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Syria and Iraq

**Let us mobilise against
dictatorships, imperialist
aggression and Daesh. We
reject the politics of “national
security”, racism and auster**

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We fight dictatorships, imperialist aggression and Daesh. We reject the politics of “national security”, racism and austerity. It’s time to mobilise!

Over recent months, people across the Middle East have been hit by an intensification of conflict in Syria and Iraq. That escalation has been sponsored both by global imperialist powers – chiefly the USA, Russia and European countries – and regional imperialist actors including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and Iran. These conflicts are the product of two distinct forms of counter-revolution: local dictatorships and counter-revolutionary regimes on one hand, and reactionary Islamic forces like Daesh on the other. The determination of major international and regional powers to impose their political and economic hegemony over the region is also a central cause of the current tragedy.

In Syria, the first form taken by the counter-revolution is support for the Assad regime. Russia’s deadly raids and the intervention of Iran, Hezbollah and sectarian Iraqi militias champion this profoundly reactionary, anti-democratic project. Assad is fuelled too by the mistrust Western powers routinely demonstrate towards democratic and revolutionary forces in Syria, including Kurdish forces.

Those fighting for a democratic and socially just future are the first targets of the Syrian regime, imperialists and their allies in the region. Syrian democratic forces are also the target of Islamic forces playing a counter-revolutionary role, supported at one time or another, directly or indirectly, by the Gulf monarchies and Turkey.

As always, women are the first victims of war. Rape, abduction and even the sale of women are gruesome outgrowths of the conflict.

What is Daesh? It is the creation both of international and regional imperialist aggressions and of the dictatorial, sectarian nature of regimes in the region, particularly in Iraq and Syria. The rise of sectarian tensions in the region is also the consequence of this deadly compound of domestic repression and external aggression.

It is in this context that we should understand the recent attacks in Ankara, Beirut, Paris, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, and the attack on the Russian aircraft in Egypt. These attacks only strengthen the evil that spawned them – state terrorism.

The rhetoric of the “War on Terror” finds material expression in the ramping up of authoritarian state security policies, in war and in racism. Racism, particularly Islamophobia, has increased exponentially and has become state policy across Europe. Imperialist powers have used the rhetoric of counter-terrorism to justify their support for dictatorships and their restrictions on freedoms, while regional dictators have used the same language to defend their own repression.

Now it is this same overarching worldview that unites France, Russia, the US, Turkey and the Syrian regime – though each has its own particular interests – such that they coordinate, directly or indirectly, their strikes and military manœuvres in Syria.

In the name of a war “against terrorism”, today the French state demands the power to terrorise. In the name of so-called “France values”, freedoms are being attacked. In an authoritarian headlong rush, François Hollande bombs Syria and Iraq while all the talk of war and noble “values” is unable to provide answers to the political and social

aspirations of the French working classes. Meanwhile, undocumented migrants, refugees, Muslims, veiled women, the Roma, foreigners and others are all prone to being designated “enemies within”.

Throughout the wider Middle East, state repression of political opponents and social movements is on the rise; in Egypt and elsewhere, hundreds of death sentences have been issued in recent months.

In the face of the temporary demobilization and disorientation of large sectors of the oppressed, we must step up to the challenge with constructive initiatives. In practice that means:

- Oppose draconian policies; defend the democratic rights of everyone.
- Oppose all imperialist aggression, alongside implacable opposition to dictatorships and counter-revolutionary regimes.
- Oppose the Western military campaign in Syria, which includes bombing and other direct participation of Western military forces and also includes the armed participation in the conflict of forces supported by the West.
- Fight against all forms of counter-revolution in the Middle East and the Maghreb, as elsewhere.
- Fight repressive security policies, racism and austerity – whether in Europe, Asia or Africa.
- Fight “fortress Europe”; demand the opening of borders and decent living conditions for all refugees and migrants.
- Strengthen solidarity with people fighting for their liberation and emancipation in the Middle East, the Maghreb and around the world.
- Solidarity with democratic and progressive anti-imperialist forces throughout the Arab region.
- Solidarity with the people of the Middle East and the Maghreb in their legitimate struggles for emancipation and against foreign aggression: we insist that the emancipation of the people of the region will be the work of the people themselves.

Signatories (more signatures will be added):

Revolutionary Left Current – Syria

Socialist Forum – Lebanon

Revolutionary Socialists – Egypt

Socialist Review Center – Kurdistan

Insaf (Redress Movement) – Libya

Al Munadil-a Current – Morocco

Emancipation Démocratique – Morocco

Ligue de la Gauche Ouvrière (LGO - Workers' Left League) – Tunisia

Sosyalist Demokrasi için Yeni Yol (New Course for Socialist Democracy) – Turkey

Devrimci Sosyalist İşçi Partisi (Socialist Workers' Party) – Turkey

Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire-Socialistische Arbeiderspartij (LCR-SAP, Revolutionary Communist League-Socialist Workers Party) – Belgium

Socialist Resistance – Britain

Socialist Workers Party (SWP) – Britain

Revolutionary Socialism in the 21st Century (rs21) – Britain

The Editors, Salvage – Britain

Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (NPA, New Anticapitalist Party) – France

Solidarité Socialiste avec les Travailleurs en Iran (SSTI) – France

Solidarity Collective Iran Paris – France

Internationale Sozialistische Linke (ISL, International Socialist Left) – Germany

Revolutionärer Sozialistischer Bund (RSB, Revolutionary Socialist League) – Germany

Irish Socialist Workers Party – Ireland

Sinistra Anticapitalista – Italy

SAP-Grenzeloos – Netherlands

Internationale Socialisten - Netherlands

“Open Left” Platform - Russia

International Socialists Scotland (ISS) – Scotland

Anticapitalistas – Spanish State

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