interventions stalled in the north by the collapse of political institutions and the ongoing impact of Brexit.

The driving force of this inflation is found in the stock market speculation on raw materials since the recovery in demand since the height of the Covid pandemic, in the context of an oligopolistic market. The catastrophic climate situation in recent months, drought and heat, explicit consequences of climate change, have worsened this situation, as of course the invasion of Ukraine by Putin's army. Global oil supply is set

to tighten, intensifying concerns over soaring inflation after the OPEC+ group of nations (including Russia), faced with falling prices, announced at the beginning of September its largest supply cut since 2020. The move comes ahead of European Union embargoes on Russian energy over the Ukraine war. Speculation on energy prices and an explosion of profits distributed to the shareholders of large companies have resulted. Underlying all this, there is an epochal reduction in the availability of fossil fuels.

Marginal rates of profit have risen, not only in large transport, energy and pharmaceutical companies. Profits in 2021 have been historic. In an unprecedented move, [the five largest French banks](#) generated more than €31 billion in profits in 2021. [Spain's Santander](#) recorded €8.1 billion in net income, Italy's Intesa San Paolo €4.2 billion and [Germany's Deutsche Bank](#) €3.4 billion. Volkswagen's operating margin almost doubled to €20 billion. In the first half of 2022, Shell (Netherlands) leads the way with profits of \$20.6 billion, followed by BP (UK) with \$21.5 billion and TotalEnergies (France) with \$14.7 billion.

These few examples of dazzling enrichment, which is also accompanied by the personal enrichment of the propertied class, especially by distribution of dividends and increase of shares value, contrast with the low wage and benefit rises, the drastic loss of purchase power and labour rights, which have increased the impoverishment of the popular classes. The unequal distribution of wealth worsened during the beginning of the Covid years. This inequality has sharpened even more, particularly for women, young people, the racialized working classes, disabled people, and those populations living in the most deprived areas. [A study](#) predicts that by the end of the year 80% of households in the UK will be in energy poverty and a further explosion of energy prices is anticipated in 2023.

In this period, neoliberal governments have stepped up tax measures in favour of corporations, cut social spending and

significantly increased military budgets – with the concomitant impact on inflation – further worsening the living conditions of the most precarious. The Ukraine war is instrumentalized by reactionary forces, multinational firms and imperialist powers to push their own agenda, arguing that all military budgets are aimed at helping Ukrainian resistance, which is obviously false. Solidarity against the Putin invasion does not prevent fighting against neoliberal and imperialist agendas and austerity policies directed against the working classes.

Governments at different levels (national, regional, local) have introduced support aid systems, energy price ceilings or transport packages, so the weight of inflation on popular classes is uneven depending on the state, but these systems are temporary and do not make up for the increase in the cost of living.

Material conditions, including the interminable wait for the next pay or benefit cheque, have become the essential concern for the vast majority of the working class. Energy, food, housing costs are essential for everyone and these costs are all increasing to unbearable levels

Such a situation is intolerable.

Many struggles have taken place in recent months:

Across the UK state there has been a significant increase in national strikes since the spring despite the most repressive anti-strike laws in Europe – particularly in transport, on the post, in telecoms and in several major ports. A significant vote has just been won for strikes by university lecturers, while schoolteachers and health workers are also balloting. On the other hand, there have been signs of fragmentation of action on the rail and mail by the leaderships of those unions. There is a significant level of public support for the strikes that are taking place. This is combined with political

action especially around the right to food and the right to housing. A six months' rent freeze has been imposed across Scotland by the devolved government there.

At the same time, we have seen the development of a movement to boycott the payment of energy bills with "[Don't Pay UK](#)" across Britain and in Italy, especially in Naples. In Germany, the demonstrations on the left have so far been limited to the oppositional left and some trade unions. This weakness is due mostly to the fact that the leadership of the big industrial unions, the chemical workers union and the metal workers union, are embedded in a tripartite structure which is proposing relief measures for the population. The far right tries to profit from the huge price increases with demonstrations that outnumber those of the left. Huge demonstration occurred in the Czech Republic on 3 October. Several days of strikes called by the trade unions, demonstrations against the high cost of living have taken place or are scheduled (in France 29 Sept, 16 and 18 October, 21 September and 9 November in Belgium). In France, strikes developed around the oil refineries, with workers on strike for four weeks.

Attacks on living conditions will worsen further in the coming months, particularly with the planned increase in contracts and energy prices, and the end of measures which partially cushioned their impact.

In Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, France, we see different political currents with different motivations attempting to divert popular classes' anger away from the capitalists responsible for this crisis and moreover refusing concrete measures to be taken immediately to protect and improve the level and conditions of life for the poorest and most precarious part of the population. At the time when the far right is seeking to exploit this situation, it is our responsibility to seek to organize the broadest class, social and political fronts to

impose social demands, the requisition of the wealth produced and the organization of public services for the benefit of the popular classes by aiming at capitalist profits. We particularly want to see the whole movement devoting resources to organizing and supporting the most precarious.

In these mobilizations, we stand for:

- Increase in wages and benefits at least in line with inflation, with particular protection for those on low incomes, and “uberized workers”, who are de facto employees of capitalist groups
- For automatic increases to keep pace with inflation – a sliding scale of wages and benefits with real measures of inflation determined by organized workers and benefit recipients themselves.
- Abolition of gender inequality at work; give effect to the principle of equal pay for men and women for work of equal value
- Access to free childcare for any child that needs it
- Abolition of VAT on food and energy and reduction and freeze of rents and prices of basic necessities
- Increase of effective tax rate on wealth and profit
- Free local and regional transport, growth of public transport systems
- Free power and heating corresponding to people’s basic needs
- Energy, banking and transport companies, to be socialized under democratic control by workers and users
- Audit of the public debt with citizen participation leading to the cancellation of the illegitimate debt as a way of finding more room for an increase in social spending and in

the struggle against the ecological crisis.

