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Pre-Congress, 17th World Congress

# Let's seize the opportunities, and build an international for revolution and communism

- Fourth International resolutions - World Congresses - 17th World Congress - 2018 - 17th World Congress discussion -

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**This text was submitted by IC members Manos (Greece), Jeff M. (SA USA) and supported at the IC by permanent guests: GaÃ«l, Mathilde (NPA and French section). This is the final version, after the international Conference held in Paris on November 10-12. The text is meant to be put to the vote against the documents proposed by the majority of the IC to the World Congress.**

## **I- The current state of the Fourth International**

### **A) The “broad parties” policy: balance sheet of a catastrophe**

The current leadership replaced the strategic goal of building revolutionary parties with the building of “broad parties”. A century after the Russian Revolution, some ask: Is the principle “no revolution without a revolutionary party” outdated? We do not believe it is. Over the last few congresses, the FI leadership has been explicitly aiming at building “broad” parties, without clear programmatic and strategic boundaries. What are the results of this policy?

In recent times, we've seen major failures. In the Spanish state, Anticapitalistas are under the pressure of the Pablo Iglesias group and thus adapting to it. By trying to gain electoral or mainstream media influence, we are led to sacrifice our goal “the overthrow of the capitalist system.”

The Syriza experiment was embraced to such an extent that the Greek FI section, which refused to support it, was even accused in the IC of being counterrevolutionary. Syriza was presented as a model for some time, yet it amounted to a catastrophe. It was introduced as an “anti-austerity” party and government. But it revealed itself to be a destructive machine against workers and the people. The worst onslaught we have seen in decades has been led by Syriza against youth and the working class.

But these are only two examples in a series of catastrophes, and no serious analysis of these disasters has been undertaken to help draw conclusions. The list of failures is long: in Brazil, the FI section participated in the Lula government; in Italy, the FI comrades supported in Parliament the formation of a Prodi government and voted for the war budget; in Portugal, the section recently supported the SP government agenda. The common feature in all these failures is the support of political forces or governments acting in the framework of capitalist management, resulting in the dislocation of the FI sections.

The policy of building “broad parties” instead of revolutionary parties did indeed lead to the dissolution of our forces into reformist coalitions. Indeed, why build a revolutionary current if there is no revolutionary communist program to stand up for? The situation is alarming. Over the years we have seen FI sections disappear, dissolve or adapt at an accelerating rate. Our ability to defend either the principle of class independence or to maximize the ability of our social class to act independently from the bourgeoisie and its State, is undermined when support is given to a politician linked to a bourgeois party, like Bernie Sanders, or to a personality with no ties to the labour movement, like Pablo Iglesias.

### **B) “New situation, new program...” or the present relevance of the revolution and a revolutionary communist program?**

Why has the current FI leadership been steadily pursuing this policy for years in spite of the series of failures? It implicitly gave up on the relevance of revolution, seeing it as something to be accomplished in the distant future. In its view, the balance of forces is so unfavourable that the task of the hour is to rebuild an elementary class consciousness, based on the struggles of the oppressed in reaction to the ruling class onslaught. There is no need for a revolutionary compass, no need for an organized battle for a transitional program, and no need for a communist program. It is sufficient for them to regroup all those who are ready to resist, reformists and revolutionaries alike, to slowly accumulate experience and strength, and to wait for better days. In order to accomplish that goal, the adequate tool is indeed the "broad party".

This becomes a justification for allying everywhere with social forces who are not even reformist in the classic meaning of the term. They look to forces with no communist programmatic basis and with no social basis in the working class.

