



NEHAWU

Weekly International Monitor

ADVANCING WORKING CLASS POWER TOWARDS OUR 10TH NATIONAL CONGRESS AND OUR 26TH ANNIVERSARY

VOLUME 3. NUMBER 17

01 - 07 JUNE 2015

Contents

Contents	1
1.1. BURUNDI OPPOSITION SAY READY TO RESUME TALKS WITH GOVERNMENT	1
1.2. SOUTH AFRICA: WFTU DELEGATE ADDRESSED THE 15 TH NUM CONGRESS	2
1.3. NEPAL: WFTU AFFILIATE CONEP IN VOLUNTEER RELIEF MISSION	3
1.4. CUBA STRESSES ROLE OF AFRICAN UNION IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA.....	3
1.5. FAO RECOGNIZES WORK OF CUBA IN FOOD SECURITY	4
1.6. YEMEN CONFLICT HAS DIRE CONSEQUENCES FOR HORN OF AFRICA.....	5
1.7. WASHINGTON ONLY WENT AFTER FIFA SO AS TO GET AT RUSSIA.....	6
1.8. U.S OFFICIALS CONSIDER NUCLEAR STRIKES AGAINST RUSSIA.....	7
1.9. LESOTHO: ABDUCTION AND ARRESTS OF OPPONENTS CONDEMNED	9
1.10. SAUDI ARABIA'S YEMEN STRATEGY: DIVIDE AND DESTROY	10

1.1. BURUNDI OPPOSITION SAY READY TO RESUME TALKS WITH GOVERNMENT

03 June 2015

Prensa Latina

Opposition parties in Burundi said today they are ready to resume talks to find a solution to the week's long political crisis triggered by President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial third term bid.

A group of 17 political parties and organisations issued a joint statement reaffirming their "commitment to continued dialogue" aimed at ensuring "free, calm, transparent and credible elections".

The opposition statement followed a summit on Burundi's political crisis at the weekend at which regional heads of state asked that presidential elections, due on June 26, be postponed until at least mid-July. Sporadic unrest continued today with parliamentary elections due in two days.

According to a spokesperson from the United Nations, Farhan Haq, the new proposal will include government representatives, opposition parties and religious organizations.

Nkurunziza hopes to win a third term in elections due later this month, but opponents say his candidacy is unconstitutional and goes against the 2006 Arusha peace deal that ended 13 years of civil war.

Burundi's electoral commission is meanwhile considering whether to hold the parliamentary vote on schedule on Friday.

Since the crisis started there are more than 30 dead, 430 injured and more than 100 thousand people have fled the country.

Source: http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3861891&Itemid=1

1.2. SOUTH AFRICA: WFTU DELEGATE ADDRESSED THE 15TH NUM CONGRESS

04 Jun 2015

WFTU

Heading the WFTU delegation participating at the 15th National Congress of the National Union of Mineworkers convening in Johannesburg, South Africa on the 3rd-6th of June 2015, the WFTU Delegate, comrade George Bazionis addressed the 15th NUM Congress:

“Dear comrades, brothers and sisters, members, officials, leadership of NUM,

On behalf of the World Federation of Trade Unions, I would like to express our solidarity to the struggles of the mine workers and the South African working class. The 15th Congress of NUM coincides with the 70th anniversary of the establishment of WFTU, in October 3rd, 1945. All these 70 years, the World Federation of Trade Unions has actively demonstrated its solidarity to all the workers of the world, it has organized struggles, currently unites the voices of over 90 million workers in 126 countries which delegates.

Your congresses, your organization, NUM and COSATU, played a decisive role in organizing the class-oriented movement in South Africa. We continue on the same path, reinforcing our common action, strengthening the international solidarity, we are brothers, comrades, workers.

The struggles that took place in your country and your branch show the hatred of the employers towards the organized workers. Since the great strike in 1946, when the leaders of your Union were arrested and dragged to the court, while dozens of workers attacked by the police with fire-guns, until the strikes of Mining Sector in 2007 and 2012, even now with the attempts to blackmail NUM members. WFTU was, from its first steps, on your side: against the division of African and colored workers, the apartheid regime, against xenophobia, promoting the internationalism and the solidarity of the workers around the world.

