

## **Response of eleven comrades to resolution proposed for the Congress of the Belgian section 7-9 February 2025**

### **Political situation Israel-Palestine**

- 3.1. The purpose of this text is to provide a brief response to the circulation of the resolution on Israel-Palestine as part of the February session of Congress.
- 3.2. For fifteen months, the war waged by Israel took on historic proportions. Unlike past operations, Netanyahu's war government today seems determined to wage a war of extermination against Palestinians in Gaza. The announced fight to the death against Hamas involves the crushing of the entire Palestinian civil society, through the deliberate organization of a genocide, in full view of the entire world and with the greatest impunity.

### **Against whom should we fight?**

- 3.3. This war of extermination is unfortunately just another episode in the extreme national oppression of millions of Palestinians by the Israeli capitalist regime. In recent decades, this regime has ignored the democratic rights of all communities in its path, including those of neighboring nation-states, and resorted to occupation as a last resort to establish its regional domination.
- 3.4. In doing so, the nature of the Israeli regime (even beyond Netanyahu's government) is deeply colonialist and also integrates a policy of segregation close to apartheid. However, this colonialism has a special feature compared to other colonial processes of capitalism: there is no mother nation outside of Israel itself. It is crucial to consider this aspect in order to make credible demands and not get lost in a "copy-paste" logic.
- 3.5. Moreover, this colonialism also masks an additional social contradiction: Israel is also constructed as a class society, within which an elite lives off the labor of an immense majority, particularly the Israeli working class, which is composed primarily of Jewish workers. This also limits the comparison to the apartheid regime, where the systematic exploitation of South Africans was carried out by a white elite and where the white working class was (and is) only a small minority within the entire working class in the country.
- 3.6. Does the specific history of the state of Israel make the working class irreversibly subservient to the ruling class? We must not lose sight of the fact that the development process of capitalism in the "advanced" capitalist countries has systematically resulted in the construction of nation-states around the new dominant class of society, and that one of the tasks of the dominant class has been to form the social class it wants to exploit: the working class. Throughout history, the bourgeoisie has done everything possible to "buy" social democratic leaders to maneuver and betray the labor movement, to win it over, to divert its political attention. This

process is not unique to Israel. Does this mean that the working class is subservient to its ruling class for eternity, especially for all countries with a colonial history?

- 3.7. The Israeli working class, regardless of religion or ethnicity, has no interest in war. Last September, a general strike in Israel was accompanied by mass mobilizations (300,000 people), not explicitly to demand an end to the war, but to demand a cease-fire to secure the release of hostages. The war policy of the Netanyahu government, which ignores the fate of the hostages, was clearly denounced, as was the exploitation of this war by the elite. During such mobilizations, the illusion that a war is being waged to ensure security is undermined. The nature of the Israeli regime and the formation of an extreme right-wing government around Netanyahu should not obscure the makeup of Israeli society and the potential social force within it.

### **Using Marxism as a compass**

- 3.8. As Marxists, we should strive to analyze society as complex processes, and not as fixed truths. This is why Marx explained that this new social class forged by capitalism, the working class, had the potential to overthrow and rule society, using the metaphor “capitalism has produced its own gravedigger.”
- 3.9. If the socialist movement rejects Israeli society as one bloc, this is a doubly counterproductive mistake: not only does it not intervene in the Israeli labor movement with the aim of developing class consciousness and introducing the ideas of socialism, but moreover, it has the consequence of slowing down any dynamics of protest movements, by allowing the Zionist right to exploit the fear of security.
- 3.10. In all capitalist countries, the dominant ideology in society is that of the ruling class. This necessarily affects more or less important layers of workers. All opportunities to build class consciousness must be used to counter this.
- 3.11. It has never been said that the Palestinians' primary task was to concern themselves with the fate of Israeli workers in their confrontation with their elite. On the contrary, detaching Israeli workers from their ruling class is a task of the internationalist socialist movement.
- 3.12. We will never have the luxury of intervening in a social environment that is convinced in advance of our ideas. On the contrary, the rule is to intervene in an environment permeated by the dominant ideology and the complications of capitalism. It is an illusion to approach the Israeli working class only from the moment that it will be won over to the ideas of socialism overnight, as one block; it is a utopian view of mind. The task of Marxists is not only to seek an echo where it is easiest, or where it is most meaningful, based on the degree of oppression, but also and above all where there is a social force capable of changing the course of history. If it is not the Israeli working class that is the central driving force of the Palestinian national liberation struggle, we must still strive to break the bond between Israeli workers and their elite and build unity in our social class across borders; that is how

our class can be decisive. This is why under the apartheid regime we believed that we also had to build unity with white workers.

