

# As crises converge, the challenge of how to move forward for those below

International Committee of the Fourth International

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## Introduction

The bloody war offensive unleashed by the Zionist state of Israel and US imperialism against the Palestinian people after the Hamas attack on 7 October has violently upset the fragile and chaotic situation of a world in multidimensional crisis. In addition to this new fact, there is the continuation of the Russian war against Ukraine, as well as the growth of the extreme right – with Milei’s victory in Argentina and the prospect of a new victory of Trump in the United States –, the sharpening of tensions between the United States and China over the future of Taiwan, and the scientific confirmation that global warming is already causing the disasters predicted for 2030. In short, the broad outlines of the situation set out in October 2023 have not been disproved, but tragically confirmed in recent months.

## An imperialist attack on the entire Middle East

The war in Palestine opens a new chapter in history. Having already provoked a new Nakba, the present war has acquired genocidal characteristics over the months – with the bombings, the destruction, the deaths of women and children, the closure of humanitarian aid and the hunger that is rampant in the territory.

In February 2024, of the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza, one million have been expelled from the northern areas to the south of the Strip. Of the more than 30,000 killed in four months, 40 per cent are women and children. With the siege of the population in the terri-

tory without food or assistance and the probable bombing of Rafah, Israel is demonstrating that its objective is the colonial retaking of the Gaza Strip. At the same time 16 Palestinian communities have been forcibly removed from the West Bank. It is an attack and threat against all Palestinians and neighbouring Arab and Islamic peoples, which has already become a regional war.

This is not an “Israel-Hamas” war. Nor is it merely a continuation of the 75-year war of the colonial settler state, apartheid, and “ethnic cleansing” against those who inhabited Palestine before the imposed creation of the state of Israel.

This is the first time since the offensive against Iraq in 2003 that the United States, has intervened so directly. Its support in arms and millions of dollars to Israel is decisive in producing a historical massacre of civilians.

Thus it is a multi-targeted colonial and imperialist offensive, with violent repression and encouragement of new settlements in the West Bank, of the disappearance or massive exodus of Palestinians, military incursions into Southwest Syria; bombings in the south of Lebanon and Beirut, to inflict casualties on Hezbollah, bombings of the Houthis of Yemen, who are trying to block the manoeuvres of the US Navy and merchant ships at the entrance of the Red Sea. The pro-Assad battalions in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis of Yemen, rebelling against a government controlled by Saudi Arabia; all forces with a relationship with the theocratic and deeply repressive regime in Iran, claim to be acting in the interests of the Palestinian people, while actually trying to progress their own interests. The conflict is already having an impact outside the region, expanding to Pakistan.

The present carnage is facilitated by the neo-fascist nature of the Netanyahu government. Greatly weakened by

months of popular protests against his arrogant overruling of the judiciary but exploiting the extreme weakness of the anti-Zionist left, Netanyahu has seized the opportunity of the attack by Hamas to try to regain control of the internal situation, to fulfil the historical imperative of his western gendarme state in the Middle East. Netanyahu is today the vanguard of the extreme right in the world, whose traditional antisemitic axes are relativized by the global Islamophobic axis.

The Israel-USA offensive is coming up against cracks and major contradictions. It is developing with the complicit silence or hypocritical protests of the great Western powers, tardy protests of China or the tightrope walking of Putin’s Russia. As for most governments in the Arab world, their logic of “normalization” of relations with Israel and invisibilization of the Palestinian cause, which prevailed before 7 October, renders their critical statements on the bombing of Gaza under popular pressure ridiculous.

What Israel is doing is not self-defence but one of the most shameful massacres in recent history, rightly denounced as genocidal by South Africa before the Hague Tribunal. The ongoing tragedy is causing political-ideological upheavals throughout the world. It is increasingly difficult for their allies to defend both the US and Israel. The carnage in Gaza is having a particular impact on the university and peripheral youth of the Global North. Racialized youth from working-class neighbourhoods, victims of the rise of Islamophobia, identify with the Palestinian cause, while actions in support of this cause are quickly branded as antisemitic. Young Jewish humanists in the West, many of whom are non- or anti-Zionists, are moving in the opposite direction to the pro-Israeli emotions of 7 October. We need to act and dialogue with all these sectors.

## The rise of the extreme right challenges the neoliberal so-called “democracies”

We are witnessing the rise of a constellation of new far-right forces around the world, which has perhaps not yet reached its apogee. In Italy they are in power, they are co-governing in the Netherlands and Sweden, are gaining strength in Germany and could win the government in France. The authoritarian Erdogan is holding on in Turkey.