Yet the present relevance and necessity of a revolutionary program was demonstrated by the revolutionary processes south of the Mediterranean Sea and by the situation in Greece: the rising and more radical forms of class conflict call for revolutionary responses. Wasn't it absolutely necessary to stand for the abolition of the debt, the nationalization of the banks and key sectors of the economy under workers' control? These demands are not reserved for contemplation in history books of the Russian Revolution. The current FI leadership did not support its Greek section who, with its modest forces, tried to implement such a revolutionary policy. This of course implied a political battle against the Syriza leadership. That precise battle wasn't waged. In the name of the necessity of a "new program" and "new parties" adapted to the "new situation", the current FI leadership supported Alexis Tsipras right up to the 11th hour (quote from the FI declaration of August 2015). The example of Greece is extremely telling. It demonstrates the impossibility of reformism as a solution in periods of capitalist crisis. Not only did the Syriza-led government prove to be one of the harshest of bourgeois governments, but Syriza itself switched almost totally, in just about one year, from left reformism to bourgeois social democracy. The formation of the government along with the nationalist bourgeois ANEL party – which was never protested by those who later formed the Popular Unity party, currently the party that the FI leadership supports in Greece – the inclusion in it of many former political and administrative personnel from both main bourgeois parties, ND and PASOK, and above all the break with the vast majority of its youth and militant base, have irreversibly changed the character of Syriza party. This is a fate that is shared by all reformist parties that wish to handle the crisis inside the framework of capitalism, despite the intentions of their leadership. This is a conclusion that the FI leadership never reached. Instead, it refers to an unexplained "capitulation" of Tsipras, deprived of any class content. The practical consequence is the FI leaders' eagerness to repeat the same mistakes. It continues to ally with and to adapt to Iglesias' policy today, via the majority of the Spanish section.

### **C) A militant deficiency and a serious democratic problem**

FI International Committee meetings are now reduced to debates of analysis of no practical consequence. The debates go on without any internationally coordinated campaign being defined or planned. Yet, all around the world we have comrades leading struggles in direct confrontation with capitalism. Theoretical discussions must be informed by practice: balance sheets of the sections' activities should feed the discussion. The confrontation of ideas should lead to defining common tasks. Without common goals, on an international scale, and without political and material mutual support, it is impossible to grow our organizations beyond a certain point in each country. But above all, our international has to be more than a discussion club; it must be a tool for revolutionary action. Tackling the political problems of worldwide class struggle together, and thinking about the problems we encounter in each of our countries, and trying solve them together – that is what a "world party" should do. Building such an international party, at least taking steps in that direction, is today's task.

The recent expulsion by the majority of the Spanish State section of the Anticapitalistas minority, which enjoyed 20 per cent support at the last congress, and which now constitutes IZAR, reveals a serious democratic problem. The

current leadership has refused to open a real discussion. It obstructs left criticism to their orientation. Worse, the refusal to allow the Spanish minority current to address the IC, on the pretext of a veto by the section, is contrary to all of our principles of workers' democracy. That includes the possibility of defending oneself in the process of an expulsion. The principle exists in many reformist organizations. But it didn't exist in the FI for the IZAR comrades. So it became acceptable for the majority of a section to expel its minority at will... without any opportunity of appeal.

In Italy, instead of trying to recuperate all comrades lost in the dissolution of Sinistra Critica and to strengthen the influence of the FI, the leaderships of the two organizations already recognized by the current leadership of the FI put a veto to the participation of Collettivo Guevara in the World Congress.

Fortunately the majority of the French section comrades, members of the NPA, do not hold this authoritarian view of political differences and did not act that way towards its minority!

Our Socialist Action Canada comrades were expelled, and still are victims of the same kind of exclusion now.

Of course there is a political logic at work behind those expulsions. Basic democratic rules are cast aside when it concerns comrades who disagree, to the left of the current leadership's policy. At the same time, heads of the FI favour working with groups outside of the International, and apply pressure on the section to isolate it, as happened in Greece. The current FI leadership often introduces our international organization as the "most democratic" international tendency. Indeed, confronted with situations of split caused by political differences, the IST in the Spanish State and the IWL in Brazil showed more openness by maintaining, in both cases, relations with the various groups that emerged from the splits.

We cannot avoid drawing the balance sheet of the policy advocated by the majority at the latest (2010) congress of the FI. We have to clearly admit that the policy of the leadership of the FI since the last World Congress was mistaken and far below what historical conditions demand.

## II- A situation with opportunities for the revolutionaries and for communist ideas to grow stronger

We do not share the current FI leadership's appreciation of the current situation. While it does feature an increasingly violent onslaught by the bourgeoisie, it is nonetheless contradictory and holds possibilities for revolutionary communists to be heard and to gain strength.

