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Venezuela

Venezuela - Halt the coup of the right and imperialism

- Fourth International resolutions - International Committee - IC 2003 -

Publication date: Saturday 4 January 2003

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1. The rightist escalation initiated with the 'general strike' and deepened with what is now being called the 'final battle' is part of the counter-revolutionary strategy to overthrow the legitimate democratic government of Chávez and to crush the process of self-organization and self-defence among workers, students, and the people.

This escalation assumes a criminal character due to the continuous murders of political and social activists, the provocations of fascist groups, and the sabotage of oil production, initiated in early December by the PDVSA [the state oil company -ed] mafias and the corrupt leaders of the CTV [the trade union federation allied with the traditional governing parties - ed].

With the support of the media, in particular television, the bourgeoisie's destabilizing operation aims at political manipulation, fear, economic chaos, and the division of the military who until now have supported the government of Chávez.

2. The same Bush administration that is preparing a new genocide against Iraq is playing a decisive role in this counter-revolutionary escalation. Not only through its open political and financial support for the coup participants, but also through the servile instrument of the OAS [Organization of American States -ed] pushing - with the complicity of most of the neo-liberal governments of the region, the European Union, and the Carter Foundation - a 'diplomatic' intervention with the objective of ending the democratic government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The declarations by Richard Boucher, spokesperson of the US State Department, leave no room for doubt: "we have emphasized the importance of the mission of the Secretary General of the OAS, Caesar Gaviria, and that two parties should cooperate with him to resolve their political differences". In the language of imperialist interests, that 'cooperation' can only be understood as blackmailing the Venezuelan government into accepting a 'democratic dialogue' as a precursor to its political capitulation.

The 'mission' of Caesar Gaviria - former president of Colombia, executor of the counter-insurgency, promoter of the paramilitary groups and responsible for the systematic violation of human rights in his country - must be thoroughly denounced and condemned.

The OAS seeks to go down the road of its 'democratic charter', which the imperialist-big business counter-revolution did not achieve on April 11, 2002. Therefore, as the left and Bolivarian popular organizations have affirmed, there can be no 'dialogue' with the right wing coup participants and big business.

3. In Venezuela a decisive anti-imperialist battle is being fought. Beyond the limitations and hesitations of the Chávez government, the Bolivarian people has taken to the streets, deepening a process of rupture with the bourgeoisie and taking measures to disrupt the coup operation. It is not only the democratic destiny of the country which is at stake, but also the relationship of forces with imperialism in the region.

After the electoral victories of Lula in Brazil, and Gutiérrez in Ecuador, the prolongation of the 'argentinazo' as a process of popular rebellion, the growth of the anti-neo-liberal resistance of the social movements, and the continental rejection both to Plan Colombia and the re-colonizing project of the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), the United States is trying to create a 'preventive' wall against the winds of change blowing through South America.

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The defeat of the Chávez government and the crushing of the radical movement of people and workers that is developing is becoming a priority in Washington's counter-revolutionary strategy. The survival of the Chávez government - and the dynamic of class struggle that has developed - does not fit in with the regional control that Plan Colombia and the FTAA imply for the Pentagon and the State Department.

At the same time, a victory for the coup and imperialist interests in Venezuela, would still more reduce the political and economic room for manoeuvre of governments like those of Lula and Gutiérrez, increase the unfavourable conditions for the armed insurgency in Colombia, and reinforce the blockade against Cuba.

4. It is in this context that internationalist solidarity with the popular struggle in Venezuela must be broad, active and militant. The struggle of the workers and students, class conscious trade unions and popular organizations, Bolivarian circles and parties of the left in Venezuela, is the struggle of the Latin American peoples against the governing elites, neo-liberalism, the IMF, the World Bank, the InterAmerican Development Bank, and the foreign debt. It is a democratic struggle for sovereignty and the right of the peoples to decide their own destiny. It is an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle. The forces of the Fourth International are part of this struggle. Promoting in various countries public activities of solidarity, demonstrations, street marches, and political declarations. Participating and supporting unconditionally campaigns of action and protest organized by democratic, anti-imperialist and revolutionary movements and currents.

By the Bureau of the Fourth International