- Massive investment into renewable energy, no new fossil fuels – for the decommissioning of nuclear.

At a time when ultraliberal governments are developing, attacking democratic rights, including in alliance with neo-fascist forces as in Sweden or Italy, it is vital that the anti-capitalist forces, the workers' movement as a whole, develop an emergency plan against the high cost of living and inflation to support all the already existing popular mobilizations and develop them while fighting attempts by the far right to exploit popular anger.

16 November 2022

Signatures

Belgium: - SAP-Antikapitalisten / Gauche anticapitaliste

England and Wales: – Anticapitalist Resistance

France: – Ensemble ! (Mouvement pour une Alternative de Gauche et Ecologiste)

– NPA (Nouveau parti anticapitaliste)

Germany: – ISO (Internationale Sozialistische Organisation)

Greece: – TPT (Fourth International Programmatic Tendency) & Magazine “4” – Greek section of FI

Italy : – Sinistra Anticapitalista

Norway: – FIN (Fourth International in Norway, Forbundet Internasjonalt)

Portugal : – SPQI : collective of FI activists

-Toupeira Vermelha: collective of FI
activists

Scotland: – ecosocialist.scot

Spanish State: – Anticapitalistas

Sweden : – Socialistik Politik

Switzerland : – BFS/MPS (Bewegung für den
Sozialismus/mouvement pour le socialisme/movimento per il
socialismo)

– solidarités

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<https://fourth.international/en/485>

COP27- still fiddling while the world burns

The [ecosocialist alliance](#) issued a statement on 5 November
2022 for COP27, which was supported by [anti*capitalist
resistance](#) and others.

COP27- Still Fiddling While the World Burns

**COP 27, which will meet from the 6-18 November 2022, unfolds
against a backdrop of growing climate chaos and ecological
degradation. As this latest COP approaches, economic
recession, increased poverty and war run alongside the
multiple interlinked and inseparable crises of climate,**

environment, extinction and zoonotic diseases. We now face a global economic recession likely to be deeper even than that of 2008.

The economic spiral into recession will make addressing environmental crisis even more difficult, as states and corporations rush to increase fossil fuel production to offset the deepening energy crisis. They will try to make working people pay with their living standards and their lives, for the crisis of their rotten system. Resources which should be directed at adaptation and amelioration of the climate crisis will be diverted to war and fossil fuel production including dangerous Fracking and Underground Coal Gasification (UCG).

We face increasingly destructive wars, most notably in Ukraine which is destabilising world food supplies, and which has the potential for the use of nuclear weapons. War causes huge physical and social damage to people and societies and the military industrial processes produce 6% of all greenhouse gasses. The impact of wars in Ukraine, Yemen, Palestine and other places in terms of human and environmental cost, and on food production and energy costs, will continue to exacerbate the crises facing the environment and the global economy. Russia's invasion of Ukraine must not be the pretext for a rush to fossil fuels, new coal and gas and the resumption of fracking. Quite the opposite- it should be a spur to shift more rapidly towards renewables.

As Ecosocialists, we say another world is possible. A massive social and political transformation is needed, requiring the mobilisation of the mass of working people, women and men, across the globe. Only the end of capitalism's relentless pursuit of private profit, endless waste, and rapacious drive for growth, can provide the basis for a solution not only to climate change, environmental degradation, and mass extinction, but to global poverty, hunger, and hyper exploitation.

The COP 27 conference will take place in an isolated, heavily policed tourist resort, with only one major road in and out, and hotels charging rates that will likely push the entire COP beyond the means of many grassroots organisations, especially those from poorer countries in the Global South. The Egyptian government say there will be room for opposition, but what they mean, is that activists will be offered fake protests opportunities where state-affiliated NGOs demonstrate around the convention giving the impression of an independent local civil society. No real Egyptian or other opposition will be allowed near Sharm El-Sheikh. We send solidarity to Egypt's climate campaigners, women's organisations, Trade Unionists and workers fighting for democracy.

2022 has seen floods in Pakistan, directly affecting thirty-three million people, Australia and elsewhere. We have seen wildfires, extreme heat, ice melt, drought, and extreme weather events on many continents, yet governments pursue still more fossil fuel production. 2022's summer of disasters broke records worldwide. In 2021, global sea level set a new record high and is projected to continue to rise. The United Nations reports that research shows that women and children are up to fourteen times more likely than men to die during climate disasters.

The big issues of climate change will be debated in Egypt but whatever is agreed, capitalism left to itself can at best mitigate, not end them. Environmental destruction is woven into the very fabric of the system itself. However, much big business resists, we will have to force it to act on a global scale. Ultimately, only the ending of capitalism itself and its replacement by democratic Ecosocialist planned production for need and not private profit can guarantee the necessary action.

Genuine climate solutions cannot be based on the very market system that created the problem. Only the organised working class, and the rural oppressed of the global south -women and

men have the power to end capitalism, because their labour produces all wealth and they have no great fortune to lose if the system changes, no vested interests in inequality, exploitation, and private profit.

Sustainability and global justice

The long-term global crisis and the immediate effects of catastrophic events impact more severely on women, children, elders, LGBTQIA+, disabled people and the people of First Nations. An eco-socialist strategy puts social justice and liberation struggles of the oppressed at its core.

Migration is, and will increasingly be, driven by climate change and conflicts and resource wars resulting from it. Accommodating and supporting free movement of people must be a core policy and necessary part of planning for the future.

Action now to halt climate change!

We demand:

- All new fossil fuels must stay in the ground – no new gas, coal, or oil! No to Fracking and UCG!
- A rapid move to renewable energy for transport, infrastructure, industry, agriculture, and homes.
- A massive global programme of public works investing in green jobs, and replacing employment in unsustainable industries.
- The retrofitting of homes and public buildings with insulation and other energy saving measures to reduce fuel use and to address fuel poverty.
- A globally funded just transition for the global south to develop the necessary sustainable technologies and infrastructure.