### **A) The tendency of the rate of profit to fall: the root of the crisis**

The fundamental problem for capitalists still is the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. The ecological crisis is combined with the economic crisis, and thus capitalism is in a situation of protracted crisis, which it cannot escape spontaneously. To restore the rate of profit, capitalists are forced to turn their mode of domination upside down, by inflicting an historical defeat on the working class. That is the meaning of the ongoing capitalist onslaught. Inter-imperialist tensions are rising and military interventions are multiplying. The number of refugees is exploding, racism and xenophobia are openly encouraged by the governments of every great power. Barbarism is not just a predictable possibility for the future; it is the reality for a major part of humanity.

### **B) Traditional leaderships and the "new reformism" — Adapting to the current capitalist onslaught**

Far from fighting the capitalist offensive, the labor movement traditional leaderships are adapting to it.

Social-democracy is completely integrated into the state apparatus and the leaders that arose from Stalinism go along with the national bourgeoisie's policies.

The massive retreat of the social democracy and labor party-type formations is not limited to Europe. It is worldwide. In Canada, for example, we saw the trade union-linked New Democratic Party (NDP) leadership pledge, in the campaign culminating in the October 2015 federal election, a "balanced budget" come-what-may. Implementation of that policy would prevent an NDP government from reversing most of the harsh austerity measures introduced by the previous Stephen Harper-led Conservative Party regime. The political default of the NDP, and the "strategic voting" stance of much of the union bureaucracy, funnelled workers' discontent with austerity into a victory for the Liberal Party of Justin Trudeau, which briefly feinted to the left of the NDP.

As far as the so-called "populist" currents in South America go, they demonstrated their inability to change the situation to any important degree, and they reject any clear break with imperialism and domestic capital.. Opposing the right governments in Argentina and Brazil does not entail an alliance with peronist and populist parties.

The so-called "new reformisms" are a symptom of rising political awareness, a reflection of the rise of struggles and of their limitations as well. But Syriza's policy in power shows the extent to which these forces adapted to capitalism in crisis, in record time, and are ready to implement the bourgeois agenda themselves, even lacking the mass working class roots the "old" reformists had acquired.

The anarchist or autonomous currents manage to channel part of the youth revolt. We must have a policy to address these currents, sometimes with possibilities of tactical agreements with some of them. In any case, we should not abandon the field of radicalism to them, while explaining why their policy is at an impasse.

### **C) Chronic instability of the system, mass resistance and politicization**

The balance of forces is very unfavourable to us. But mass resistance shakes every continent. The crisis of the system feeds a chronic political instability.

The brutality of the capitalist onslaught feeds phenomena of social and political regression. The traditional left, when it comes to power, leads the capitalist onslaught, thus opening a space for the far-right. But this is far from being the majority sentiment in the working class. In the electoral base of these far-right currents, we can nonetheless find a significant number of workers, who have been among the first victims of capitalism. A solid fightback of the working class, winning significant victories, could regain many of those who have been temporarily captivated by far-right demagogy without, of course, having the illusion that we can avoid a confrontation also with the base of the extreme right and, even more, of neofascist and neonazi parties.

The effect of the onslaught, in the context of crisis, is not one-sided. It also spurs mass resistance movements and a new politicization. The dynamic of polarization is well illustrated by Trump's election. Although he symbolizes the increasingly reactionary policy of the ruling class, he was elected in a situation where mobilizations are on the rise and the interest in socialist ideas is higher than in decades inside the main global power. In the same way, worldwide possibilities for social explosions and collective struggles are rising.

Among significant sectors of youth and the working class, there is a perception that this is a rotten system leading to failure. Most of the time, struggling masses know what they do not want anymore, and have profound disgust for the capitalist system, without knowing with what to replace it, and how. But we are not only observing struggles as a mechanical response to the attacks, but also processes of accumulation of experience, politicization, regroupment and organization. Massive national mobilizations against the challenge to the Labor Law in France, the struggle of

low-wage workers for the right to form a union and win a \$15/hour minimum wage, and the rise of Black Lives Matter in the United States, the unprecedented student mobilizations in Quebec, the massive workers' strikes in Asia, particularly in China and India, are renowned. But we also see the renewed interest in socialism illustrated by Jeremy Corbyn's double leadership victory in the British Labour Party, and the renewed interest in socialist ideas in the United States. All these signs indicate that the elements for anti-capitalist awareness are present. It is, nonetheless, a very uneven and limited process. Currents hostile to socialism are reaping the fruits of the deep discontent. The electoral audience of the FIT in Argentina, the recomposition of the union movement in South Africa, despite the limitations of both experiences, and above all, the renewed interest in "socialism" in the United States indicate that anti-capitalist ideas can acquire a mass audience.

