

# Amendment to “Our orientation and tasks in social movements”

## Amendment 1

Why social movements are strategically important? (§2):

There are different forms of social movements: those defending collective working/living conditions (trade unions, neighbourhood movements, peasants/farmers movements, environmentalist movements) or movements of the oppressed (women’s, LGBTI, indigenous, racialized, disabled). These movements overlap and intersect in many different ways as do those who are involved in them.

Explanation: This paragraph draws what we consider to be an artificial distinction between ‘movements for living and working conditions’ and ‘movements of oppressed people’. Even if this is not the objective, this dichotomy runs the risk of perpetuating the hierarchy of a struggle against exploitation (primary) and struggles against oppressions (secondary). Moreover, this is a distinction which is not really re-exploited in the rest of the text, which in our view reinforces its superfluous aspect.

That said, it is important and useful, from the point of view of strategic analysis, to be able to distinguish and articulate at least three dimensions of struggles: struggles against exploitation in the workplace, struggles to defend places where people live (and the living within them), and struggles against oppression. These three dimensions can coexist, and in practice often do in really

existing social movements: a struggle by women care workers has both a class dimension and a feminist and often even anti-racist dimension. Similarly, a struggle against gentrification and police violence in a working-class district of a large city simultaneously has a territorial, anti-racist and anti-capitalist dimension. Another example: an indigenous people’s struggle against the destruction of their habitat and living environment by giant capitalist mining companies has anti-colonial, territorial and anti-capitalist dimensions all at the same time. Our approach is to support these multiple dimensions of struggle, to amplify them and to aim for an explicit junction of the different aspects and terrains of struggle in a global confrontation with the dominant classes based on exploitation, oppression and the destruction of living spaces and life.

Nonetheless, we think that keeping the list of different social movements may be useful to the text in illustrating what it’s all about. However, as such a list is not intended to be exhaustive, we also suggest adding ‘for example’, which leaves the list of social movements open-ended.

We therefore suggest replacing the above paragraph with the following:

**There are a multitude of social movements: for example trade unions, neighbourhood movements, peasants and farmers, ecologists, women’s movements, LGBTI movements, indigenous movements, racialised movements, disabled movements. These social move-**

**ments often have several dimensions: against exploitation in the workplace, for the defence of living spaces and the living, and for liberation in the face of oppression (particularly of women, LGBTI people, indigenous people, racialised people and people with disabilities). Our approach is to support these multiple dimensions of struggle, to amplify them and to aim for an explicit junction of the different aspects and terrains of struggle towards a global confrontation with the ruling classes, which rely on exploitation, oppression and the destruction of living spaces and life.**

## Amendment 2

Why social movements are strategically important? vi). (§1):

We fight for all social movements to take an intersectional approach without losing focus on their own particular demands.

Explanation: We believe that the use of the term ‘intersectional’ is ambiguous. Intersectionality refers to a multitude of theories and practices, some of which are entirely compatible with our Marxist approach, but others of which flirt more with a liberal conception of identity. As it stands, it seems awkward to us to use the term without defining it, and so we propose replacing it with the notion of convergence of struggles, which puts more emphasis on intervention within social movements.

We therefore propose replacing the above paragraph with the following:

**Our intervention in social movements must emphasise the convergence of struggles, without losing sight of their respective demands.**

## Amendment 3

4. General dangers in the movements

### c) Ultraleftism /fragmentation (§1):

While we are in favour of intersectionality and mutual support – sometimes referred to as ‘a movement of movements’ this is not the same as the movements adopting demands on everything.

So, for example, it is excellent that within La Via Campesina there are women’s and youth sections and specific events taking up their specific needs within the framework of campaigning around land and food sovereignty. On the other hand, within Ende Gelände, the direct-action environmental movement in Germany, some people have suggested it needs to take a position on every political issue

going in a way that has the danger of fragmenting and blunting the movement.

Explanation: in French, the term ‘ultragauchisme’ does not refer to any well-established concept in the Marxist tradition. We therefore suggest replacing it with gauchisme. Furthermore, the initial text does not mention the leftist phenomenon. We therefore suggest adding a section summarising some of the fundamental features of contemporary leftism. In the paragraph on fragmentation, we have replaced the term ‘intersectionality’ with ‘convergence of struggles’, in line with the explanation given in amendment 2.