- A major cut in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 70% by 2030, from a 1990 baseline. This must be comprehensive – including all military, aviation, and shipping emissions – and include mechanisms for transparent accounting, measurement, and popular oversight.
- The end of emissions trading schemes.
- No to ‘offsetting’ of carbon emissions- we need a real zero not net-zero.

We call for:

- Immediate cancellation of the international debt of the global south.
- A rapid shift from massive factory farms and large-scale monoculture agribusiness towards eco-friendly farming methods and investment in green agricultural technology to reduce synthetic fertiliser and pesticide use in agriculture and replace these with organic methods and support for small farmers.
- A massive reduction in meat and dairy production and consumption, with a view to its phasing out, through education and provision and promotion of high- quality, affordable plant-based alternatives.
- The promotion of agricultural systems based on the right to food and food sovereignty, human rights, and with local control over natural resources, seeds, land, water, forests, knowledge, and technology to end food and nutrition insecurity in the global south.
- The end of deforestation in the tropical and boreal forests by reduction of demand for imported food, timber, and biofuels.
- A massive increase in protected areas for biodiversity conservation.

- End fuel poverty through retrofitting energy existing homes and buildings with energy efficient sustainable technologies.

We demand a just transition:

- Re-skilling of workers in environmentally damaging industries with well-paid alternative jobs in the new economy.
- Full and democratic involvement of workers to harness the energy and creativity of the working people to design and implement new sustainable technologies and decommission old unsustainable ones.
- Resources for popular education and involvement in implementing and enhancing a just transition, with environmental education embedded at all levels within the curriculum.
- Urgent development of sustainable, affordable, and high-quality public transport with a comprehensive integrated plan which meets peoples' needs and reduces the requirement for private car use.
- A planned eco-socialist economy which eliminates waste, duplication and environmentally harmful practices, reduction in the working week and a corresponding increase in leisure time.
- Work practices reorganised with the emphasis on fair flexibility and working closer to home, using a free and fast broadband infrastructure.
- An end to ecologically and socially destructive extractivism, especially in the territories of Indigenous peoples and First Nations .
- Respect for the economic, cultural, political and land rights of Indigenous peoples and First Nations.

As eco-socialists we put forward a vision of a just and

sustainable world and fight with every ounce of our energy for every change, however small, which makes such a world possible. We will organise and assist wherever worker's and community organisations internationally, raising demands on governments and challenging corporations.

If you would like to support the statement or contact Ecosocialist Alliance please email eco-socialist-action@protonmail.com

Ecosocialist Alliance, October 2022

Groups

[Left Unity](#), UK

[Anti-Capitalist Resistance](#), UK

[Green Left](#), UK

[Global Ecosocialist Network](#), International

[RISE](#), Ireland

[Parti de Gauche Marseille Nord](#), France

[Socialist Project](#), Canada

[Breakthrough Party](#), UK

[People Before Profit](#), Ireland

[Climate and Capitalism](#), International

[XR Camden](#), UK

[Anti-Fracking Nanas](#), UK

West Cumbria Friends of the Earth, UK

Save Euston Trees, UK

[Ecosocialist Alliance UK Facebook Group](#), UK

Individuals

Beatrix Campbell, OBE, Writer, UK

George Monbiot, Environmental Writer & Activist, UK

Julia Steinberger, Professor of Ecological Economics, Lausanne University, Switzerland

Victor Wallis, author of Red Green Revolution, USA

Professor Krista Cowman ,Historian, UK

Marina Prentoulis, Associate Professor in Politics & Media, UEA; author of Left Populism in Europe, UK

Romayne Phoenix, Ecosocialist Campaigner, UK

Dr Jay Ginn, (retired academic researcher, UK

Alistair Sinclair Green Eco-Socialist Councillor, Lancaster City Council, UK

Clara Paillard, Unite the Union & Tipping Point UK, UK

Felicity Dowling, Left Unity Principal Speaker, UK

Derek Wall, Former GPEW Principal Speaker; Political Economy Lecturer, Goldsmiths; Author of Climate Strike,UK

Rob Marsden, Red Green Labour editorial board- personal capacity, UK

Jo Alberti, veteran left activist, UK

Doug Thorpe, Left Unity National Secretary, UK

Kevin Frea, Deputy Leader, Lancaster City Council, UK

Dee Searle, One Vote for the Planet activist, UK

Jim Hollinshead, Left Unity, UCU, UK

Ed Bober, UK

Patrick Fitzgerald, Artist, Vizcaya, Spain

Allan Todd, Climate & Anti-Fascist Activist; member of Left Unity's NC, UK

Gordon Peters, Ecosocialist activist, UK

Tim Dawes, Former Chair Green Party of England and Wales; Rtrd. Senior Local Govt. Officer/Consultant, UK

Joe Human. climate activist, UK

Fiona Prior, Climate activist, grandmother, UK

Peter Murry, Ecosocialist activist, UK

Lucy Moy-Thomas, Climate Emergency Camden, UK

Tina Rothery, Climate Campaigner, UK

Dr. Richard Nicholson, Haywards Heath Town Councillor, UK

Sally Lansbury, Labour Party Cllr., Allerdale Borough Council, UK

Deanna Austin-Crowe, Health Worker, UK

Chris Bluemel, Musician & Activist, UK

Lucy Early, Ecosocialist Alliance member, UK

Joseph Healy, International Officer of Left Unity & UNITE Regional Officer, UK

Al Barnes, Paramedic & XR Activist, UK

Steve Masters, Climate activist and Green party councillor, UK

Alice Brown, One Vote for the Planet, UK

Jane Walby, Global Justice Now, Camden Fairtrade Network, Debt

Justice, UK

Dorothea Hackman, Save Euston Trees, UK

Penelope Read, Eco-Warrior, Actor & Musician, UK

Samantha Barnes, Solicitor, UK

Charlotte Christensen, Mum & Anarchist, UK

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<https://anticapitalistresistance.org/cop27-still-fiddling-while-the-world-burns/>

Socialists contest Glasgow Council By-election

The Scottish Socialist Party is standing George MacDougall in a Glasgow Council by-election, *writes Mike Picken.*

The by-election in the Linn Ward, on the south east edge of Glasgow, takes place on Thursday 17 November and is caused by the death of a Labour councillor, Malcolm Cunning, a former leader of the Labour group reelected only in May.