## **III - The working class always plays a central role**

A commonly held view in militant circles feeds scepticism concerning the present relevance of revolution. It contends that the neo-liberal onslaught supposedly eliminated full time work and weakened the working class so badly that it no longer plays a central role. We see the working class from a political viewpoint: it is the only social category that, because of its own position in the capitalist production and reproduction, can unify the struggles of all those layers who are oppressed in the workplaces as well as in the schools, in conscription armies, in the family. To unite with the struggles of women, LGBT people, immigrants, minorities, indigenous people, in a common project of emancipation, which is communism.

In fact, the working class is globally more numerous today than ever. In South Korea alone there are as many wage-earners today than there were in the whole world at the time of Karl Marx. The working class, which in our view is composed of wage workers who do not exercise management power, today constitutes between 80 and 90 per cent of the population in the most industrialized countries, and almost half of the total global population.

Globally, the number of industrial workers worldwide went from 490 million in 1991 to 715 million in 2012 (ILO data). Industry even grew faster than services between 2004 and 2012! The industrial sector did not shrink, but the agricultural sector did, from 44 to 32 per cent of the global workforce.

It is true that the industrial working class dropped numerically inside the old capitalist powers. But its role in class struggle is far from being secondary, as was proved for example by railroad and oil refinery workers in France in the mass strikes of 2010 and 2016. And the proletarianization of services created new wage-earning sectors in the old capitalist metropolises who recently proved their combativity. Cleaning workers, for example in the historic strikes in Netherlands in 2010 and 2012, and retail and fast-food workers involved in the Fight for \$15 movement in the United States, reflect this trend.

It is not true that the rise of part-time work made the working class unable to lead significant struggles and play a revolutionary role. In the past, much less job security and the absence of big industries did not stop the Parisian workers from taking power during the Commune of 1871. Today, workers find the path to mobilization in spite of the obstacles created by the capitalist onslaught. The biggest strike in decades in France, biggest in numbers and length, was the strike of undocumented workers in 2009-2010, which involved 6000 strikers, including 1500 short-term contract workers organized in a strike committee, over 10 months. The 2009 general strike in Guadeloupe showed the ability of workers to unite the oppressed and threaten the power elite.

By reorganizing industry worldwide, capitalist globalization created new working classes in the southern countries, whose potential was shown by the recent mobilizations: the wave of strikes happening in China since 2010, the 2015

massive strikes in Bursa, Turkey, the formation of mass militant unions in Indonesia, the role of the union movement and of mass strikes demanding the resignation of South Korea's Prime Minister in late 2016.

These struggles develop, for the most part, despite the union leaders. For these struggles to end up challenging the system, it is necessary to rebuild a worldwide class struggle workers' leadership. Building a class struggle wing of the labor movement, independent of the official union leaderships, particularly able to launch the building of organs of self-organization, strike committees, is a central task for a revolutionary international. Differentiation or breaks inside the labor movement indicate the opening of new possibilities. Examples include the process of creation of a new union confederation, breaking with the ANC in South Africa, differentiation inside the CGT in France, and discussions on the prospect of forming a class struggle "workers' block" after the Labour Law Reform movement.

If we take into account all these factors, the global working class never had such a potentially powerful role. Every sector of the working class does not have the same objective weight in the production apparatus and is not able to play the same role. And we have to take that into account in our efforts to organize and recruit. But the revolutionaries have to take seriously the central role of the working class, and develop a solid political intervention in relation to it. This task should be taken on not only by the national sections, but be the subject of regular discussions at the international level.