### c) Fragmentation

**While we are in favour of the convergence of struggles and mutual support - what is sometimes called ‘a movement of movements’ - this does not mean that movements adopt demands on all issues.**

For example, it is excellent that within La Via Campesina there are women’s and youth sections and specific events that respond to their specific needs as part of the campaign around land and food sovereignty. On the other

hand, within Ende Gelände, the environmental direct action movement in Germany, some have suggested that it must take a stance on all political issues, which risks fragmenting and blunting the movement.

### d) Leftism

We must also take care to fight against leftist logics within social movements, which are characterised by: a permanent search for radicality for radicality’s sake (in the political line and in the methods of struggle); the refusal of compromise, and of any alliance with other progressive fringes of social movements, perceived as not radical enough; and a disconnection from and distrust of the class consciousness of the masses. In a period marked by a decline in revolutionary movements, this type of logic tends to take on greater importance, seeking to counterbalance the relative weakness of mass movements with abstract radicalism.

Gauche anticapitaliste/  
SAP - Belgium

# Amendments to text on social movements

## 1) Text on Social Movement :

### 6. Conclusion

para 8 We also note that our collective discussion is underdeveloped on two particular questions of oppression – around racism and racialization and around disability.

The former is particularly complex because the history of self-organization is not only very different in different parts of the Global South but also within the Global North (**because it doesn’t concern the same populations**). Different historical and current factors such as the nature of the colonial relationships, the presence of a **pre-colonial** population, an Afro-descendant population resulting from a slave-owning economy, the different forms and causes of migratory movements, all shape how racism is experienced and the forms of anti-racist struggles and movements. **Nevertheless, two major world**

events were to have a strong influence on and divide these movements: the United Nations ‘World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance’ in Durban in 2001 and the attacks of 11 September 2001. At the Durban Conference, the heated debates and conflicting claims centred on whether Zionism was a form of racism, whether the rise in anti-Semitism was due to the oppression of the Palestinians by the various governments of the Israeli state, the demand for an individual apology from every state that has engaged in slavery in the past, and recognition of slavery as a crime against humanity, with reparations; the reaffirmation of the rights of refugees and the need to protect ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious minorities; discrimination against Roma and Travellers; and explicit recognition of the link between sexism and racism. For its part, the attacks on the Twin Towers

of the World Trade Centre in New York was used as a pretext to amplify a new form of racism, which in some countries (France and Belgium) would have great difficulty in being recognized as such: Islamophobia. We are witnessing two major shifts in the fight against racism: in the 1990s, the abandonment of biological racism (there is no such thing as the human race), to be replaced by cultural racism; and later, religious racism; and in the 2000s, the overtaking of moral anti-racism, based on State anti-racism and its fight against xenophobia (stereotypes and prejudice) and interpersonal discrimination, by a more radical movement, driven by younger generations of racialized people. They want to confront institutional, systemic and structural racism, especially that developed by the State, its apparatus and its governments.

In 2020, a third event shook up the anti-racism scene: Black Lives Matter, the largest anti-racist mobilization since the

1960s and the struggle of black Americans for civil rights. All over the world, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to demand radical and lasting changes to the place of black and Afro-descendant people in our societies (decolonization of minds, education, museums and public spaces). These struggles have highlighted police violence and racist practices in particular. From now on, the fight against racism must concern all forms of racism: ethnic and religious minorities; migrants/asylum seekers and rejected asylum seekers; anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, Negrophobia and Romanophobia (at least in Europe). While supporting the self-organization of oppressed and racialized people, we must try to unify these struggles into a radical, broad, pluralist and unitary movement (converging struggles), while defending an intersec-

tional Marxist approach. It's up to us to make the links between imperialist policies and wars to support dictatorships and control and/or plunder raw materials for Western, Russian and Chinese multinationals; structural adjustment policies and debts in the global South, global warming, etc., as well as the various causes of migration to the metropolises. Hence the importance of opening up borders and defending freedom of movement and settlement, while at the same time demanding that the countries of the Global South be allowed to develop and keep their intellectuals.

Finally, fighting fascism means fighting the far-right parties and all the structures (media, state policies, government parties) that help to normalize their presence and their ideas in the political arena. It means thinking strategically

(in the long term) and tactically (in the short term) about our alliances to fight the fascist threat. What's essential in our anti-fascist struggles is to make this connection between the primary targets of state authoritarianism and repression, and the specific targets of the far right: migrants and racialised people, women, LGBTQIA+ people, ethnic and religious minorities, and trade unionists and other left-wing activists. We will not be able to strengthen our anti-fascist struggles without the presence of those who experience these oppressions most violently, and it is necessary to recognise the importance of racism in society in general and in fascist ideology in order to be able to stand up to these oppressions.