At the heart of the Linn ward is the vast Castlemilk area – a remote housing scheme/estate established in the post-war period. At a well attended SSP election meeting on 8 November in the heart of Castlemilk, socialist candidate George MacDougall explained that poverty is a massive challenge in Castlemilk, particularly due to its remoteness and lack of infrastructure with few shops or cultural facilities, no rail

station and a poor and expensive bus service. Housing standards are varied but some older tenements are afflicted with inadequate insulation and damp. George has lived in the area and explained that it had a strong community ethos with a previous local group, Castlemilk Against Austerity, campaigning for improvements and standing independent candidates in the elections with some success. During its successful early period twenty years ago the SSP won around 13% of the vote in Castlemilk.

The SSP campaign is focussing on the need to unite working class communities against the Tory UK government and point out the inadequacy of the response of parties in the Scottish Parliament – SNP, Labour and Green. SSP Industrial Organiser, Richie Venton, told the public meeting that the SSP demands were to “End Fuel Poverty” by cutting energy bills and calling for the nationalisation of the entire energy system. Venton explained that the SSP demanded a ‘Socialist Green New Deal’ that involved challenging the Tory government at Westminster and demanding the Scottish Parliament and Scottish councils campaign for a massive insulation programme with retrofitting of working class homes, combined with a move to clean green energy, an end to fossil fuel extraction and free public transport to end reliance on private cars and reduce pollution. While these demands are massively popular across Scotland, none of the parties in the Scottish Parliament are prepared to confront the Tory government at Westminster to get them implemented.

The SSP also called for massive solidarity with those workers currently struggling against the Tory wage cuts and cost-of-living crisis. A highlight of the public meeting was a speech by Gordon Martin, the RMT union Scottish Organiser. The RMT has been leading the battle across Britain to defend wages through strike action on the railways. Martin explained that although the strike action had been temporarily suspended following recent developments by the Rail Delivery Group

employers, the RMT was still committed to a further ballot for strike action in the event of no reasonable inflation-matching offer on pay and conditions coming forward. Also addressing the meeting was Melanie Gale, an NHS nurse and workplace representative of the GMB union. She spoke about the struggle in the health service for decent pay and welcomed the likelihood of industrial action by the RCN and other unions (two small health unions in Scotland had already voted for strike action, while the RCN Scotland confirmed on 9 November they had also voted for strikes). Melanie demanded the SNP/Green government in Holyrood put their money where their mouth was and come forward with a pay offer that matches inflation.

The by-election takes place under the transferable vote system used in Scottish councils, so there is no question of the SSP 'splitting' the left or pro independence vote. There are nine candidates in the by-election, including not just the five parties at Holyrood (Labour, SNP, Green, LibDem and Tory) but also the Alba Party, a largely reactionary splinter from the SNP, and the ultra conservative UKIP and Freedom Alliance parties.

This by-election marks a welcome return by the SSP to contesting elections and providing a voice for working class politics of solidarity, socialism and environmentalism. While it is unlikely to make a major breakthrough in terms of numbers of votes at this stage, as the SSP has not stood in an election in the area for 12 years, the SSP campaign focusses on key class issues of the day. To help the SSP election campaign use [this form](#) to contact them.



Gordon Martin, RMT Scotland
organiser addresses SSP
election meeting in
Castlemilk, 8 November

Solidarity with Nicaraguan people – Scotland's role

In Scotland, soon after the 1979 Sandinista [FSLN] revolutionary triumph over the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, a united front solidarity campaign was established called **Scottish Medical Aid for Nicaragua** (SMAN), *writes Norman Lockhart.*

The campaign included trade unions, Labour Party and other campaigns, including church organisations influenced by liberation theology.

It played a similar role to the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign based in London and was based on the experience of Medical Aid for Palestine.

It also incorporated the El Salvador solidarity campaign

(ELSSOC) which had been more prominent in Scotland.

It not only sent NHS doctors and nurses to work mostly in the southern region and concentrated in sending Scottish delegations there, including trade unionists and MPs, but also built health centres and other facilities for people neglected by the Somoza dictatorship.

A high point of the solidarity was the visit by the then revolutionary Sandinista president Daniel Ortega to the Glasgow Mayday 1989 celebrations at a time when right wing US President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher dominated the world of imperialist politics.

The revolution was never to be considered perfect – it was even once described as the Labour Party but with guns!

One of the important lessons of both the Nicaraguan FSLN and the FMLN in El Salvador had been recognising the common grounds for uniting in struggle.

In the context of the popular struggles world wide and particularly in Latin America again today, it should be a priority to defend democratic and human rights against what can be referred to as the [Orteguista dictatorship regime](#).

Ortega and his partner the current vice president Murillo have become another brutal dictatorship [that has imprisoned several hundred political prisoners](#) including his once fellow Sandinista combatants.

For example, one of them who has been detained in solitary confinement for over a year, [Dora Maria Tellez](#), led a military wing of the Sandinista army in overthrowing the Somoza dictatorship and was also the minister for health during the Sandinista government.

This process became more obvious about four years ago when police, aided by para military thugs, shot down workers,

peasants and students demonstrating in defence of the environment and for better state pensions.

While the Sandinista revolution heralded many obvious benefits for the population of Nicaragua in health and education as well as land reforms and farming cooperatives, it also set a worldwide example to those forces struggling for social justice and human rights.