## IV- Our proposals

### A) Building revolutionary vanguard parties – the present relevance of Leninism

Here is how Lenin in "Left Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder" defined party discipline, how a party of cadres for the revolution is built, the opposite of the Stalinist caricature:

*"The first questions to arise are: how is the discipline of the proletariat's revolutionary party maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and – if you wish – merge, in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people – primarily with the proletariat, but also with the non-proletarian masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, from their own experience, that they are correct. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, all attempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end up in phrase-mongering and clowning. On the other hand, these conditions cannot emerge at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated by a correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement."*

"No revolution without a revolutionary party." This means that beyond the diversity of tactics revolutionaries may adopt in building their party according to the country and the situation, building revolutionary parties, parties to take the power and for communism, is still the strategic goal. For this purpose, political independence from reformism and total independence from bourgeois governments (even if "left"), from the state and its institutions, is crucial.

In order to build revolutionary organizations who are not content with proclaiming principles, our goal is to build a party of cadres capable of giving life to the programmatic principles, which means trying to give each of our members the means to acquire the highest possible level of education, to be able to play a part in the destruction of capitalism

and the building of another society. But education must be consistent with our political militant practice. To be able to get rid of the system that generates exploitation and oppression, we have to narrow the gap between the private sphere and the public sphere as much as we can. That gap is the product of the capitalist system we live in. Against that logic of "separation", we consciously pursue the prospect of revolution and are consistent in our choices and ways of life. It's the complete opposite of individual frustration. On the contrary, it is a freely agreed emancipation and association against the dominant ideology disseminated by the state, school and family. It is designed to regroup in order to reach a common goal — the destruction of the capitalist system, based on exploitation and oppression, to build another society, the communist society.

Seeking to plant roots in the working class and in oppressed sectors is instrumental. It must be systematically discussed and conducted with dedicated tools. The present relevance of the insurrectionary general strike as the main "strategical hypothesis" in most of the world, our analysis of the central role of the working class thus must have immediate consequences in practice, in our sections and internationally. What does it mean? It means that we have an active approach to gaining a base in the key sectors of the capitalist economy. An effort must be made in that direction, in each section, but also that the International should help to reach that goal, and participate in the effort. Through theoretical input, but also centralization of information. It also means that we systematically develop an independent political intervention to address our class.

Every revolutionary must think about how we can fight back against both the austerity policies and the capitalist-patriarchal system. The only way to defend our social achievements and to gain new ones is still the mobilization of the working class and the youth. Every social achievement has been reached as a result of the mobilization. Twentieth-century history demonstrates it. Workers' and women's rights have not been gained at the polls but through strikes and demonstrations. In that sense, our main task is to re-build class consciousness. The most effective way to do so is still by the struggle of the working class interest against that of the bourgeoisie. Rallies, demonstrations, occupations, assemblies, strikes — those are still the best tools for raising the consciousness of the oppressed. This does not mean that we ignore parliamentary elections. But we do subordinate them to mobilization. In our strategy, the elections cannot be a goal but a means for strengthening our class's mobilization towards raising class consciousness. The workers and the youth must adopt the struggle against every kind of oppression and link it to their struggle for class emancipation. For doing so, it is necessary that the working-class mass organizations include in their platforms elements like equal pay for equal work, respect for LGBTQI rights and the socialization of domestic labour.

The strategic hypothesis we advance to end capitalism and patriarchy is a non-stop series of mobilizations that make the working class aware of the necessity of taking power for real social change. Strikes are not a fetish but an essential route to raise workers' reliance on their own potential power. Strikes are "schools of class struggle" because they are moments in which the working class can self-organize. It is by means of conflict that workers create automatic responses and mechanisms to resist the bourgeoisie's policies. Revolutionaries should not ignore today's struggles, even if they are small. To the contrary, we must take part in them. Therefore, we need to find solutions to our deficiency in having a strong presence within the working class and taking part in its battles.

