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Letter to Readers

Aid needed as IV's readership jumps 75%

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Over the last six months, visits to internationalviewpoint.org have grown rapidly. In 2005, the site averaged 10,000 visits a month. In each of the last six months, there have been more than 17,500 visits. On average, there are 900 visitors to the site each day - and some days over 1,200 - more than the readership of our printed magazine.

All of this reflects the unique quality and quantity of the articles we publish. Since the online magazine has launched last year, internationalviewpoint.org has published more than 1,000 articles. The magazine carries vitally important debates, on topics as important as the crisis of the Brazilian left, the left's approach to Islam and Islamophobia, and solidarity with the Iraqi opposition.

However, some visitors now report that the site is overloaded if they visit it at peak times. We urgently need our readers to donate \$2,000 to fund more powerful computers to serve the growing demand.

Today, internationalviewpoint.org is caught in scissors: pressure is growing on one side because the number of visitors already exceeds the volume we forecast for October 2006; pressure is growing on the other side because we don't have the resources we planned for, but also because even that amount would have been inadequate to meet the demand we face.

Late November, International Viewpoint put out an emergency appeal for donations to put new technology in place. We needed a further \$3,200 before the end of the year to scale up our infrastructure to support 20,000 visits a month. The response from our readers was rapid, but few of them are rich:

– we raised almost \$1,000, which was doubled to nearly \$2,000 by a supporter.

Our failure to meet our goal has produced serious consequences.

The slowing and overloading of our site has some astonishing symptoms.

According to the most widely accepted ranking of web site traffic, in the last three months the reach internationalviewpoint.org has grown 236%. At the same time, the average number of pages read by each visitor has fallen from 3.3 pages to 1. This suggests that, for many readers, the web site is so slow that after reading one page they are unable to access a second, yet along a third.

This astonishing growth reinforces the great opportunities for International Viewpoint. The readership of the site is now similar to that of the website of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, whose readership is also growing.

However, the greater length of International Viewpoint articles and our more extensive use of photography means that the demands placed on our system greatly exceed even those of lcr-rouge.org.

However, unless we are able to rapidly extend our technical resources we will alienate new visitors and dissuade them from returning to the web site.

We need \$2,000 urgently to strengthen the website. This will allow us to initially make some design changes to the site which will make it use less power to load each page and secondly to increase the power of the computer servers

that run the site.

There are three ways you can make a donation.

– Use the button below to make a payment online using Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover or PayPal.

– By bank transfer to Barclays Bank, 876-878 Stockport Road, Manchester M19 3BP, Britain; account number 40259691; sort code 20-26-20. From outside Britain, our IBAN code is: IBAN GB30 BARC 2026 2040 2596 91. Our bank's SWIFTBIC code is: BARCGB22.

– By post to IV, PO Box 112, Manchester M12 5DW, Britain.