In Central and Eastern Europe, in addition to the deepening fascist nature of the Russian Federation under Putin since the open invasion of Ukraine, the far-right Fidesz party has been in power in Hungary since 2010; similarly, PiS, the embodiment of the Polish far-right, has been in power for eight years; and although the PiS narrowly lost its domination in the last elections in October 2023 to a pro-European coalition, it retains the country's presidency; at the same time, in Bulgaria, the populist conservative party (Smer-SD), which came out on top in the last legislative elections, has joined forces with the far right (SNS) to govern.

In Latin America, after Bolsonaro's disaster and Dina Boluarte's coup d'état in Peru two years ago, they conquered Argentina's Casa Rosada, declaring a war to the death on one of the most combative and organized workers' and popular movements. They threaten the United States and the world, with the possibility of Trump taking back the White House.

They pose real threats in Asia, where Bongbong Marcos, son of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, rules the Philippines, and the anti-Muslim Narendra Modi rules India since 2014. His Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government has limited civil liberties, labour and environmental rights, as well as the constitutional autonomy of Kashmir region. In Indonesia the far right Prabowo Subianto has just been confirmed president.

Since 2008, and more markedly since Brexit and Trump's victory in 2016, movements and parties of a supposedly “renewed” far right have strengthened and multiplied with electoral victories. They present themselves as counter-systemic, even if they are (ultra) neoliberal, conservative in their mores, nationalist, xenophobic, racist, misogynist, enemies of LGBTQIA+ rights, transphobic and

massively inspired or supported by religious fundamentalism. They spread science denialism concerning climate change.

The advance of this constellation of the extreme right, is the result of decades of crisis of (neoliberal) democracies and their institutions, due to the increase in inequalities and the inability of these regimes to provide satisfactory answers to the aspirations of the peoples and workers.

The deep roots of the new far right are the desperation of the impoverished social sectors in the face of the worsening crisis, the disintegration of the social fabric imposed by neoliberalism, combined with the failures of the “alternatives” represented by social liberalism and “progressivism”. As a result, fractions of the bourgeoisie have emerged and grown throughout the world supporting this new version of fascism as a political-ideological solution capable of shutting down regimes, controlling with an iron fist the mass movements, imposing brutal adjustments and dispossessions to recover the rates of capitalist accumulation. The most notable example of this division is the polarization between Trumpism (which has taken the Republican Party by storm) and the Democratic Party in the United States.

This panorama poses as a fundamental task for the Fourth International: the fight to the death against these far-right forces, authoritarianisms and neofascism.

## Ukrainian people defends its right to national self-determination

The invasion of Ukraine by Putin's army in 2022 accelerated the geopolitical redesign of the world. Putin's regime reproduces, with its aggression, the relations of domination inherited from the Tsarist empire – not without borrowings from Stalinism and convergence with the ideologies of the extreme right around the world.

The war is inflicting these atrocities long-term. Russia continues to shell civilian areas and attack Ukrainian infrastructure (railroads, roads, schools, hospitals, mills, warehouses, ports, etc) throughout the territory. In the occupied zones, mass rapes and massacres, the destruction of Mariupol

and bombardments affecting civilians – supposedly “protected” by Russia – have gone hand in hand with repressive imposition of Russian passports, destruction of Ukrainian culture, deportation of children, etc. Millions of Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes or leave Ukraine tearing apart their families and social networks, turning them into refugees in different countries.

It was the popular armed and civilian resistance to the invasion of February 2022 (unexpected by both Putin and the Western powers) that forced Putin to make opaque adjustments to the aims of his military offensive, which was supposed to “denazify” Ukraine and protect the Russian-speaking population of the Donbas. The ground front has stabilized (in early 2024) after huge human losses, without the Russian forces being able to stabilize their control of all the territories proclaimed Russian.

In Russia and Belarus, those who dare to speak of a “war” for what is officially a “special military operation” or who express the slightest opposition to it are criminalized. The partial mobilization of some 300,000 men in September 2023 caused hundreds of thousands of young men – often without refugee status – to flee, not without threats to their families back in Russia. Thousands of civilians in the border areas of Russia have now become victims of Putin's war, suffering from attacks by Ukrainian drones and shells.

Russian aggression has for the time being enabled NATO to be consolidated and enlarged on the basis of the fears of Russia's Eastern European neighbours. This is why the defeat of this invasion and of Russian imperial logic is a decisive factor for a successful popular campaign throughout Europe for the dismantling of all military blocs - NATO, CSTO, AUKUS.