- 3.13. In the past, we have always considered Marxism as a compass, both for analysis and action. Basing yourself on Marxism means not so much collecting the most radical quotes possible, even if it means losing sight of the author's intentions, or pointing the finger at capitalism from time to time, but rather dwelling on an analysis of the whole situation. It is a class analysis in the sense that the course of events is judged not on the basis of the dominant images at any given time, but also and above all on the basis of the underlying processes, and the role that the division of society into opposing social classes plays over these processes.
- 3.14. If you reject this compass, you condemn yourself to suffer current events and to react in the confusion. On the contrary, using this compass makes it possible to refine the analysis, understand the contradictions and try to formulate slogans and demands to reach the layer in society that has the power to change the course of things: the working class, in all its diversity and unity, and its youth.

### **On the importance of credibility**

- 3.15. In times of war, these social classes do not disappear. The right to self-defense and the defense of an oppressed nation does not mean that we should rally behind the banner of Arab nationalism or reactionary groups. We will never refuse to step side by side with flags of communities fighting for their national liberation, which do not have the same character as flags of established powers. We can support the struggle against colonial oppression without waving national or other flags ourselves; they simply do not express what we want to bring to the resistance movements politically.
- 3.16. Moreover, just because it is a defensive struggle, against a militarily more powerful enemy, does not mean we should ignore the social projects of such organizations. In Iran, the Tudeh Party paid a high price for its cooperation with Islamic organizations during the revolutionary process of '78-'79. The new Islamic regime eventually became the embodiment of counterrevolution. Should we remember what happened to the regimes of the Baath parties, Saddam Hussein in Iraq or the Assad dynasty in Syria? Fundamentalist regimes that took power in the region? Have the millions of victims of these regimes become legitimate as part of the "resistance to Western imperialism"?
- 3.17. Where can it lead if we imagine that the enemies of our enemies are allies, even if only in certain circumstances? Although the attacks of 7/10/23 did not come out of nowhere and took place in a context of brutal national repression, at what point can we imagine that terrorist attacks on civilians are not reprehensible? How can we consider that carrying out rapes, mutilations and murders has some legitimacy when we take into account the ethnicity of the various parties? This kind of approach will

never allow us to build our organization in the labor movement, in oppressed communities. This can only discredit our activists and sympathizers.

- 3.18. Criticism of terrorism as a method of struggle does not belong to the “white media bourgeoisie. Since the First International, Marxists have systematically opposed activists who advocated the use of terrorism, especially to “raise awareness. This is even why the First International ended, with Marx opposing the methods of the anarchists against the backdrop of the defeat of the Paris Commune. In the recent period we have been confronted with terrorism-based tactics, especially from the 1960s, with the development of Maoist movements, in the neo-colonial world but also in Europe. We do not think we have made a mistake in systematically opposing these movements and their methods. It is regrettable that the comrades do not see a difference between the propaganda of the ruling classes (regardless of their origin) and the necessary criticism of the tactics and strategies that the revolutionaries must adopt.
- 3.19. Under no circumstances can organizations like Hamas or Hezbollah offer solutions, whether it is to change society, or even to break the dynamic of oppression that the Palestinian masses suffer. These organizations have built an implantation among the people based on the desperation of the poor masses in the region, but nevertheless constitute obstacles to the struggle for national liberation, for the rights of women and minorities, as described in Nicolas Croes' contribution on the occasion of the last session of Congress. It is regrettable that so little attention has been paid to the content of this contribution.

