

A platform for Socialists and Libertarians for peace and the Ukrainian resistance

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We are facing economic and social transformations on a global scale that have challenged, in many ways, the previous fault lines of political alignments. The fallout from the collapse of the USSR and the emergence of a great totalitarian superpower like China shakes the US-driven capitalist Western hegemony to its foundations. These dynamics have been clearly shown during the war in Ukraine, where part of the Western left – which we broadly/largely feel ourselves to be a part of – has openly refused to support the Ukrainian people's right to self-determination and independence.

Yet these positions are inscribed in the very history of the labour movement. In 1915 socialist activists met in Zimmerwald and signed a manifesto proclaiming: "peace is only possible if every thought of violating the rights and liberties of nations is condemned. Neither the occupation of entire countries nor of separate parts of countries must lead to their violent annexation. No annexation, whether open or concealed, and no forcible economic attachment made still more unbearable by political disfranchisement. The right of self-determination of nations must be the indestructible principle in the system of national relationships of peoples".

Not sterile pacifism, then, but a "just peace" based on the rejection of annexations such as the loss of a nation's autonomy. A peace that grants the possibility for all peoples to develop democratically and independently. These are the

foundations on which to challenge inequalities and injustices and to open spaces for freedom and self-determination. In countries with authoritarian or totalitarian regimes this is being denied and oppression is the order of the day. Even in Western capitalist countries, democratic freedoms and rights are increasingly being swallowed up, revealing social inequalities that are much more jarring than in the past. That is why Socialists and libertarians are fighting tooth and nail to defend spaces of democracy and social and civil liberties.

With the war in Ukraine we are also witnessing a sort of clumsy and pernicious “Eurocentrism” by the international left, which, by calling for de facto equivalence between the aggressors and the aggressed, has no intention of understanding the reasons of those who are resisting, throughout the former USSR, against Russian imperialism.

We want to take another path: that of dialogue and cooperation with the best part of Eastern Europe, with the firm belief that the revival of the left can only take place on a European scale, where Russia and Ukraine are very much part of Europe. This is what fuels the kind of internationalism that rejects chauvinism and Russophobia, authoritarianism and “Great Russian” colonialism. We stand for the freedom of all peoples at every latitude of the world, from Kurdistan to Palestine.

These rights to self-determination go hand in hand with the right of resistance and includes the possibility of siding, “militarily”, even with forces traditionally hostile to the left and which belong to the NATO camp. Throughout the history of the last century, this has already happened several times: during the Spanish Civil War and in World War II when it was necessary to fight against the rise of fascism. Workers and the oppressed, in some circumstances, have less to lose in one camp than in another.

In concrete terms, the – open – proposal is to create four strands of activities:

1. Deepening the knowledge of the territories of the former USSR. Too many, too often talk and write without prior knowledge of the subject. We aim to create a flow and exchange of information and news about what is happening in those countries.

2. Engaging in dialogue with all those who support a democratic and left-wing perspective in the former USSR. This long-term action could take the form of a journal and/or a website with translations of articles, essays and materials from that sphere as well as discussions about the prospects for Europe. This work cannot and must not be for specialists or intellectuals only, but must also not be brought down to the level of 'Facebook messages'.

3. Public and online initiatives to publicize and broaden the discussion on these issues on a national and international scale.

4. Concrete solidarity with the people directly affected by the war and democratic opposition to Putin's Russia as well as to the antisocial and repressive measures of the Zelensky government.

This aggregation is one of individuals that reject the logic of 'intergroups' and 'front organizations' and is based on free participation, given the general agreement on what is being advocated here, and according to each individual's will and possibilities.

To continue doing this work, we need your support, however big or small.