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Puerto Rico

First congress of Democracia Socialista proposes ecosocialism as the alternative to the climate crisis

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The first Congress of Democracia Socialista (DS- Socialist Democracy) opened in San Juan last weekend with discussion on the climate crisis and ecosocialism as the alternative. Congress activities began on Friday, August 5 with a presentation by Professor Jorge Colón entitled, “The Climate Crisis and the Ecosocialist Alternative.”

The presentation, which was open to the public and in which more than 50 people participated, was transformed into a space for debate, exchange and coordination for leaders and members of organisations fighting for the defence of the environment, the protection of our ecosystems and the rapid transition to renewable energy sources.

According to Jorge Lefevre, spokesperson for DS, the activity exceeded the established objectives. “Compañero Jorge Colón clearly presented the crossroads at which we find ourselves,” he said referring to the climate crisis. “The logic of the capitalist system demands that the economy grow without limit. When the economy does not grow, there is crisis. The growth which capitalism requires in order to avoid and overcome crises, the boundless expansion of the market and the accumulation of profits, are in contradiction to peoples’ need to survive the climate crisis which confronts us” he added. “The survival of humanity in the face of the climate crisis is incompatible with capitalism. The socialist perspective allows us to recognise that the destructive effects of this genocidal crisis are felt principally by the popular masses and most vulnerable social groups (women, people of colour, indigenous peoples, peasants, those of the global south, etc). We need an ecosocialist alternative, a democratic form of organising society and planning the economy in order to survive the civilisational crisis into which humanity is being plunged”, the union leader maintained. “You cannot sustain a system that demands growth when the survival of humanity demands degrowth,” he added.

Preceded by a report by Andreu Coll, militant of Anticapitalistas in the Spanish State and a member of the Fourth International leadership, as part of its work the organisation analysed the international situation. The international conjuncture is marked by what are designated “interimperialist conflicts”. Rising tension between the USA and China, exacerbated dangerously last week with the visit of Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan, the clash between NATO and Russia over the expansion of their respective zones of influence and the war provoked by the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army, are manifestations of these conflicts.

Additionally, the activity was attended by professors Félix Córdova Iturregui and Iyari Ríos, who presented their analysis of the current situation and highlighted the structural nature of the deep crisis in the Puerto Rican economy. Lefevre added that “the economic crisis that manifested itself in the so-called recession of March 2006 contains several very complex historical levels. It was not a cyclical crisis, the result of the movement of the contradictions inherent in the cycle of capital, but the result of the accumulation of crises at different historical levels, the main ones being the collapse of capitalist and traditional agriculture that accompanied the golden age of the project of industrialisation between 1947-1974; the collapse of the petroleum-chemical project between 1974-1985; the disappearance of practically half of all manufacturing jobs, beginning with the final disappearance of Section 936. [1] It was no coincidence that the so-called recession that began in March 2006 coincided with the end of the period of grace granted to corporations under 936 before the Section disappeared without the elaboration of any viable alternative to replace it”, said the spokesman.

Lefevre, a member of the organisation’s Political Committee, raised the importance of having an analysis at the historical level of the Puerto Rican crisis, to be able to break with the crisis and with capitalism itself. “The analysis of a concrete situation has to be rigorous and serve us as a compass to guide our tasks and our actions.” Alongside Lefevre, María E. Suárez Santos, Natalia Santos Orozco and Manuel Rodríguez Banchs make up the Political Committee.

First congress of Democracia Socialista proposes ecosocialism as the alternative to the climate crisis

August 8, 2022.

Translated by David Fagan from [Punto de Vista Internacional](#).

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[1] Section 936 of the Federal Tax Code of the USA, allowed subsidiaries of U.S. firms operating in Puerto Rico to pay no federal taxes on their Puerto Rican profits, even if those profits were taken out of Puerto Rico and sent to the United States.