### **What does the cease-fire mean?**

- 3.20. A weak cease-fire has been signed between Hamas and Israel, providing immediate aid to the Palestinians. This cease-fire is the combined result of growing opposition in Israel to Netanyahu's war policy and of the international solidarity movement against the war, which has put increasing pressure on the Israeli government and its allies.
- 3.21. This timing also corresponds to a moment for the war government of Netanyahu and its allies at which additional damage can satisfy their imperialist hunger even if Hamas has not disappeared: weakening of Hezbollah and Hamas, strengthened positions in Lebanon and Syria, fall of Assad, weakening of Iran. The ceasefire also makes it possible to monetize, at least temporarily, Israel's internal social peace and prevent the war from turning into an uncontrollable regional conflagration.
- 3.22. This in no way means peace, or an end to the national oppression of the Palestinians. Netanyahu quickly announced that the resumption of the war could happen very soon, and retains the unshakable support of the United States with Trump, although his adventurism could also be a double-edged sword for Israel.
- 3.23. This ceasefire is also precarious because no fundamental problem has been solved, and the empty promises of the agreement only allow us to envision at best a

status quo before 7/10/23, in other words the basis for new conflicts. The Netanyahu government is more weakened than the image it wants to portray, and has never found a recipe other than war to overcome its instability.

- 3.24. The struggle for real and radical change must overcome all forms of national oppression and achieve equality of living conditions and rights between the two nations. The cease-fire removes a leaden weight and can also provide space for mass mobilizations. The return to ruins and the dynamics of reconstruction can stimulate popular mobilizations and international solidarity. In the past, we have referred to the first Intifada as a model for mobilization in Palestine, without reliance on the imperialist and Arab powers in the region. On the other hand, the end of the war and the weakening of Netanyahu may give more confidence to resume social mobilizations against his government's maneuvers.
- 3.25. On a capitalist basis, no diplomatic construction will make peace possible, because no national liberation is possible without social liberation. It is through the expropriation of resources from capitalists that true liberation can be achieved, not through the expropriation of one community by another. This is true for the Palestinians, but also for all oppressed national minorities in the region. This is why we believe that the demand for the right to an independent Palestinian state, in a federation of socialist states in the region, is the most feasible and relevant demand.
- 3.26. No socialist state will be built on the foundations of capitalist states, or even on the basis of dominant political structures that are corrupt and/or fundamentalist in the case of Palestine. Obviously, there is no place for the Zionist state in a socialist society. Should we therefore assume the destruction of states as a fundamental demand to profile the ideas of socialism, especially when there is a national conflict? Demanding the death of the state of Israel will never bring about unity in our class. This is an example of what a transitional program is not.

### **Our political heritage**

- 3.27. The war waged by Israel has led to a great deal of debate in society, and moreover within the party. A war situation often has the effect of fueling pre-existing discussions and polarizing positions. The war waged by Israel since the October 2023 Hamas attacks is clearly no exception.
- 3.28. Relatively massive mobilizations took place internationally to denounce and oppose this genocidal war. In the past, such mass movements have helped build international solidarity to stop wars. Class intervention in these movements plays a decisive role as pressure becomes a balance of power. This class intervention often takes place at a later stage of mobilizations against the war, when the war also involves some of the economic and social complications.
- 3.29. We must strive to see this possibility, this potential for the antiwar movement; and not repeat again the weaknesses and relative limits of the state of the movement. Unfortunately, this relative passivity of the working class in the anti-war

movement can cause bitterness among a whole layer of combative activists, mingling with impatience and to some extent with despair in the context of a genocide.

- 3.30. Being Marxists, we are not insensitive to such an atmosphere. Therefore, collective discussions are important to ensure that we do not lose control in such situations. Unfortunately, we note that a growing number of comrades, especially in the field of national coordination, have chosen to break with this approach and reject our historical analysis and program regarding Israel and Palestine.
- 3.31. For our part, we wish to rehabilitate this analysis with this response, as we believe it retains its relevance in light of the events and challenges posed by the various protest movements.
- 3.32. We are also proud that we have had a sister department in the region, and the political construction work that this department has accomplished and continues to accomplish. This, along with the work of smaller sections in the Middle East, was also a reflection of our collective ability to carry out a nuanced analysis of Marxism in a complex situation, and translate it into a program that resonates. Losing ties with such revolutionary sections and activists should raise questions.

#### **For a rejection of the resolution**

- 3.33. The late publication before Congress of such a resolution does not allow for a more consistent response to it. It is regrettable that sufficient time was not respected before Congress, despite the announced democratic intentions of national coordination. In the coming months, we intend to continue to respond more extensively to this issue in order to further complete the historical analysis and program begun.
- 3.34. In any case, we believe that this resolution already represents a break with the tradition and Marxist and internationalist orientation of our organization. Therefore, we invite the comrades present at the congress to reject it when it is put to a vote.