### **A revolutionary International that does not prioritize youth is doomed to disappear**

Youth still plays the role of tactical vanguard. The theory developed by Ernest Mandel is still relevant today. Whether we look at the processes of the Arab revolutions, or at the mobilizations in Latin America, in Mexico and Chile, or in France in the mobilization against the CPE, and in all likelihood soon in the USA with the anti-Trump mobilizations, we see this. Its role in struggles is always paramount, and recruiting youth is plainly vital for any revolutionary organization. To be consistent with that stance, we reaffirm our current's theoretical, practical, and militant hallmarks. We stand up for youth autonomy, an autonomy subordinated to the proletariat and its historical interests but with forms of organization that are not independent but autonomous from the labor movement organizations and the parties we build. So we set as a goal, when it is possible, the building of revolutionary youth organizations. The youth



sectors in our parties are a mediation to achieve that goal. We should also have a specific orientation to address students. It is a part of youth that actively participates in the overturns during revolutionary processes. So the international youth camp plays a fundamental role for this policy. But it should not become a space where voicing disagreement with the current FI leadership is excluded. Forbidding the participation of the NPA youth sector in the last camp shows a worrisome theoretical and practical/political weakness. Similarly disturbing was the refusal to allow four IZAR comrades into the camp to have a workshop. Some of them have been building the FI for 15 years. They had to host their workshop in the parking lot, with over 70 young comrades who wanted to understand, debate and share, in attendance. These episodes are symptomatic of a paralyzing and fearful sectarianism. It is a de facto form of mis-education, as young comrades become accustomed to such exclusionary practices on the pretext of ideological purity and struggle against "factionalism".

There is no Chinese Wall between the project for the society we advocate, communism, and the party we are trying to build. There has to be consistency between those two forms. Our party won't be an island of communism because it lives and develops in a framework of social relations determined by patriarchy and the capitalist system. But we must get as close as we can to our goal. This of course regards the relations between members, which have to abide by democratic principles and not contradict our program of struggle against all oppression. But beyond that, it is the freely agreed association of men and women struggling for communism and abiding by relations which cannot be in contradiction with these emancipation principles. We oppose every form of "separation" forged by Capital between intellectual work and manual work, between men and women, between nationals and foreigners, between the private and public spheres. We reject every form of taboo inside the organization, but instead build a programmatic and practical/militant unity of all the comrades, through debate and verification in practice.

(+++We should add a paragraph about revolutionary feminism) Motion

### **B) Advocating for a transitional program for the 21st century**

The FI should advocate a set of key measures, a transitional approach, starting with everyday issues and demands, linking them to the question of power and to the aspiration for a new society. Eventually, the connection of the current struggles is established to the aim of challenging the pillars of the capitalist system.

A primary focus of this program is the expropriation of the key sectors of the economy. The bank crisis and bail-outs provided a new opportunity to explain and popularize the need for bank nationalization. Company bankruptcies, massive lay-offs, and the struggles to which they give rise, also offer an occasion to bring the struggle for workers' control up to date and explain the need to requisition the great means of production, distribution and exchange. A transitional approach is embodied in the demand "No layoffs, for workers' control over hiring."

Fossil and mineral resources are not infinite. The maximum peak of extraction will soon be reached. Capitalism with its structural logic aims always to increase consumption "to utilize more raw materials and energy. The goal of capitalism is to always produce more and maximize profit. Capitalism cannot be "green". Capitalism destroys the environment and species. It destroys our planet. But, once again, there cannot be a consistent ecological policy without a consistent struggle against capitalism and without understanding that the only subject able to end capitalism, and the ecological disaster it provokes, is the working class. If we share this analysis, we should draw the conclusions from it, in terms of our social basis, our intervention and our orientation. Indeed, the working class, allied with other sectors, is the one force, in the face of the ecological catastrophe, that is capable of imposing a program of anti-capitalist ecological transition. Such a transition will focus on replacing fossil and nuclear energy with green, sustainable alternatives, and on the need for a worldwide planned economy.

The capitalist world still is structured and organized by imperialism whose interests are never bound by any commitment to any people. This is notwithstanding the fact that Capital can sporadically choose to support a specific

struggle with its own methods and goals.