The continuity of our common struggles takes on particular importance today, in the phase of capitalist crisis; the bourgeoisie in every country of the world attacks the working class; through drastic wage and pension cuts, intensification of work, lack of safety measures, even brute force against the struggling workers and people.

Just before the 1st anniversary of the so called “accident” in Turkey, where 301 Turkish miners died, 10 more died in Latin America and many more are losing their lives every day without anyone knowing it; because the safety measures for the capitalists are expenses and must be minimized, while human lives are expendable.

The workers didn't created the capitalist crisis, It is a crisis caused by the over-accumulation of capital, a crisis of the capitalist system which illustrates that it is an out-dated system that has been overtaken by events. The capitalist system cannot re-emerge from the current crisis to the pre-crisis position. Even a partial recovery process is bound to be pregnant with another deeper crisis. This is the “illness” of the capitalism, this “illness” burdens capitalism since 1824, the first capitalist crisis in England and it will be returning back again and until we overthrow it.

The change of government in Countries such as Greece is evidence that social-democracy and opportunism have nothing to offer to the workers' interests, but no more than false hope in order to prevent people's struggle.

The basic duty of our unions, the present period, is bringing together workers under such demands and slogans that reveal the only way to get rid of the capitalist crisis: the abolition of the exploitation of man by man. The struggle for the re-constitution of the workers' movement and to support development based on the needs of those that produce the wealth.

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of WFTU I express again our warm greeting to your congress, I wish you every success in it, the documents and the debate of yours will be useful tools, not only for NUM, but for the workers of your branch in every country, because South Africa is a large mining country, but also has a rich history of struggles for the liberation and the elimination of the racial discrimination. South Africa and Africa have given great examples of worker-leaders, heroes of our movement.

The history of your movement is for us a matter of admiration and pride; we are going to further accentuate it. Together we will go on, with NUM, with COSATU, with the heroic South African Communist Party, until the final victory of the international working class.

The World Federation of Trade Unions paying a tribute to the heroic struggles of the South African movement intends to host in your country, in 2016, the World Trade Union Congress, which consists an extremely important trade union incident.

Long live the 15th Congress of NUM!

Long live the 70th Anniversary of WFTU!

Long live the international solidarity!”

Source: <http://www.wftucentral.org/south-africa-wftu-delegate-addressed-the-15th-num-congress/>

1.3. NEPAL: WFTU AFFILIATE CONEP IN VOLUNTEER RELIEF MISSION

02 June 2015

WFTU

Nepal is in condition of gravely shocked at the moment. Due to the devastating earthquake of the April 25, 2015 and immediately followed by similar tremors of April 26 and May 12 took an unimaginable loss of lives and destruction of physical infrastructures. Almost nine thousand peoples including foreigner tourists died and 23000 have been injured.

According to official source of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Nepal Government, 503734 public houses are fully damaged and 275231 houses have been partially damaged, consequently resulting more than 2.5 millions peoples homeless. Similarly hundreds of cultural heritages, schools, colleges, hospitals and govt office buildings have been collapsed. The estimated loss of nation's economy is 1000 billion.

In this sorrowful hour of national tragedy, we express sincere thanks to WFTU and our fraternal friends for the kind support and solidarity.

Our nation is right now fully dedicated to overcome from this unexpected disastrous situation and before the monsoon starting, we are paying full attention in rehabilitation and reconstruction work for the earthquake victims. For this, the CPNUML has declared 1 month national volunteer mobilization campaign from May 24, 2015 to June 23, 2015. Under this campaign, CONEP has mobilized more than 400 cadres in under the leaderships of Pres. Com. Biswanath Pyakurel, 1st Vice President /WPCM Com. Premal Kumar Khanal and General Secretary Cde. Shiva Kumar Adhikari to build temporary houses for homeless earthquake victims. Till May 31st 2015, 91 highly risky and cracked houses by earthquake have been demolished. Likewise 15 temporary cottages have been built and handed over to the poor families. The mission of Volunteer works will be continuous till June 23, 2015.

By Shiva Kumar Adhikari

General Secretary, CONEP Nepal

Source: <http://www.wftucentral.org/nepal-wftu-affiliate-conep-in-volunteer-releaf-mission/>

1.4. CUBA STRESSES ROLE OF AFRICAN UNION IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA

04 June 2015

Prensa Latina

Anayansi Rodriguez, permanent representative at the United Nations Office in this city, stressed the role the African Union is playing today as a decisive factor in the international arena.

