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Bolivia

All power to the peoples of Bolivia

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The triumph of the Bolivian people against the coup leaders and the right wing in the October 18 elections, the strength of the results, and the possibility of deepening a process of change marked by the decolonization of the Plurinational State today constitute a tremendous inspiration for the peoples of the whole continent.[NBN]

We must not be distracted by the festivities, although our hearts are beating frenetically. Because, despite the fact that the widely-recognized results clearly demonstrate that the ticket led by Luis Arce and David Choquehuanca have won the presidency and vice-presidency in the first round, this outcome will have to be defended against the right wing's mafia actions. They will seek ways to destabilize the country and prevent the collapse of their rhetoric centered on accusations fraud through which they sought to legitimize the coup a year ago.

Nor can we let down our guard. We know that the civilian, military, and paramilitary fascist right, along with their custodians – the Yankee embassy, the Organization of American States (OAS), the transnational corporations that gained so much economic power and political control with the support of the coup government – are already preparing their criminal response.

The presidential ticket of the Movement Toward Socialism(MAS) was the path the Bolivian people chose to defeat the coup. Despite all the maneuvers aimed at suppressing the vote for the people's candidates – preventing the vote abroad, generating fear with the military and police presence in the streets, trying to manipulate the vote by eliminating the dissemination of preliminary results – the people imposed their will. The ticket headed by Arce and Choquehuanca received more than 53.4 percent of the votes, 22 points more than the second-place finisher, the right-wing Carlos Mesa, who won 31.5 percent, and almost 40 points more than the fascist coup leader Fernando Camacho, who ended up with just 14.1 percent.

The OAS and its spokesman Luis Almagro, who a year ago legitimized the idea of fraud that allowed the right to remove Evo Morales, today find themselves in an absurd position. The same holds true for those who, through either leftist or feminist discourses, blamed the coup d'état on the victims instead of placing responsibility on the national and global hegemonic powers that be who conspired to interrupt the process of change. The coup makers acted, not because of weaknesses or missteps inherent in the process of change, but because the process threatened their (capitalist) interests.

The mistakes made by Evo's government will be analyzed and assessed by his people and by the organizations that, now a year later, are returning to the government. But nothing in that analysis can justify the coup, the civilian, military, paramilitary and religious dictatorship, the massacres, the crimes against humanity, the political bans, the persecution and imprisonment of political and social leaders (especially indigenous peoples), the exiles, the closure of community media, the persecution of journalists who questioned the coup, the patriarchal and racist violence against indigenous women wearing pollera skirts, the lack of respect for the Wiphala indigenous flag and other symbols of the Plurinational State.

The Bolivian people will be the ones who build the roads towards justice and construct a path towards historical memory so that the criminals responsible for the Senkata and Sacaba massacres, and those responsible for the death of Sebastián Moro, an Argentine journalist murdered by the fascists, may be brought to trial.

It will be the people who will continue to demand freedom for Facundo Molares, an Argentine journalist held hostage by the Bolivian dictatorship in the Chonchocoro prison, and for the freedom of all political prisoners. The victory of the

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MAS will have to be defended by daily actions that bring peace to the country based on justice and not on impunity or forgetting.

The electoral results are cause for rejoicing, they will stimulate the struggle of all peoples. And they forces us to look critically at the path followed until now so that in this new moment, with the strength and legitimacy that the elections provide, the process of change can be deepened, it can avoid being caught up in the institutional logics of democracies conditioned by transnational global lobbies and their puppet governments.

Dismantling militarization and the repressive forces trained in fascism and racism, in the culture of fear internalized by blood and fire, is an inalienable component of the possibility of recovering a democracy of the people and for the people.

The popular, feminist, anti-colonial power has won a second chance, it must not be wasted. The people who resisted the dictatorship in the streets, the people who – despite the pandemic – went out to blockade roads when the government threatened to postpone the elections, the people who mobilized vote by vote (when it was decided that this was the strategy for the struggle), now deserve to be the source of all power.

The dignity on the faces of those who are today celebrating the political defeat of the dictatorship will be engraved in our collective history. Jallallathe women in polleras! Vivathe Bolivian people! Respect the Wiphala, damn it!

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