Antiracist Commission Gauche  
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# LGBTIQ organizing = Appendix to social movements text

This appendix does not claim to be a total picture of the state of the LGBTIQ struggle or movement but to tease out some of the key factors facing the movement and the left today based on our collective but partial experience

At the level of the attitude of the ruling classes we are at a contradictory point over LGBTIQ politics as to some extent we are with other social questions. On the one hand homophobic, misogynistic and particularly transphobic politics are central mobilisers for key far right movements. Trump and those around him are the most visible of these but we should not downplay the role of evangelical Christian currents in Africa and Latin America or the attacks on the parental and adoption rights of same-sex couples in Meloni's Italy.

On the other hand other states claim to defend LGBTIQ rights within a 'human rights' framework while focusing on the idea that i) the LGBTIQ family can replace the state in providing social reproduction ii) the pink market is a useful place for capital to make profit. This tendency which has existed for decades is adapting to the far right agenda if not quite as grotesquely as on migration. At the same time it has always been an agenda most

directed at and accommodating to cis gay men.

The LGBTIQ movement has very few international structures or events which make assessing the political balance of forces difficult. This is compounded by the fact that the World Social Forum and the associated regional forums which did provide some focus for radical groups within the movement no longer function in the same way. Never the less there are some overall trends we can note

On the negative side we need to note – and find more effective ways of calling out and opposing – the development of a visible antitrans current. This tendency is not confined at all to Lesbian, Gay and very occasional Bi individuals – many of its most prominent figures are Cis women – and is very often a minority amongst activists but is nevertheless deeply pernicious. And politically we can see how it fits into the wider picture with some apparently happy to make common cause with far right activists and at the same time wanting to promote a vision of 'sex rights' which plays on notions of gender and sexuality as fixed (sometimes god given), which echoes the need to 'protect' children and young people and which is deeply divisive. Most of these currents are

also sex negative and deeply hostile to sex workers

On the more positive side however there are a number of developments to catalogue

Amongst young people despite the countervailing growth of far right ideas there is in many contexts a more positive attitude to people exploring sexuality and gender expression. This has led to the development/proliferation of new identities such as non-binary and a-gender which didn't really exist in the same ways in previous periods as well as in some contexts to somewhat separate social formations for trans fems and trans mascs. There are some dangers here in terms of fragmentation – compounded by the fact that lessons from earlier periods of struggle do not have strong channels for exploration. Further the level of atomization and isolation imposed by late stage capitalism on the most marginalized can result in sectarianism born of frustration

Some lessons and indeed ways of organizing that came to the fore around HIV/AIDs especially in advanced capitalist countries had an impact in some of the more positive collectivist organizing in response to the covid pandemic in terms of fighting for state provision to protect

## 18<sup>th</sup> Congress

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those most at risk. M-Pox did not really have the same impact but in a world where the environmental crisis means other pandemics are inevitable we should build on this.

The visible involvement of many queer activists including trans and lesbian militants in campaigns to defend an extend fights for bodily autonomy. The fight to defend and extend abortion rights in law and in practice has continued to be crucial in many territories and continents. At the same time the involvement of queer activists in these campaigns has often won broader support for the fight of trans people, particularly trans youth to life affirming health care.

During the Black lives Matter movement the visibility of specific mention of Black Trans Lives was particularly heartening. We are not able to draw conclusions about what this says about the

relationship between Black/Indigenous/ Queer and Trans movements in different territories

Radical queer and feminist activists have often been visible in solidarity with Palestine, rejecting the pinkwashing of Israeli society on the pretext of the undoubted sexism and heterosexism of Hamas. These activists rightly point out that Palestinian women and LGBTIQ people are equally the victims of Israeli genocide, that the oppression of Palestinian LGBTIQ people under Israeli rule (inside and outside the 'Green Line') is compounded by the apartheid laws that target them as Palestinians, and that Israeli society is far from a model of women's or LGBTI rights even in comparison with capitalist democracies in Western Europe or the Americas. These organisations and contingents build on work done over a longer period of time

both by queer activists and organisations from the region and those working inside the international solidarity movement but have become much more apparent as the movement has grown internationally in the last year and more. While there have been some tensions in some countries (eg initially in Denmark) overall this has been a development that has made a key section of queer movement more visible than before, clearly aligned to an anti-imperialist approach and more accessible to communities that may have previously been walled off from it. The points raised by these activists need to be integrated into the discourse of the wider solidarity movement.'

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