During a meeting to celebrate the Africa Day, Rodriguez paid tribute to the honorable and heroic history of the peoples of that continent, "of which the Cuban nation inherited nobility, wisdom, humanism, dignity and spirit of resistance."

She also expressed gratitude to the "African brothers for their permanent and unanimous support to Cuba in the struggle for lifting the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States."

On the other hand, the representative of that regional entity in Geneva, Jean-Marie Hehouzou, thanked the Caribbean island's contribution to the independence of the African peoples.

Hehouzou recognized the historic relevance of the Caribbean nation's cooperation actions, particularly the recent presence of Cuban health professionals in West African countries who fought Ebola virus.

A large group of ambassadors from Africa, the Caribbean and other Latin American nation participated in the meeting, stated a press release from the Cuban Permanent Mission.

Source:http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3864021&Itemid=1

1.5. FAO RECOGNIZES WORK OF CUBA IN FOOD SECURITY

02 June 2015

Cubainsidetheworld.wordpress.com

The work of Cuba in the fight against hunger and food security of its population in the middle of difficult economic conditions was recognized Friday by the FAO representation in Cuba.

The representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Theodor Friedrich, praised in press conference that the main strength of the Caribbean nation has been the concern and occupation of their authorities for feeding, which has made it possible to substantially reduce the scourge of hunger.

With programs and social policies against poverty, this country met the goals set in the Development Objectives of the Millennium and the World Food Summit, which is demonstrated with a prevalence of undernourishment below five percent since 2005, praised Friedrich.

He stressed that these results allow Cuba to settle today among the 16 nations with success in reducing hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, a region with significant advances in the fight against this scourge in the world.

During the past 25 years Cuba has been solving basic needs of the population in relation to food, enabling to reach 3, 533 calories a day per person in the 2014-16 triennium.

This indicator makes it one of the countries with the highest calorie food availability per capita in the region, he said.

The FAO representative meant the role of government to strengthen food and nutrition security through price subsidies for staple foods, which cover half of the nutritional needs of citizens, with emphasis on vulnerable groups, sick persons with disabilities and seniors.

Thus, he said, the country maintains a network of popular food for low-income people, as well as delivering free meals or reduced-price health centers, education and others.

He recalled that the report of Food Insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean, published by FAO on Thursday in Chile, recognized that it was the political commitment of Cuba with universal social policies, standing as one of the key elements to sustain such results.

This is more significant, he said, considering the context of slowing global economy and the economic, financial and trade which is subject to blockade.

To a question from Prensa Latina, Friedrich said that in the last two years, FAO has increased the implementation of projects

in Cuba related to sustainable production, value chain and tackling climate change in order to replace food imports.

Source: <https://cubainsidetheworld.wordpress.com/2015/06/02/fao-recognizes-work-of-cuba-in-food-security/>

1.6. YEMEN CONFLICT HAS DIRE CONSEQUENCES FOR HORN OF AFRICA

03 June 2015

Afro-Middle East Centre

As the Saudi-led aerial campaign on Yemen enters its third month, it is having severe consequences for states in the Horn of Africa. The rapid and unplanned return of migrant workers, a collapse in trade, and an influx of Yemeni refugees are factors set to impact negatively on these states if the conflict endures.

Geographically located less than thirty-five kilometres from Djibouti at its closest sea point, Yemenis' contact and relations with Africans in states such as Djibouti, Somalia, and Ethiopia have existed for millennia. In recent years the most emblematic aspect of this contact has been the flow of migrants from Africa seeking employment opportunities. Currently over a million Ethiopians are documented as residing in Yemen, and 250 000 Somalis fled to the country in the past two decades. Most of these migrated to Yemen to escape conflict at home, viewing the Arab country as a transit point en route to employment opportunities in the Persian Gulf. However, because of a crackdown on migrants in Gulf states, many have sought opportunities in Yemen instead.