## Unprecedented internationalization

We are experiencing an unprecedented internationalization of the major issues facing humanity. The crisis of capitalism has acquired a new quality since the 2008 crash and the recession that immediately followed, and even more so with the Covid pandemic. The capitalist crisis has clearly become multidimensional. There is a convergence between the environmental crisis – which for

some years now has been producing increasingly extreme climatic phenomena, among which the recent excessive heat waves stand out – with the phase of lasting economic stagnation, with the intensification of the dispute for hegemony in the inter-state system between the United States and China, with the advances of authoritarianism and neo-fascism, with the resistance of the peoples and workers and the multiplication of wars in the world.

We have entered a new moment in the history of capitalism. A period qualitatively different from the one we have lived through since the establishment of neo-liberal globalization at the end of the 1980s, and particularly more conflictive from the point of view of the class struggle and the struggle between states in comparison with that which opened 33 years ago with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the bureaucratic regimes of Eastern Europe.

There are two major differences between this situation and the convergence of crises at the beginning of the 20th century, which resulted in the “age of catastrophe” (1914-1946), including two bloody world wars.

The most immediately threatening facet of this multidimensional crisis is the ecological crisis provoked by two centuries of predatory capitalist accumulation. After all, what is the ecological crisis if not the result of the fossil fuel-based capitalism? The escalating climate and environmental crisis is hitting humanity and life on the planet hard: the rate of increase in average temperatures on Earth is double what it was up until last decade; biodiversity is being lost, there is pollution, contamination and pandemics, all of which shorten the deadlines for decisive action.

The globalized corporate economy, based on burning fossil fuels and increasing consumption of meat and ultra-processed foods, is rapidly exacerbating the climate crisis. A climate that will reduce humanity's future on the planet. Melting poles and glaciers are accelerating the rising seas and the water crisis. Agribusiness, mining and hydrocarbon extraction are advancing (not without resistance) on tropical forests, essential for maintaining the planet's climate systems and biodiversity. The effects of the climate crisis will continue to manifest themselves violently, destroying

infrastructures, agricultural systems, ways of life and producing gigantic human displacements. None of this will happen without a leap in social conflicts.

## The economic and social crisis

We are still living under the impact of the great financial crisis of 2008, which opened a new great depression, followed by a long recession, just like that of the years 1873-90 and particularly like that of 1929-1933. We are experiencing a crisis of neoliberal globalization. Firstly, because this mode of capitalist functioning is no longer capable, as it used to be, of guaranteeing the growth, profit and accumulation rates that it did at the end of the 1980s and 1990s. Secondly, because geopolitical polarization, aggravated by the wars the advance of nationalism, is shaking up the super-internationalized value chains (eg the Europe-Russia energy chain and global chip production, the target of U.S. fury to prevent Chinese leadership in telecommunications and artificial intelligence). There is a tendency to redesign the already shaken global production chains. However, none of these difficulties prevent the neoliberal imperialist governments and their underlings from continuing their adjustments and vicious attacks on wages, social budgets and the commodification of agriculture.

Despite paltry growth after 2008, the neoliberal economy tries to evade its own crisis by rushing headlong into continued concentration of capital, financialization, public and private indebtedness, digitalization – which brings more and more power to big transnational corporations in general and to Big Tech in particular. Stagnating or slowing growth, with inflation (aggravated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine) and the implementation of the same old neoliberal policies only exacerbate social, regional, racial and gender inequalities between and within countries.

The unbridled search for protection against the crisis (or maintenance of profits) encourages financial speculation and permanently threatens the system with the 2008 wave of bankruptcies that has affected not only banks but also large industrial corporations such as General Motors, Ford, General Electric, or large real estate corporations. In addition to its recessionary character

-which shakes the living standards of the working masses-, the rise in interest rates makes sovereign and private debts grow, creating the conditions for new regional or even global default crises.

## The absence of mass revolutionary alternatives

It is not that there are no struggles and resistance movements, on the contrary. We have had in this century at least three waves of democratic and anti-neoliberal struggles (beginning of the century, that of 2011 and that of 2019-2020), a renewed women's movement, the anti-racist movement that emerged in the United States and a constellation of struggles for climate justice across the globe. However, these great struggles have been confronted, objectively, not only with neoliberal capitalism and its governments but also with the dilemmas of structural reorganization of the world of labour - the industrial working class has lost social weight in much of the West; oppressed sectors, youth and new fringes of precarious workers are not yet organized in a permanent way, and in general have difficulty in unifying with the trade union movement.