Most notably the recognition of the need for the indigenous and minority black groups on the Atlantic coast for self determination.

This was very significant in undermining the base of the 'contras', the terrorist opposition financed, trained and armed by the USA.

Part of the consolidation of the revolutionary process and the best way for a legitimate international profile was the first democratic presidential election that confirmed the Sandinista popular liberation victory.

In contrast, a clear expression of the revolution's many faults was the so called 'piñata' when after losing the next election many financial rewards and privileges (state property, land and businesses) were given to faithful FSLN party servants or bureaucrats.

The dictatorship of Ortega has even refused permission for [revolutionaries from other latin american states](#) to visit Nicaragua to find out first hand what conditions for working class people are like. And even the Organisation of Latin American States OEA has condemned Ortega's undemocratic regime repeatedly over the last four years but this year it was unanimous and without abstentions.

There is still a network of Scots previously sympathisers of the Sandinista revolution who support the people's continuing struggle.

Norman Lockhart, October 2022

Image from <https://correspondenciadeprensa.com/>

Solidarity with the protest movement in Iran!

Statement of the [Executive Bureau](#) of the [Fourth International](#)
Since 16 September Iran has been thrown into turmoil by widespread protests against the policies of the ruling clique. They were triggered by the brutal murder of the young woman Jîna (Mahsa) Amini, who was beaten to death by the “morality police”. The duration and the expansion of the demonstrations to all parts of the country and almost all strata of the population testify to a deep-seated discontent and anger that goes beyond rejection of the regime’s deeply restrictive dress code for women. The causes also lie in a social plight that has been worsening for years for large sections of the population and in massive repression.

Unlike previous unrest, such as the rebellion against electoral fraud (2009) or protests against rising fuel prices (2019), the rallying cry in the forefront is “Down with the Islamic Republic!” After a month of protests the movement is still going strong and spreading.

Compared to past decades, the social hardship among the population is even greater today. More than half of the population lives below the subsistence level and can only survive with a lot of difficulties. Health care has become even more inadequate than it already was. The ecological damage is enormous, with severe water shortages, desertification and deforestation affecting the rural

population particularly, and high levels of air and water pollution in the cities.

What is striking and enthralling is that the movement is led by young women, including school students. This is fed by the history of women's struggles and movements in Iran since before the days of the 1979 revolution. Popular support is based on a now widely shared hatred of the regime and of the corrupt theocratic clique that dominates and exploits the country, enriching itself to the point of becoming dollar billionaires.

The fact that the movement has lasted for so long and on such a broad scale, despite the harsh repression, can only be explained by the anger felt above all by the younger generations. Broad sections of the students and pupils who are resisting their confinement and taking to the streets for a different life.

The second specificity of today's wave of protest is that it has spread from Jîna (Mahsa) Amini's home city in Kurdistan throughout the country. This is why the Kurdish chant "Jin Jiyan Azadi" translated to Persian as "Zan Zendegi Azadi" has become the main slogan of the movement today. In Kurdistan, the rejection of the theocratic regime and the struggle for self-determination have a long tradition and are being expressed with force. What is new is the scale of the protests in Baluchistan, where social oppression and massive poverty are the worst in the country. The repression there manifested itself, for example, on 7 October when more than 100 people were shot dead during a demonstration in the provincial capital Zahedan.

And a third prominent feature should not be overlooked: For a week now, calls for a political strike have been increasing, something that has not happened for more than 35 years, since the crushing of workers' councils and left organisations. A first section of the oil industry in the southern Khuzistan

province has been on strike for a week, evoking memories of 1979, when the oil workers' strike was the prelude to a nationwide general strike. However, the leaderships of the main independent unions are almost without exception in prison.

It is solely up to the people of Iran to determine their own destiny, with full democratic rights and gender equality, with religious freedom and secularism, defending the rights of all minorities and working for social and economic justice.

We therefore call for:

- Broadening the international support of all progressive and left-wing forces for the protest and revolt movement in Iran against the religious dictatorship, for the defence of democratic freedoms, and for the dismantling of the police and militias that repress the individual freedoms notably of women.

- Expressions of internationalist solidarity such as messages from women's movements, trade unions, student associations and so on to give political and moral support to the movement. We encourage trade unions to discuss with their counterparts practical forms of solidarity; universities to call on their counterparts to protect the lives and freedom of their students; women's and student movements to make links with movements in Iran.

- Support for public demonstrations of solidarity with the movement on the call of the progressive forces in the Iranian communities in exile, this is crucial.

- An end to all repression in Iran and for human rights organisation to monitor the crimes committed by the state in their repression of the population.

- For the right to humanitarian visas primarily for persecuted women and girls and LGBTIQ people, fleeing the repression in

Iran.

Woman, life, freedom!

Zan, Zendegi, Azadi

Jin, Jiyan, Azadi

18 October 2022

Executive Bureau

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Photo: Uprising in Tehran Sept 2022 Copyright Darafsh /
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After the floods, Pakistan needs reparations, not charity

At the time of writing, *writes Farooq Tariq on 13 September*, more than one-third of Pakistan is under water. Flash floods, generated by abnormal monsoon rains have so far claimed the lives of [1350 people](#). One million residential buildings are totally or partially damaged, leaving more than [50 million people](#) displaced from their homes.

Crucially, the flood is expected to add [\\$10 billion worth of damage](#) to an already teetering economy. More than 793,900 livestock have died, depriving families across Pakistan of a critical source of sustenance and livelihood. Around two million acres of crops and orchards have been impacted.

These impacts are undeniably a symptom of an accelerating climate crisis. Despite producing less than one per cent [of global carbon emissions](#), Pakistan bears some of the worst consequences of the climate crisis globally. The nation has consistently ranked in the Global Climate Risk Index as among the top ten most vulnerable countries in the world over the past twenty years. As Julien Harneis, the UN humanitarian coordinator in Pakistan says: 'This super flood is driven by climate change – the causes are international'.