The current conflict in Yemen is reversing this pattern. Prior to the 2011 uprisings Yemen was already the poorest Arab country. In 2014 the World Food Programme reported that over eleven million Yemenis required food assistance, and five million were at severe risk of malnourishment. The recent conflict has exacerbated this situation, and the large-scale infrastructural damage inflicted on Yemen will ensure that these statistics will endure for the medium term. Over 20 000 African migrants have returned to their home countries in the past two months, and the number will likely substantially increase over the next few.

Djibouti alone has received around 13 000 people in this period, with around forty-five per cent being Yemeni refugees. This is placing enormous pressure on states with already-stretched resources, and creating massive concern about the implications of the migration. Somaliland, for example, had initially refused to accept migrants that were not Somalis. This decision was subsequently reversed following pressure from the Somali government. A further aggravation is that economic activities have substantially ceased in Yemen because of the conflict, resulting in a halt in remittances sent to the Horn states, leaving their citizens in a precarious situation and forcing them to increasingly rely on the state.

Moreover, the closure and blockade of Yemeni seaports have severely impacted trade between Yemen and Horn states, especially Somalia. Livestock sales from Somalia to Yemen, which accounted for over 250 million dollars trade in 2014, have ceased. Fish exports met a similar fate, resulting in a lowering of fish prices because of large surpluses. The problem is compounded because, under a 1994 scheme, the fish export market has a barter component, with Somali fish being exchanged for Yemeni oil and ice. Somalia is thus poised for a shortage in oil products, and the inadequacy of its freezing infrastructure may lead to surplus stocks rotting.

At the political and security levels, the consolidation of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) may increase instability in the Horn, with Somalia being especially susceptible. The Saudi focus on the Houthis and their allied militia, while largely ignoring AQAP, has allowed the latter to become stronger. In April the group seized control of the port city of Mukalla, overrunning a prison complex in the process and freeing around a hundred AQAP operatives. The captured Mukalla port had previously been utilised to trade with Horn states, especially Somalia, but can also be used to smuggle weapons and operatives into the Horn, allowing AQAP to increase its capacity and enabling it to transfer arms and personnel to the Somali Shabab movement.

This could be significant since Shabab is suffering defeats in Somalia; African Union forces have pushed the group out of over eighty per cent of the territory it had previously controlled. Such transfers from Mukalla could enable al-Shabab to undertake more military activities, including in neighbouring states. They will also allow current Shabab leader, Abu Ubaidah, to consolidate his control. With Yemen being awash with small arms, the conflict could also see an increase in small arms proliferation in the Horn region.

Despite these negative consequences, certain African states have been at the forefront of the Saudi-led campaign. Saudi

Arabia's monetary clout and its rhetoric of Arab and Sunni solidarity have resulted in four of the ten countries in the coalition - Egypt, Sudan, Morocco and Senegal - being African. Their role could have the unintended consequence of negatively affecting African interests, especially in the Horn.

Source: <http://www.amec.org.za/articles-presentations/146-yemen/508-yemen-conflict-has-dire-consequences-for-horn-of-africa>

1.7. WASHINGTON ONLY WENT AFTER FIFA SO AS TO GET AT RUSSIA

04 June 2015

Paul Craig Roberts, Counterpunch

Washington's attack on world soccer is following the script of Washington's attack on the Russian-hosted Sochi Olympics. The difference is that Washington couldn't stop the Olympics from being held in Sochi, and was limited to scaring off westerners with lies and propaganda. In the current scandal orchestrated by Washington, Washington intends to use its takeover of FIFA to renege on FIFA's decision that Russia host the next World Cup.

This is part of Washington's agenda of isolating Russia from the World.

This Washington-orchestrated scandal stinks to high heaven. It seems obvious that the FIFA officials have been arrested for political reasons and that the recently overwhelmingly-re-elected FIFA president, Sepp Blatter, was forced to resign by Washington's threats to indict him as well. This can happen because Washington no longer is subject to the rule of law. In Washington's hands, law is a weapon that is used against everyone, every organization, and every country that takes a position independent of Washington.

This clears the deck for Washington and its British lapdog to take over FIFA, which henceforth will be used to reward countries that comply with Washington's foreign policy and to punish those who pursue an independent foreign policy.

The only hope for South America, Asia, and Russia is to form their own World Cup and turn their backs on the corrupt West.

