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Algeria

**No to neoliberalism! No to the
free market! For a politics that
serves the needs of the
people!**

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Tipaza, Algiers, Oran, Djelfa, Batna, Béjaïa, Chlef, Bordj... the riots which spread throughout the country underline the failure of the policy followed for several decades and confirm that the choice of neoliberalism contradicts the meeting of the elementary needs of the popular masses.

Everywhere, young people have expressed their anger against the rocketing price of basic products, their distress at the absence of housing, their despair before the scarcity of jobs, their unhappiness at a life without leisure, in a prison country that Europe prevents them from leaving, in a blocked society in crisis. Youth so poor in a country so rich, they have also expressed their hatred for the new possessing classes, their rejection of corruption and humiliation and their determination against repression.

The tradition of rioting is not new. Baraki and Diar Echems still resound from the battles for rehousing. For several months discontent has boiled. In the brawling to get hold of a packet of milk, or the search for an open bakery, rage was expressed at the billions stolen, the gifts presented to Gulf emirates, Algerian princelings or lords of Europe, all of them exempted from tax.

At the origin of the explosion, the increase in sugar, oil and groceries. The spectacle of the legitimate revolt of the youth of Tunisia has, certainly, inspired Bab el-Oued and Oran. The distribution of social housing revived the hatred of corruption. We were asked to wait while the fortunate jumped the queue.

The wage increases obtained in the public sector after years of struggles, strikes and repression are derisory for the smaller categories, that is for the majority. And these increases which are not yet applied everywhere are already eaten up by the price rises. The workers in the private sector have rarely received increases.

All our collective agreements should register a sliding scale of wages: when prices increase wages should go up by the same amount!

The value of the dinar has fallen by a factor of 20 since 1994, to offer Algerian workers almost free to investors. The new religion of market freedom is proclaimed, but, by order of the IMF, the dinar has been administratively lowered while prices have been freed! **Return to prices imposed by the state for all basic products.**

Oil revenues are spent on giant projects but our old have been squeezed and our youth have no work. The businessmen of the great powers love the Algeria of big contracts and our youth flee it on improvised boats. The patriotic turn announced is contradicted on the ground by the presents made to the Emirates and the promises made to the Europeans. Our politics need to be reoriented!

Our investments should be targeted on development for the satisfaction of the needs of the people: housing, jobs, health, transport, training.

Our youth are reproached for their desperate violence. But does the regime leave any other means of being heard when the association of stonecutters is deprived of approval, when a seminar on violence against women is not allowed, when marches and strikes are subjected to attack and legal prosecution?

No to neoliberalism! No to the free market! For a politics that serves the needs of the people!

For freedom of expression, organisation, demonstration and strike activity!

Algiers, January 6, 2011