The people of Pakistan are the latest victims of a global crisis to which they have contributed almost nothing, – and which has instead been driven by the excess emissions of rich countries and corporate polluters. This fundamental injustice is at the root of increasing demands for climate reparations from Pakistan and the wider Global South.

We are now taking out more loans to simply pay off the interest of our previous debts. The money sent out of Pakistan to pay off our international creditors could be spent instead on rehabilitating the millions who are displaced

One such demand is debt cancellation. Debt injustice and the climate crisis go hand in hand. As extreme weather events intensify countries on the frontlines, such as [Mozambique](#), and island states in the Caribbean are facing increasing economic damages. After these events, low-income (and often already heavily indebted) governments face a shortfall in funding and have little choice but to take out further loans to rebuild livelihoods and communities.

We can already see this cycle happening in Pakistan. Even before the floods, Pakistan was drowning in debt, having faced a steep fall in foreign exchange because of soaring global commodity prices and a rise in the US dollar. The cost of electricity and food has soared. By the end of this year, Pakistan will have had to pay a total of around \$38 billion dollars to the [IMF](#), [World Bank](#) and other financial

institutions including the Chinese State Bank. A spiral of borrowing is generating an impending economic crisis.

The floods have prompted a flurry of foreign aid, with USAID contributing \$30 million, adding to a United Nations contribution of \$3 million last week. The UN is launching a new flood relief plan for Pakistan, as its officials echoed calls for greater contributions from around the world. But still, it is nowhere near enough.

As humanitarian organizations scabbled for emergency funds, a familiar face reared its head once more. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), recently approved a bailout request with a plan to release [\\$1.1 billion to the country](#). At first glance, this may seem like a vital step in Pakistan's recovery, but to pile further debt on a country already in the grips of a financial crisis will only end in further disaster.

The empirical evidence overwhelmingly supports the view that a large portion of [government debt](#) harms economic growth potential, and in many cases, the impact gets more pronounced as debt increases. Pakistan's high degree of indebtedness has made it more vulnerable to economic shocks and weakened the country politically vis-a-vis powerful external lenders. It has also greatly reduced Pakistan's ability to invest in education and healthcare, or its infrastructure.

If the West intends on supporting Pakistan through this crisis, it needs to implement a series of measures that tackle the scale of damage inflicted by the Global North upon the South since the Industrial Revolution. As a first step, this should include comprehensive debt cancellation, alongside greatly increased climate finance to support communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

In addition, many climate-vulnerable countries including Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Tuvalu are now also calling for compensation from rich countries for the disasters they are

now facing.

This is often termed as 'Loss and Damage', which even now in 2022 is still not an official part of the negotiations agenda at the UN climate change conference, COP. Climate-vulnerable countries have on numerous occasions demanded climate compensation from the rich countries and corporations that have created climate chaos – each time [they have been blocked](#). At COP27, there must be further concrete progress on these discussions.

The concept of waiving debt is not new. During the pandemic, some debt relief was put in place for low-income countries, although the private sector has continued to collect payments, which inevitably exacerbated the economic crisis generated by Covid-19. But even private creditors can be kept at bay when there is a strong moral demand. In July, a few months after Russia's invasion, Ukraine's creditors made a landmark agreement to cease collecting debt payments during the war.

If international institutions suspended the collection of debts, Pakistan wouldn't need new loans. The money sent out of Pakistan to pay off international creditors could be spent instead on rehousing the millions who are displaced. Pakistan needs at least four years to rebuild and reconstruct its economy and to cover up the damages done by floods and heavy rains.

But there also remains a wider question: who should pay for the climate crisis? Why should Pakistan have to take out any loans at all to pay for the impacts of a crisis it has not caused? Pakistan's climate minister Sherry Rehman told [The Guardian](#) that global emission targets and reparations must be reconsidered, given the accelerated and relentless nature of climate catastrophes hitting countries such as Pakistan.

Of course, repairing climate apartheid and fixing the crisis is not as simple as writing a cheque, and many other measures

are needed to support Pakistan's people through the catastrophe they are facing.

Yet without debt relief or funding to compensate for loss and damage, Pakistan's cycle of debt and climate crises is only set to worsen



By Farooq Tariq

Farooq Tariq is the General Secretary of the Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee, a network of 26 peasant organizations and a coalition member of the international platform La Via Campesina.

This article is republished from the website of [CADTM, the Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt](#). CADTM is an international organisation based in Liege, Belgium and is led by [Eric Toussaint](#), a writer of several books on debt published by Resistance Books, [here](#) and [here](#).



Original Source : [New Internationalist](#)

Imagining an Independent Wales

The Welsh/Cymraeg movement for independence from the UK state has been growing significantly across the country over recent years, *writes Mike Picken.*

A demonstration organised by [Yes Cymru](#) and [All Under One Banner Cymru](#) on 1st October in the capital of Cardiff/Caerdydd saw around 10,000 people march for independence/**Annibyniaeth**.

[Speakers from across the independence movement addressed marchers](#) about the failures of the Tory-led UK state, including many public figures from the cultural movement.

There has always been a strong movement in Wales for independence, rooted in the Welsh language and cultural movement, but what has been significant in recent years has been the growth in discussion particularly among the left, about the importance of political independence and what type of state a future independent Wales needs to be. New left wing organisations such as the Welsh socialist organisations [Undod](#), [Labour for an Independent Wales](#) and the [Welsh Underground Movement \(previously Valleys Underground\)](#) have emerged and are working alongside the left in [Plaid Cymru](#).