In the midst of increasingly rapid changes, one element of the previous period remains and is aggravated by the reconfiguration of the exploited class and the oppressed sectors (as a result of the so-called productive restructuring): the absence of an alternative to capitalism that is credible in the eyes of the masses, the lack of an anti-capitalist force or set of forces leading the economic and social revolutions. The extremely critical moment for the system is, therefore, also that of a great political and ideological fragmentation of the social movements and the left. This is linked to a regression in the consciences of the oppressed and exploited, affected by geographical, technological and structural reconfigurations and by neoliberal hyperindividualism. Added to this are the negative outcomes of “left” governments such as Syriza and Podemos, and the tremendous fragmentation of the socialist left to give rise to a picture in which the struggles are more difficult and their impact in consciousness raising and political organization weaker.

## How the many crises reinforce each other

To characterize the capitalist crisis as multidimensional means that it is not a simple sum of crises, but a dialectically articulated combination, in which each sphere impacts on the other and is impacted by the others. The link between the war in Ukraine (before the conflict in Palestine exploded) and economic stagnation has worsened the critical food situation of the poorest people on the planet, with more than 250 million more hungry than ten years ago (2014-2023). The flow of people displaced by wars, climate change, the food crisis and the spread of repressive regimes is increasing, especially among the countries of the South, although the media give more prominence to South-North displacement.

The disastrous prospects in the environmental and economic fields, since at least 2016, have undoubtedly played an important role in pushing part of the bourgeois fractions in different countries to detach themselves from the project of formal democracies as the best way to implement neoliberal precepts. Increasingly significant sectors of the bourgeoisies adopt authoritarian alternatives within liberal democracies, resulting in the strengthening of right-wing fundamentalist movements and far-right governments.

The expansion of a hyper-individualistic neoliberal sociability, combined with the right's use of social networks and possibly now AI, further fosters depoliticization, class fragmentation and conservatism. Digital technologies also help to deepen the subordination-clientelization of the medium and small peasantry, considered as the main food producers in the world, or even the massive reduction of these peasantries. On the other hand, neoliberalism, by continuing to violently attack what remains of the welfare states, imposing the super-exploitation of industrial and service workers and particularly of care and social reproduction work, throws women, particularly women workers, into the dilemma between surviving (badly) or fighting.

Neoliberalism keeps women in the formal labour force (in the North) or in less structured and more informal forms (in the Global South), further reducing

the wages and incomes of those who "work outside" or provide services, while burdening working women as a whole with the tasks of caring for children, the elderly, the sick, the different; work previously covered by the welfare state, notably in advanced capitalist countries but now brutally cut back. With the networks of social reproduction in crisis, more so in the neocolonial countries than in the metropolises, neoliberal society is domesticating (handing back to the family) and racializing (handing over to non-whites, blacks, indigenous women, immigrants) the tasks of care, but does not take responsibility for social reproduction as a whole.

From an overall geo-economic perspective, today's neoliberal capitalism and its interstate system introduce digital devices and algorithms as new productive forces, giving rise to the emergence of digital platforms, as well as new forms of social relations of production, such as uberization, and various social relations mediated exclusively by the market. At the same time, the centre of gravity of global capital accumulation has shifted in the 21st century from the North Atlantic (Europe-USA) to the Pacific (USA, especially Silicon Valley, and East and Southeast Asia). Not only China is decisive, but the whole region, from Japan and Korea to Australia and India.

## Geopolitical chaos and reconfiguration of the global order

The "new order" or disorder under construction, which already carries the threat of more inter-imperialist conflicts and a resumption of the nuclear race, makes the world more conflictual and dangerous. The "geopolitical chaos" of a few years ago is worsening, while giving rise to a crisis of the imperialist system: i.e. a weakening of the hegemonic power. This is combined with the assertion of a new imperialism, such as Russia, or an emerging imperialism, like China. It is a reconfiguration underway in a global context of immense instability, with nothing consolidated. In any case, the unipolarity of the bloc under US leadership (following the collapse of USSR) no longer exists.

The facts show that, with the strengthening of the Asian giant in the economic, technological and military

spheres, in the last decade we have been experiencing a hegemonic dispute based on the rivalry between the old imperial system – the US bloc, with the European imperialisms, the Canadian state, Japan, South Korea, Australia – and the emerging bloc that China is trying to build. This latter bloc, expanding and on the offensive, includes Russia (despite its particular interests and contradictions with Beijing), North Korea, many Central Asian republics, new friends among the caliphates of the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Iran) and is trying to turn the BRICS into an alliance against Western imperialisms. India however remains a strong ally of the USA, including against China.