Anti-imperialism should be a central focus of our propaganda and activity. We are against all imperialist interventions and for the withdrawal of all imperialist troops. By standing in solidarity with, for example, the Kurdish people, we do not avoid pointing to the central responsibility of imperialism for the development of reactionary currents such as ISIS, and for the horrendous conditions experienced by the peoples of the region. Even so, recognizing that the reactionary currents also have their own logic and autonomy, we participate in demonstrations to defend the Kurdish people, while linking our unconditional defence with our clear-cut rejection of imperialist intervention. That is why we do not endorse calls to action that ask our government to provide weapons to the Kurds. We do not foster the illusion that our bourgeoisie could defend the peoples of the region.

Facing our own imperialism, it is not our role to create illusions on the theme: arms, not bombs. That is exactly what happened when the Red Green Alliance members of parliament voted for the war budget on the pretext that it would allow sending weapons, but who were very quickly faced with the second step, the only important one for the Danish government, and the others, sending Danish F-16 jets which are today bombing Iraq, in alliance with France and the United States.

Insurgent working classes will have to confront both "their own" national state apparatus and international imperialist institutions such as the European Union. "The main enemy is at home" means that we fight simultaneously against the international imperialist coalitions in which "our own" bourgeois class takes part. While firmly opposed to any nationalist, capitalist alternative, we know that an anti-capitalist revolutionary policy is incompatible with membership in the EU.

We know that the struggle against imperialism, racism, austerity and capitalist domination is not a struggle to be waged only at the level of a single country. But neither can it be waged without breaking with the capitalist policies of the EU, the ECB, with European finance capital, with the xenophobic, anti-immigrant policies of "fortress-Europe". To attack the national bourgeoisie's power is to break with all the institutions of the EU. Against the Europe of the TroÅka we defend international solidarity, we strive for a free socialist alliance of the workers and peoples of Europe.

Inseparable from the imposition of worldwide austerity is the corresponding rise in imperialist wars and interventions. Led by U.S. imperialism, the world's sole superpower, and its historic imperial European counterparts, we are almost daily witness to wars of saturation bombing, mass murder, wars of privatized or mercenary armies, drone wars, sanction and embargo wars, and near-secret wars, as is the case with the U.S. Africa Command's re-colonizing and plundering of Africa. French imperialism too, as well as other former European colonizing powers, increasingly intervene in Africa and elsewhere to maintain and expand their interests.

There are no "humanitarian wars" conducted by the imperialist beast. There never have been. The term itself is repulsive to revolutionaries, whose *raison d'être* is opposition to all imperialist interventions and wars. Unconditional support for the right of oppressed nations and peoples to self-determination is a fundamental revolutionary socialist principle. The FI must unconditionally reject any and all calls on imperialism to aid in the defeat of local tyrants and dictators. Such "aid" inevitably comes with strings attached – lethal strings that are more akin to the hanging rope than to any kind of "benign" or "democratic" assistance.

The liberation of the oppressed can only be achieved through their own independent mass organizations and through the construction, in time and regardless of the difficult circumstances, of revolutionary socialist parties of the Leninist type. Rejection of imperialist intervention in all its variations is the prerequisite for successful national liberation struggles, and for all other gains.

## Let's seize the opportunities, and build an international for revolution and communism

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In the face of imperialism's incessant wars of conquest, the FI's central demands should focus on "Bring the Troops Home Now!" and "Right to self-determination for all oppressed nations!"

We defend the peoples' right to self-determination. But we do not follow the leadership of any national bourgeoisie, even if it comes from an oppressed nation. In the oppressed nations we support a balance between the democratic fight for the right to self-determination and the fight for a society without classes. It means that, according to our strategy, the struggle for national freedom can be useful for working class emancipation only when led by the working class itself. Thus, we fight for working class independence from the bourgeoisie in the oppressed nations. For example, the struggle for the right to self-determination of the nations oppressed by the Spanish State would be useful if linked to the fight against capitalism and led by our class.

This program is not an electoral platform, a program for government. It can only be realized by a joint mobilization of the working class and the oppressed, bringing a Workers' Government to power, to destroy the bourgeois state by relying on self-organized organs arising from the mobilization of our class in alliance with all sectors of the oppressed.

### **C) Building a revolutionary international**

We insist, we have to set as a goal the building of a militant international, an organization capable of leading internationally coordinated campaigns. Even with modest forces, an organization based in several countries, acting in coordination, can magnify the effectiveness of its political intervention.