It is particularly significant for those of us in Scotland that the Welsh Labour Party leadership have accepted that independence is a legitimate constitutional demand and that not only are supporters of Independence openly tolerated and even adopted as candidates by Welsh Labour, but that the question of independence should be examined by the new [Constitutional Commission](#) established with the support of Welsh Labour in [Senedd Cymru](#). Not only that, Welsh Labour government in Senedd Cymru has a [cooperation agreement](#) with independence-supporting Plaid Cymru covering a range of topics

but especially [action on the climate crisis](#). This is the complete opposite of Scottish Labour, where supporters of Independence are hounded out, and despite Keir Starmer's claim of "No Deals with the SNP" disastrous agreements with the ball-wrecking Tories in several councils, including Edinburgh, have been made by Scottish Labour.

The topic of what sort of independent Wales is needed was discussed at a meeting on the eve of the 1 Oct demonstration, under the heading "***Imagining an Independent Wales***". This meeting was called by another newly formed organisation [Melin Drafod](#) – which means 'Think Tank' in the Welsh language – and is devoted to discussing ideas about progressive social change within an independent Wales. Among the speakers was former leader of the Plaid Cymru political party, [Leanne Wood](#). This meeting and discussion was recorded and has now been published by Melin Drafod. The meeting like all meetings organised by Welsh independence activists is bilingual, but for Scottish readers the comments of Leanne Wood are entirely in English.

Video originally published here: [Imagining an Independent Wales – Melin Drafod](#)

You can read more about the position of marxists and Fourth International supporters on Welsh Independence in the following documents:

- [The submission by Anti Capitalist Resistance, supported by ecosocialist.scot, to the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales](#)
- ['Disunited Kingdom' an analysis by Terry Conway following the elections in Scotland, Wales and England in May 2021](#)
- ['Whispers of a Forgotten Nation' by the late Ceri Evans, marxist writings by a leading Fourth International supporter about Wales, the national question and related issues](#)



Radical Independence Campaigners to protest at UK Supreme Court in London

The [Radical Independence Campaign \(RIC\)](#) is calling on supporters of Scottish and Welsh Independence and for Irish reunification to make a protest at the UK Supreme Court in London on Tuesday 11 October at 10am, *writes Mike Picken*, when the Court will begin hearing evidence on whether the Scottish government has the legal powers to call a second independence referendum in October 2023.

RIC has called for Scottish independence supporters and allies to gather outside the court from 10am on Tuesday morning to peacefully assert our right to hold a referendum.

There is a Facebook event page here:

[Let The People Decide! | Facebook](#)

The [hearing](#) will consider a reference from Scotland's most senior legal officer, Lord Advocate Dorothy Bain, under the provisions of the devolution legislation (the Scotland Act 1998) allowing her to refer a matter to the UK Supreme Court for determination. The Court will be asked to decide whether a proposed consultative referendum on Scottish Independence is within the current legal powers of the Scottish Parliament. The UK government of the new Conservative Prime Minister, Liz Truss, will oppose the proposed referendum through the offices of its legal officer, the Advocate General. There will also be a [formal intervention](#) heard in favour of the rights of the Scottish Parliament and people for self determination, submitted by the Scottish National Party (SNP)

This legal battle follows the May 2021 election to the Scottish Parliament when a majority of members (MSPs) elected for the Scottish National Party (SNP) and the Scottish Green Party had a manifesto commitment to hold such a referendum in the first half of the parliamentary session (ie before the end of 2023). The UK Tory government now headed by Liz Truss and her band of right wing Brexit supporters, and supported by the Labour Party official opposition of Keir Starmer, is totally opposed to holding such a referendum and is trying to block it by any means available, even though a majority of the Scottish Parliament have been elected on that basis. The UK Supreme Court is now being asked to determine who has the power to call a referendum.

The Radical Independence Campaign (RIC) is saying that the people of Scotland must be allowed to decide, not the Westminster Parliament and

not the courts.

The UK Supreme Court is based in London, but is the only court that covers the whole of the UK – which is divided into [separate legal systems](#): that of **Scotland**, whose legal systems and institutions are more closely related to the ‘Civil Law’ systems of Europe and were preserved as independent under the 1707 union of England and Scotland; that of the largely ‘Common Law’ system of **England**, which historically also included **Wales** though there is now a small separate body of Welsh law since legal powers of Senedd Cymru were changed in 2007; and that of the part of the **north of Ireland** under UK state control, a direct legacy of the colonial partition (‘Northern Ireland’). The eleven Judges in the UK Supreme Court are drawn from all of the legal systems; although the majority are from England, the current President of the Court is a Scottish Judge. Five of the Judges will hear the case and a decision is expected in two to three months, possibly sooner.

RIC is pointing out that the decision of the Court will also have significant implications for the increasing numbers supporting independence for Wales and the reunification of Ireland, and it is calling on supporters of those causes to join them at the Court and build links across the UK state for the right of the nations within the UK state to self determination.

ecosocialist.scot hopes to provide further coverage of the protest and the Supreme Court hearing so please return [here](#) for more updates.

Radical Independence Campaign

Another Scotland Is Possible

The Radical Independence Campaign works for an independent Scottish republic. We see independence as a means to achieve the radical change that Scotland urgently needs. We stand for a Scotland that is:

- *For a democratic, secular, socially just and environmentally sustainable Scottish republic.*
- *Action based on the sovereignty of the people not the UK Crown, leading to the setting up of a Constituent Assembly.*
- *Action to establish universal health care, education, housing, income, pensions and trade union rights; and to win land reform and challenge environmental degradation.*
- *Equality and opposition to discrimination on grounds of sex, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion/belief, disability or age*
- *Solidarity with the struggles for workers' rights, democracy and self-determination, based on internationalism from below*
- *Support for Scotland's artistic and cultural revival in all its languages*

Climate Camp Scotland: Meet & Camp Out @ the Kelpies, Saturday 15 October/

From our friends at [Climate Camp Scotland](#) ...

Hey there campers!

We've got some tasty stews on the stove this Autumn so make sure you stop by the kitchen tent...