We are witnessing the proliferation of war situations around the world, such as those continuing in Syria, Yemen, Sudan and the conflict in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, we observe overt or covert civil wars, such as the case of Myanmar, as an example of the former, and the constant struggle of Latin American states against criminal organizations, and in turn, of these against the populations, as evidenced in Mexico, Brazil and Ecuador. This conflictive situation is advancing in the geoeconomics and geopolitics of Africa, where Russia competes economically and militarily with France and the United States, particularly in the former French-speaking colonies of West Africa. For its part, China is continuing to try to increase its economic influence in all parts of the African continent and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

## The nature of present China and Putin's Russia

The nature of the Chinese "great leap" of the last 30 years was capitalist. Heir to a great social revolution and a turn towards restoration from the 1980s onwards, essential for the neoliberal redesign of the world (carried out in partnership with the US and its allies), the emerging Chinese imperialism has specific characteristics, like all imperialisms. It is based on a statist capitalism planned and centralized in the CCP and the Armed Forces (PLA, the People's Liberation Army): a developmental capitalism with openly developmentalist policies where most large corporations are joint ventures between state-owned

or state-controlled enterprises and private enterprises.

Chinese emerging imperialism is still, of course, under construction. In the last 10 years China has made a leap in the export of capital: it has acquired big participation in energy, mining and infrastructure companies in neo-colonial countries (Southeast Asia and Central Asia, Africa and Latin America) and has become the world's largest patent filer and registrant. Since 2022, China is a net exporter of capital (it exports more capital than it imports). It has been investing more and more in armaments and warning with increasing vehemence that there is a line (or several lines) – Taiwan and the South Sea – that rivals and weaker states must not cross. It has not yet invaded or colonized “another country” on the European or U.S. model, although its policy toward Tibet and Xijiang (and with the small territories historically in dispute with India and Bhutan), is essentially colonialist.

Russia today is the state resulting from the massive destruction of the foundations of the former Soviet Union, and from the chaotic and non-centralized restoration that took place in it, from the takeover of old and new businesses by bureaucrats turned oligarchs. At the beginning of the century, Putin and his group, coming from the sectors of the former espionage and repression services, devised the project of recentralizing Russian capitalism, using Bonapartist relations between oligarchs and a 21st century version of the old national-imperialist ideology of Great Russia. This was transformed into the main instrument for reasserting Russian capitalism in competition with other imperialisms, and qualitatively increasing the repression of the peoples of the Federation, including the Russian people. The ultra-repressive nature of the Putin regime can be considered as developing towards fascism.

## The United States, a hegemon in crisis

The emergence of rivals does not detract from the nature of the United States as the richest and most powerful country militarily, with unprecedented war power and the bourgeoisie most convinced of its “historic mission” to dominate the planet at any price, and

therefore to wage war in favour of the continuity of its hegemony. It is indeed Uncle Sam who still has the last word in the still hegemonic imperialist “collectivity”. The point is that, although the United States is unbeatable in coercion, it has as never before (at least since the Vietnam War) a serious problem: an imperialist hegemony, like all hegemonomies, can only be sustained if it also convinces its allies and its domestic public. And there's nothing more dangerous than a cornered hegemon.

The United States has serious problems of external legitimacy, but also, and more seriously, internal legitimacy – elements that did not exist in the previous period of supposed “unipolarity” and “war on terror” in the 1990s. Its business, bureaucratic and political elite is more divided than ever over the project of internal domination and is forced to face the mess of undoing the value chains that have deeply linked the U.S. economy to China's over the past 40 years.

In addition to its relative economic decline, the United States is a bourgeois democratic society and regime in open crisis since the Tea Party and Trump took control of the Republican Party from within – with pretensions to change the rules of the world's oldest bourgeois democracy – and polarization deepened. The tendency of this crisis is to deepen more and, with Trump or Biden in the White House, contribute to weaken the once all-powerful “America”, which will face onslaughts between Executive, Congress and Justice, capable of harming its global objectives.

## The Global South

Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and a large part of Asia (in particular its southern and southeastern portions) make up the territories of the neo-colonial countries known as the Global South. Despite the inequalities between their various states and social formations, as a whole they make up that fundamental part of the world – where most of humanity lives or survives – in debt, producing raw materials, possessing the least destroyed ecosystems, extensive food systems and cheap labour that are fundamental to the permanent and predatory enrichment of the imperialist North.

After forty years of neoliberal globalization, the Global South continues to concentrate greater proportions of inequality, hunger, lack of social protection systems, authoritarian governments, expropriation and bloody social conflicts. However, financial, productive, commercial and cultural internationalization has also produced a perverse equalization with the North in terms of problems and political polarization: the rise of the extreme right (Duterte, Bolsonaro, Modi, Milei), the growth in the power of criminal organizations, climate tragedies (as in India, Bangladesh, Philippines, Brazil), crises of state and political systems, civil wars (as in Myanmar, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti) and wars between countries.