It is astonishing that Russia, Asia, and South America so much desire to be part of the corrupt and immoral Western world. Why do countries wish to be associated with evil? Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and perhaps Argentina and Brazil have learned that being in the Western orbit means putting their country under Washington's control.

Putin, Lavrov, and China's leaders say that being associated with the West is like being associated with the plague. Yet they still want to be associated with the West. Why do Russia and China think that their self-esteem depends on Washington's approval?

FIFA is a Swiss-based organization. Yet the arrests of FIFA officials is based on a Washington-initiated "investigation" by the FBI. By asserting the universality of US law, Washington is asserting the authority of its police and prosecutors over sovereign countries.

Why did Switzerland, and why do other countries lay down in obedience to Washington's assertion of the universality of its laws? Are the political leaders paid off or are they threatened with assassination or false indictments? What explains that of all countries on earth only Washington's law is universal, acknowledged and bowed down before in other countries? Is it fear of retribution?

Possibly, but one answer is that the entire point of being a leader of a foreign country is to be made rich by kowtowing to Washington. One year out of office and Tony Blair was reported to be worth \$50 million. Where did the money come from? No one wanted to listen to Blair's speeches when he was Prime Minister. Why did Americans pay him six-figure sums to give speeches?

Putin can become rich, too. All he needs to do is to turn Russia over to Washington.

Here we are in an orchestrated soccer scandal hyped to the hilt by the prostitute media while all the real scandals go unremarked.

For example, a number of the mega-banks in the West have pleaded guilty to felony charges and only suffered fines. As Finian Cunningham has pointed out, the money laundering and price-rigging by the “banks too big to jail” dwarfs the alleged criminality at FIFA. The Securities and Exchange Commission actually issues waivers to the banks for their criminal activity. One dissenting SEC commissioner accuses her colleagues of encouraging “recidivism” by the constant issue of waivers.

Washington itself cannot be believed as not a single significant statement out of Washington’s mouth since the Clinton regime has been true; yet, Washington still parades around as the arbiter of truth.

Saddam Hussein did not have weapons of mass destruction. Assad did not use chemical weapons. Iran did not have a nuclear weapons program. Russia did not invade Ukraine. But Washington convinced the world that its lies were true.

It is almost a certainty that politicians up in arms over unsubstantiated charges that FIFA took bribes have themselves taken bribes. Just look at the bribes given to Congress by corporations to vote fast track for TTIP.

Can anyone name even one leader of one EU country (other perhaps than Greece at the moment) who doesn’t take bribes from Washington?

According to Udo Ulfkotte, no one can name even one British or EU newspaper that doesn’t take bribes from the CIA.

How many UN votes are determined by Washington’s threats and bribes?

Whether or not FIFA decisions are tainted by bribery, the purpose of the “investigation” is to cast doubt on the decision to hold the World Cup in Russia. The World Cup is a global spectacle and conveys prestige on the host country. Washington intends to deny this prestige to Russia. That is what the “investigation” is about.

Source: <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/06/04/why-washington-went-after-fifa/>

1.8. U.S OFFICIALS CONSIDER NUCLEAR STRIKES AGAINST RUSSIA

05 June 2015

Socialist Website

US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter is meeting today at the headquarters of the US European Command in Stuttgart, Germany with two dozen US military commanders and European diplomats to discuss how to escalate their economic and military campaign against Russia. They will assess the impact of current economic sanctions, as well as NATO’s strategy of exploiting the crisis in eastern Ukraine to deploy ever-greater numbers of troops and military equipment to Eastern Europe, threatening Russia with war.

A US defense official told Reuters that the main purpose of the meeting was to “assess and strategize on how the United States and key allies should think about heightened tensions with Russia over the past year.” The official also said Carter was open to providing the Ukrainian regime with lethal weapons, a proposal which had been put forward earlier in the year.

Most provocatively, a report published by the Associated Press yesterday reports that the Pentagon has been actively considering the use of nuclear missiles against military targets inside Russia, in response to what it alleges are violations of the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty. Russia denies US claims that it has violated the INF by flight-testing ground-launched cruise missiles with a prohibited range.