Meet & Camp Out @ the Kelpies, 15 Oct

We are beginning to lay foundations for an incredible 2023 climate camp.

On [Saturday 15th October](#) we are going to Falkirk / Grangemouth for a series of **informal tea-time chats** with local organisers, community members and trade unionists to hear about living with **Scotland's biggest polluter**, the recent wildcat strikes, the cost of living crisis, and their aspirations for a just transition.

After our meetings we'll head to a (secret) **fire and camp spot** to enjoy the Autumn leaves and hopefully some stars! It should be a very wholesome and productive day and night, and everyone is welcome to join for as much of the runnings as they feel able.

The day starts at **1.30pm** with the community meeting at **the Kelpies** Visitor Centre Cafe.

[To get a briefing with venue details, travel info, and how to take part click here.](#)

It should be a wholesome and fun day for the group so we hope you'll consider joining us!

Climate Camp have our regular meetings online, organised via Signal. To find out more about these or to get more involved, [join our Signal groups here.](#)

Autumn love and solidarity,

[Climate Camp Scotland](#)

Solidarity with Ukraine! Solidarity with the Workers of Ukraine! Glasgow Public Meeting Sat 22 October 10.30am

Speakers from the recent Ukraine Solidarity Campaign delegation to Ukraine will address a public meeting in Glasgow called by Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland on Saturday 22 October 10.30am at John Smith House, [145-165 West Regent Street Glasgow G2 4RZ](#).

The leaflet advertising the meeting is available in PDF form [here](#) and reproduced below. The Facebook event is [here](#).

***Solidarity with Ukraine!
Solidarity with the Workers of
Ukraine!***

Public Meeting:

10.30am, Saturday 22nd October

John Smith House 145-165 West Regent St. Glasgow

Speakers from the recent Ukraine Solidarity Campaign delegation to Ukraine:

- Chris Ford (Ukraine Solidarity Campaign)**
- Alena Ivanova (Another Europe is Possible)**

The war in Ukraine continues to dominate headlines: Ukraine's counter-offensive, Putin's escalating rhetoric, sham 'referendum' in Russian-occupied regions of Ukraine, and Putin's military mobilisation decree.

The focus of the media is primarily on the extreme cost to human lives and the Ukrainian economy as a result of the Russian invasion. But Ukraine's labour movement is not just fighting at the front.

It is also fighting to defend and extend rights and protections for all. As it struggles to continue to fund its military resistance, the Ukrainian government and Parliament has also proposed emergency measures dramatically weakening employment rights.

With rising inflation, energy insecurity and the urgent need for more military and humanitarian support, Ukraine needs our solidarity more than ever. At the same time, global powers are already initiating discussions about reconstruction and pushing their agendas. But what kind of Ukraine are Ukrainians bravely fighting for?

A recent USC solidarity delegation to Ukraine met with trade unions and left groups in Ukraine. It discussed recent developments in the war, workers rights and the future reconstruction of Ukraine. Organisations met by the delegation included:

The Federation of Trade Unions; the Confederation of Free Trade Union; the State Employees Union; the NGPU Miners Union; the Free Trade Union of Rail Workers; the Education Workers Union; Sotsiyalnyi Rukh and the Social-Democratic Platform.

This meeting has been organized to provide first-hand accounts of the struggles of the Ukrainian people and of Ukrainian workers, and to help build labour movement solidarity with those struggles.

Organised by Ukraine Solidarity Campaign(Scotland). PCS, ASLEF, and the NUM are affiliated to the USC at a national level. Affiliates in Scotland include local GMB, Unite, NUJ and ASLEF branches. To invite a speaker from the USC (Scotland) to your branch meeting, e-mail: uscscotland@yahoo.com

Ukraine Solidarity Campaign (Scotland): [Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland |Facebook](#)

Ukraine Solidarity Campaign National Website: <https://ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org>

Public Meeting:
10.30am, Saturday
22nd October
John Smith House
145-165
West Regent St.
Glasgow



Ukraine Solidarity Campaign (Scotland) | Education, Solidarity, Campaign, Scotland | Facebook
Ukraine Solidarity Campaign National Website: <https://ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org>

**Solidarity with Ukraine!
Solidarity with
the Workers of Ukraine!**

Speakers from the recent Ukraine Solidarity Campaign delegation to Ukraine:

- Chris Ford (Ukraine Solidarity Campaign)
- Alena Ivanova (Another Europe is Possible)

The war in Ukraine continues to dominate headlines. Ukraine's counter-offensive, Putin's escalating rhetoric, and the humanitarian crisis in Russian-occupied regions of Ukraine, and Putin's military mobilisation, are the focus of the media. But Ukraine's labour movement is not just fighting at the front.

It is also fighting to defend and extend rights and protections for all. As it struggles to continue to fund its military resistance, the Ukrainian government and Parliament has also proposed emergency measures to gradually restore employment rights.

With rising inflation, energy necessity and the urgent need for more military and humanitarian support, Ukraine needs our solidarity more than ever. At the same time, global powers are already initiating discussions about reconstruction and post-war agreements. But what kind of Ukraine and Ukrainians do we want to fight for?

A recent USC solidarity delegation to Ukraine met with trade unions and left groups in Ukraine. It discussed recent developments in the war, workers rights and the future reconstruction of Ukraine. Organisations met by the delegation included:

The Federation of Trade Unions, the Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the State Employees Union, the MOPU Miners Union, the Free Trade Union of Rail Workers, the Education Workers Union, Solidarity Baku and the Social Democratic Platform.

This meeting has been organised to provide first-hand accounts of the struggles of the Ukrainian people and of Ukrainian workers, and to help build labour movement solidarity with those struggles.

Organised by Ukraine Solidarity Campaign (Scotland) in partnership with the following branches: ASLEF, GMB, NUJ, PCS, RMT, UNITE and NUM. For more information, contact: uscscotland@yahoo.com or visit our website: <https://ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org>