## Latin America

Since the beginning of the century, South America has been the scene of a series of struggles, multitudinous demonstrations, popular *estallidos* (riots), election of reformist governments born out of these struggles and a lot of political polarization – because neo-extractivism, predatory exploitation of nature, social breakdown, inequality, daily violence, militarization and political crises are growing, which also feed far right alternatives. Since 2018, a new cycle of mobilizations has, in a radical way, swept through the Andean countries. Resistance, explosions and social struggles - which have combined democratic and economic demands - are combined on the one hand, and the permanence of the extreme right as a central enemy on the other. These struggles are sometimes channelled through the election of the so-called “progressive” governments of the second wave.

They are not governments of the workers and the oppressed, therefore they are not “our governments”. We do not participate in them, nor do we owe them unconditional support. However, in a period marked by the presence and growth of the ultra-rightists, they are governments seen by broad sections of the masses as an alternative to neo-fascism, because in general they are alternatives on the electoral plane. Thus, studying each national case in the current world context, and considering the necessity of defeating the extreme right, our policy cannot be

other than popular mobilization and a careful combination of programmatic demands, encouragement and support for the struggles against the neo-liberal and predatory measures of these governments, denouncing what is most reactionary, promoting the best ways of fighting the extreme right, with the indispensable maintenance of the independence of the movements against these governments.

## Africa within the vortex of crises

This region with 1.2 billion inhabitants exists in a capitalist world, which shapes and constrains their lives at every turn. In spite of the narrative of Africa rising, which suggested Africa was finally throwing off the yoke of neo-colonial underdevelopment, Africa and particularly sub-Saharan Africa is a victim of the “uneven” part of uneven and combined development. It remains the poorest continent in the world. The World Bank estimates that 87% of the world’s extreme poor will be in Africa by 2030.

The multi-dimensional crisis of capitalism is having catastrophic effects across the whole continent. Africa is responsible for just 4% of global carbon emissions, yet 7 of the 10 most countries vulnerable to climate disaster are in Africa. Four years of drought in the Horn of Africa has displaced 2.5 million people. Several conflicts that mark the political situation in Africa, especially the war in Sudan, have their roots in extreme disruption brought on by the accelerating climate crisis.

For some time, we have been witnessing the new scramble for Africa, which is fuelling a wave of conflicts across the continent – from Sudan to Mozambique. While many of these conflicts are related to new oil and gas finds, an increasing focus is the race to control and extract rare earth minerals and other critical minerals (cobalt, copper, lithium, platinum) for low carbon technologies needed for the “green economy” in the advanced economies.

Together with the former colonial powers and of course the imperial hegemon, the USA, China and Russia play a significant role in extracting wealth through forms of super-exploitation and fuelling conflicts on the continent.

Consequently, new conflicts, regional wars, coups and civil wars continue to define the continent’s political economy. Taking advantage of conflicts in several African countries and where regimes backed by Western powers face new insurgencies or are toppled, a familiar pattern plays out. Russia, principally through the mercenary Wagner group is deployed to undermine Western influence and gain access to influence in the region. This is also true for the series of coups in West Africa which are challenging the power of French neo-colonialism and where the new regimes turn to Washington’s competitors for military and financial lifelines.

However, China is the main non-Western power extracting Africa’s wealth. China uses its economic power to exact unequal exchange, whether in the form of resource backed loans, other loans, trade deals and through its investments in Africa’s extractive industries and infrastructure. It is estimated that 62 percent of African bilateral debt is owed to Chinese creditors.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the so-called citizens’ movements (Le Balai citoyen (Burkina Faso), Y en a marre! (Senegal), Lucha (DRC), etc.) seem to be seeking a new impetus. Faced with popular demonstrations, including those of the political opposition, the regimes also respond with fierce repression (Senegal, Swatini/former Swaziland, Zimbabwe, etc.). In general, there is not a leftist or “progressive” (anti-neoliberal) anchorage, much less an anti-capitalist perspective (as raised by the Algerian comrades during the Hirak). The Sudanese uprising, with its remarkable self-organization and radical social and democratic demands, is now being stifled and the population decimated in the merciless armed conflict between generals, each backed by the most reactionary states. The Kais Saïed regime in Tunisia has strangled the democratic aspirations born out of the Arab Spring.

