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Britain

# Two steps to stop Brexit

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### **This statement from Socialist Resistance was agreed on November 25.**

We called for a vote to Remain in the referendum in 2016 as the Leave campaign was totally dominated by a nationalist and xenophobic reaction to globalisation. We did so in the knowledge that the EU is an undemocratic neoliberal institution, and is a necessary instrument for big business and finance in the era of globalised capitalism. Voting Remain was to defeat the far right.

In the present situation, there is no space for a Left Brexit. Any such Left Brexit would have to be in the context of mass mobilisations and a radical left government confronting the neoliberal EU. This is even more obvious today.

It was correct in the immediate aftermath of the referendum to state that it should be respected, as a re-run then would have been seen as a manoeuvre to overturn the decision.

All forms of Brexit will entail economic disruption to a greater or lesser extent depending on whether it is a hard/no deal Brexit or a soft one. The cost of this disruption will be passed on to the working class and the poor who have not yet recovered from the crash in 2008. All Brexits, even soft ones, will also entail the loss of the democratic right of freedom of movement of people throughout the EU 28.

Now, two and half years on, with the information out in the open as to the consequences of the various Brexit deals, the call for another referendum or people's vote on any deal, including an option to Remain, is legitimate in the present circumstances. The issue of whether referendums are a good way to decide on government policy in general is a different discussion.

We welcome the Labour Party position adopted at its recent conference in so far as it opposes any Tory deal, that there should be a general election if the Tories lose the vote in Parliament, and "if we cannot get a general election Labour must support all options remaining on the table, including campaigning for a public vote". This implies a referendum with the option to vote Remain and this should be in the Labour Party manifesto.

But while Labour's "six tests" means that they will vote against any Tory Brexit, these tests also commits Labour to "a strong and collaborative future relationship with the EU" and the "the fair management of migration". In other words, a very soft Brexit without free movement of people.

We continue to oppose any Brexit, including a soft one, and call for a vote against all Brexit options in Parliament and to Remain in the EU, including in a referendum.

The Labour Party should adopt a position of opposition to all forms of Brexit and take the leadership of the anti-Brexit movement. Failure to do so risks the Labour Party losing a general election and the future of the "Corbyn movement".

Given the crisis and meltdown of the Tories, the central agitational demand today is for the Tories to step aside and for a general election, followed by a referendum on the outcome of negotiations.

While opposing the neoliberal and undemocratic EU, we support the call for "Another Europe" based on opposition to neoliberalism, popular democracy, respect for the rights of nations, freedom of movement for people, an end to

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fortress Europe and militarism, and for economic and political solidarity. We should sketch a new vision for the 21st century to update the “united socialist states of Europe”. We do not have any illusion that the EU, just like the UK, can be reformed and democratised without mass struggles.

We will participate in mobilisations for another referendum or a “people’s vote” but we do not support the “People’s Vote” campaign as it is dominated politically by neoliberals and Europhiles. We support the “Another Europe is Possible” campaign and other similar European-wide campaigns.

*PS:*

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