Our international must renew its discussion of a revolutionary communist program that addresses the reality of 21st century capitalism, instead of holding disjointed theoretical discussions with no real link to political practice.

A global revolutionary strategy cannot be based on the experiences of certain countries only. We need to overcome the eurocentrism that can be found also in the FI, where European experiences are often projected as a universal model. The experience of comrades in other continents has never been in the centre of our debates and elaborations. This is not just about a task of recording experiences, but about a strategic comprehension of the global revolutionary process under different social conditions.

We, alone, cannot embody the revolutionary communist international. We must try to unite revolutionaries from various traditions, based on an agreement on the current situation and the tasks. It is through common practice that political discussions may lead to principled unity. Regroupment of revolutionaries internationally should be one of the goals to be discussed in the FI. Building a revolutionary international capable of having a significant influence will not happen only by recruiting to our organization. The FI should invite other revolutionary national or international groups to start discussing the need for a common response to the crisis of capitalism, common campaigns, and to address what type of organization can and should be built.

We know that a policy of seeking discussion with militants from other political traditions won't lead to unity in the short term. We realize that leaders of each of the various Trotskyist "internationals" are convinced that they are correct in their programmatic, strategic and tactical stance. Moreover, it is the rule that each group is convinced of the need to build an "international" around its own group exclusively. Even so, we have to recognize that we won't build an international for revolution and communism simply by primitive accumulation around our own nucleus. There is always something to learn from the various Trotskyist revolutionary traditions, and even from forces beyond that sphere. There are different experiences and activists of value in many currents and organizations. It is through theoretical and programmatic debates, in creative combination with intervention in the field of class struggle, that the national and international explosions, regroupments and recomposition of forces will occur.

## Initial conclusion

We defend the present relevance of an international that grasps the opportunities in the present situation, and that builds an international for revolution and communism. Based on the political key points of this contribution, we want to foster a broad debate addressed to revolutionary currents both inside and outside of the FI. From that point of view, we will initiate a debate with every FI comrade and section. We intend that this debate be respectful of differences, and for the unfolding process to help reinforce our international in a context of global capitalist crisis. Our over-riding aim is to build a political current as broadly as possible to defend the prospect and to affirm the present relevance of building an international for revolution and communism.

A number of FI comrades from various countries have already expressed their support to the views expressed above. Not all of them have been apermited by the FI Bureau to formally sign the text, as they are not formally members of FI sections, in most cases (Spanish State, Canada) because they have been undemocratically excluded from those sections. Since they are still comrades of the FI political project and tradition, we have to mention their names here, before the list of signatures of the FI members who are submitting this text :

*Mariajo Teruel, dirección polÃ-tica estatal (IZAR-Malaga)*  
*Javier Castillo, dirección polÃ-tica estatal (IZAR-Madrid)*  
*Tomás MartÃ-nez, dirección polÃ-tica estatal (IZAR-AlmerÃ-a)*  
*Rubén Quirante, dirección polÃ-tica estatal (IZAR-Granada)*  
*Barry Weisleder, federal secretary, Socialist Action/Ligue pour l'Action Socialiste*  
*Elizabeth Byce, federal treasurer, SA/LAS*  
*Julius Arscott, central committee member, SA/LAS*  
*Giuseppe Caretta, Collettivo Guevara, Italy*  
*Angelo Cardone, Collettivo Guevara, Italy*

**Submitted to the FI by :**

**Xavier Guessou, Comité Politique National NPA**  
**Armelle Pertus, Comité Exécutif NPA**  
**GaÃ«l Quirante, Comité Exécutif NPA**  
**Juliette Stein, Comité Politique National NPA**  
**Jeff Mackler, National secretary Socialist Action**  
**Michael Schreiber, editor, Socialist Action newspaper**  
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**Kleanthis Antoniou, Political Bureau OKDE-Spartakos**  
**Taxiarhis Efstathiou, Central Committee OKDE-Spartakos, National Coordination Body ANTARSYA, General Council of ADEDY (public sector workers' national confederation)**  
**Fani Oikonomidou, Political Bureau OKDE-Spartakos**  
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**Kostas Skordoulis, Control Commission OKDE-Spartakos**

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