The military coups of 2023 in former French colonies in Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon) are an indicator of the political crisis in this continent. This crisis is accentuated by the rise of military action by Islamist terrorist groups financed from Gulf Monarchies, which have been strengthened by the defeat of Gaddafi in Libya and the result of the intervention of the Western powers. In

these four countries, the military who seized power, without encountering any resistance in a context of regime crisis, took advantage of the total discredit of the political institutions and the widespread rejection of the French imperialist presence (Françafrique) among the population, in particular among the youth of the Sahel. This rejection was also very clearly expressed in Senegal during the social movements of 2021. In the case of the military coup in Gabon, a former French colony in Central Africa, what is decisive is the internal crisis of the regime, since there has not been the same rejection of France by the new governants and by the population. In any case, the military who have come to power offer no real alternative to imperialist policies and the neo-liberal model, much like the Islamists who came to power through elections in Tunisia and Egypt after the Arab Spring.

## The exploited, the oppressed and the peoples of the world respond with mobilizations

After the crisis of 2008, there was a resurgence of mass mobilizations all over the world. Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, Plaza del Sol in Madrid, Taksim in Istanbul, June 2013 in Brazil, Nuit Debout and yellow vests in France, mobilizations in Buenos Aires, Hong Kong, Santiago, Bangkok. This first wave was followed by a second wave of uprisings and explosions between 2018 and 2019, interrupted by the pandemic: the anti-racist rebellion in the United States and United Kingdom, with the death of George Floyd, women’s mobilizations in many parts of the world, including the heroic struggle of women in Iran, revolts against autocratic regimes such as in Belarus (2020), a mass mobilization of Indian peasants that triumphed in 2021. The year 2019 witnessed demonstrations, strikes or attempts to overthrow governments in more than one hundred countries: in six of them governments were successfully overturned or modified against reforms, in four governments were overthrown, in two governments were completely reformed (study by Mediapart, 24/11/2019).

In the aftermath of the pandemic, the three months of resistance in France against Macron’s pension reform; and the workers’, students’ and popular

uprising in China that helped defeat the CCP's Covid Zero policy stand out. In the US, the process of unionization and struggle continues in the new branches of production (Starbuck's, Amazon, UPS), with the emergence of new grassroots anti-bureaucratic processes (rank and file), with strikes of workers in education, health. In 2022/2023, the big strikes of Hollywood screenwriters and actors stood out, in addition to the historic and so far victorious strike of the workers of the three big automakers in the country.

The working class in a broad sense, which is currently preparing to face the impacts of Artificial Intelligence (as evidenced by the resistance in the strike of American screenwriters and actors), remains a lively and numerous force. However, it has undergone processes of restructuring, repression, and a lower level of consciousness and organization can be observed compared to the last century. Large industrial complexes survive in China and spread throughout Southeast Asia. Peasants in Africa, South Asia (India and Pakistan) and Latin America are also bravely resisting the invasion of imperialist agribusiness. Indigenous peoples, who constitute 10% of the world's population, resist the advance of capital over their territories and defend the common goods essential for all humanity. The defeat of the Arab Spring and the Syrian tragedy retard the resilience of the peoples of the Middle East; despite this, we have seen the heroic uprising of the women and girls of Iran.

Workers continue to resist capital and fight for living conditions, albeit under new forms of labour organization and new ways of organizing to fight, and therefore with more difficulties than previously. What is at stake is to work harder than ever, in every country, in every urban periphery, in every workplace, in every occupation and strike, in every new grassroots union, in every new category and new popular movement of resistance to order, in unity around common demands, in the creation and strengthening of self-organization and in the anti-capitalist politicization of demands, towards the reconstruction of a consciousness of the exploited and oppressed and of their class independence against capitalism.

## The central demands for a new time

Faced with growing inequality between countries, imposed by the imperial capitalist system; faced with wars and nationalist disputes, which claim millions of lives, the Fourth International stands unconditionally against all imperialisms. We stand for the full independence of all colonies and neo-colonies. We stand for a world in which no state or ethnicity oppresses or restricts the rights of others. The peace we propose is an egalitarian and anti-colonial peace.

Our most urgent task in solidarity with Palestine is to win political and social forces to support the international call for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, allowing the unimpeded entry of humanitarian aid. We demand an end to the destruction of Gaza to the expulsion and displacement of Palestinians inside Gaza and the West Bank, the freeing of all Palestinian prisoners and of the Israeli hostages. We demand an end to other governments' complicity with Israel's actions and for an arms embargo against it. We work to build the broadest possible movement in support of the Palestinian people, stepping up the BDS campaign. This movement includes those Jews throughout the world who assert that Netanyahu and the Israeli government do not speak for them and for whom a peaceful Jewish presence in Palestine can only be concretized by defending the rights of the Palestinian people.

The strategic solution in the Middle East starts with the right of return for all Palestinians to their historically recognized territory, the elimination of apartheid from the river to the sea, combatting of all relations of oppression, racism and exploitation throughout the region, imposing equal rights for all peoples and therefore the dismantling of the Zionist state as the state "of the Jews". We work for the development of a vast egalitarian revolutionary movement of all the peoples of Palestine in their struggle for self-determination. But it requires a rejection of Zionism by the Jewish people of Israel and their participation in an Arab revolution carrying democratic, secular and socialist dynamics.

The only lasting solution to the war in Ukraine is the complete withdrawal

of Putin's troops. All possible ceasefire or "peace" negotiations must be public to Ukrainian and Russian peoples. It is up to the Ukrainian people to decide on the conditions for a ceasefire that will lead to the defeat of the aggression, the preservation of what is still left of Ukraine's infrastructure and the withdrawal of Russian troops – with the return of the population to their homes. We defend the right of the Ukrainian people to resist and receive help against the invasion, and build a free and democratic Ukraine, and we support all those in Russia and Belarus who oppose this war.

We fight for the dismantling of all military blocs – NATO, CSTO, AUKUS. We oppose any logic of sharing "spheres of influence" at the expense of the people and any neo-liberal and political conditioning of the aid provided. We oppose the cynical use of the war in Ukraine to increase military budgets, as in Europe. We denounce all nuclear blackmail on both sides. We continue to fight for world disarmament, in particular as regards nuclear and chemical weapons, for a world peace in which no state imposes, invades or oppresses another, i.e. a peace without colonisers and without cemeteries of colonized peoples.

In Africa, we reject the Western imperialist discourse which, under the pretext of re-establishing constitutional order, wants to support military intervention to preserve its interests. We are fighting for the complete withdrawal of French military troops from the entire region and the closure of the U.S. military base of Agadez in Niger. We demand the departure of the troops of the Wagner group. We support all efforts to conquer the political and economic sovereignty of the peoples, in the direction of a new and anti-systemic movement for the unity of the countries and peoples of Africa.

In the face of the extreme right of the North and the South, the unitary policies of the left (united fronts) are an important part of our repertoire in these times, although never negotiating or accepting the loss of our political independence, nor that of the social movements. In authoritarian regimes (such as in China, Russia, Belarus, Nicaragua, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Arab Emirates, Iran and the other caliphates) or those with

# International situation

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ected governments but of an authoritarian nature (such as Turkey, Venezuela, the Philippines), our policy is one of frontal opposition to those in power, an unremitting struggle for democratic rights and unconditional support to the insurgents, such as those of Myanmar and Yemen.

In this context, the initiative of holding, in Brazil, a broad conference of activists against fascism in 2025 is of great importance for the International. It should be part of our priorities of action in all continents to support and strengthen this idea, working to realize it, through regional or continental pre-conferences.

We fight for the satisfaction of basic demands, such as universal and free health care, health infrastructure guaranteed by the states, decent housing, decent work, wages and pensions, as well as access to water and energy at low prices.

One of our central tasks is to encourage and support the socio-environmental struggles, working to make the ecological anti-capitalist demands those of all the workers' and oppressed sectors. Only the strength of the movements of the exploited and oppressed in the socio-environmental plan can confront the ongoing climate collapse.

We defend the right of women workers and society in general to compensation for care work (with children, elderly or sick people) guaranteed by state policies. We fight for the right to decide whether to have children, for the right to abortion and all contraceptive methods, sex education at all levels, for quality public day care centres, quality full-time schools; for equal pay, job opportunities and income between men and women.

Against structural racism that discriminates against Black people, indigenous peoples and all racialized minority ethnic groups, particularly when they are migrants in the North, we propose and fight for anti-discrimination policies, reparations for slavery and land theft, as well as affirmative actions. We stand with all migrants against xenophobia and expulsion policies. For the end of all walls.

Against conservative homophobia and transphobia, which attack the LGBTQI community worldwide, we raise our voices for the broadest right to

dispose of our bodies as we see fit and as we wish. For the full citizenship and rights of gay, lesbian and non-binary couples, with the possibility of marriage, conception and adoption. We defend the rights of the transgender community, the fight against violence and their full integration into social life.

All these struggles must unite to defeat the new fascisms, to overthrow the regimes of exploitation and oppression, to lead to the confrontation with imperialism, colonialism, capitalism in a word. The Fourth International fights for a world in which no state oppresses, invades, exercises oppression on the other, where a peace between equals is possible, with respect to the self-determination of the peoples. We fight for a decolonial, ecological and socialist - ecosocialist - world where the defeat of capitalism and its logic allows all to be equal in their differences. A feminist world, of all ethnicities and colours, all sexual orientations and identities, of all beliefs, of all forms of human life in symbiosis and balance with nature. ■