Three options being considered by the Pentagon are the placement of anti-missile defenses in Europe aimed at shooting Russian missiles out of the sky; a “counterforce” option that would involve pre-emptive non-nuclear strikes on Russia military sites; and finally, “countervailing strike capabilities,” involving the pre-emptive deployment of nuclear missiles against targets inside Russia.

The AP states: “The options go so far as one implied—but not stated explicitly—that would improve the ability of US nuclear weapons to destroy military targets on Russian territory.” In other words, the US is actively preparing nuclear war against Russia.

Robert Scher, one of Carter’s nuclear policy aides, told Congress in April that the deployment of “counterforce” measures

would mean “we could go about and actually attack that missile where it is in Russia.”

According to other Pentagon officials, this option would entail the deployment of ground-launched cruise missiles throughout Europe.

Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Joe Skewers told AP, “All the options under consideration are designed to ensure that Russia gains no significant military advantage from their violation.”

The criminality and recklessness of the foreign policy of Washington and its NATO allies is staggering. A pre-emptive nuclear strike against Russian forces, many of them near populated areas, could claim millions of lives in seconds and lead to a nuclear war that would obliterate humanity. Even assuming that the US officials threatening Russia do not actually want such an outcome, however, and that they are only trying to intimidate Moscow, there is a sinister objective logic to such threats.

Nuclear warmongering by US officials immensely heightens the danger of all-out war erupting accidentally, amid escalating military tensions and strategic uncertainty. NATO forces are deploying for military exercises all around Russia, from the Arctic and Baltic Seas to Eastern Europe and the Black and Mediterranean Seas. Regional militaries are all on hair-trigger alerts.

US officials threatening Russia cannot know how the Kremlin will react to such threats. With Moscow concerned about the danger of a sudden NATO strike, Russia is ever more likely to respond to perceived signs of NATO military action by launching its missiles, fearing that otherwise the missiles will be destroyed on the ground. The danger of miscalculations and miscommunications leading to all-out war is immensely heightened.

The statements of Scher and Carter confirm warnings made last year by the WSWS, that NATO’s decision to back a fascist-led putsch in Kiev in February, and to blame Russia without any evidence for shooting down flight MH17, posed the risk of war. “Are you ready for war—including possibly nuclear war—between the United States, Europe, and Russia? That is the question that everyone should be asking him- or herself in light of the developments since the destruction of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17,” the WSWS wrote.

In March, Putin stated that he had placed Russian forces, including its nuclear forces, on alert in the aftermath of the Kiev putsch, fearing a NATO attack on Russia. Now the threat of war arising from US policy has been confirmed directly by statements of the US military.

These threats have developed largely behind the backs of the world working class. Workers in the United States, Europe and worldwide have time and again shown their hostility to US wars in Iraq or in Afghanistan. Yet nearly 15 years after these wars began, the world stands on the brink of an even bloodier and more devastating conflict, and the media and ruling elites the world over are hiding the risk of nuclear war.

US President Barack Obama is expected to escalate pressure on Russia at the G7 summit this weekend, pressing European leaders to maintain economic sanctions put in place in response to Russia’s annexation of Crimea last year. The latest outbreak in violence in Ukraine this week, which the US blames on Russia, is to serve as a pretext for continuing the sanctions.

Speaking to Parliament on Thursday, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko warned of a “colossal threat of the resumption of large-scale hostilities by Russian and terrorist forces.” He claimed without proof that 9,000 Russian soldiers are deployed in rebel-held areas of Donetsk and Luhansk, in eastern Ukraine.

“Ukraine’s military should be ready for a new offensive by the enemy, as well as a full-scale invasion along the entire border with the Russian Federation,” Poroshenko said. “We must be really prepared for this.” He said the Ukrainian army had at least 50,000 soldiers stationed in the east, prepared to defend the country.

Poroshenko’s remarks came a day after renewed fighting in eastern Ukraine between Kiev forces and Russian-backed separatists resulted in dozens of casualties. This week’s fighting marked the largest breach to date of the cease-fire signed in February.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Thursday that Russia believed the previous day’s hostilities had been provoked by Kiev to influence upcoming discussions at the G7 summit this weekend and the EU summit in Brussels at the end of the month. “These provocative actions are organized by Ukraine’s military forces, and we are concerned with that,” he stated.

Each side blamed the other for initiating fighting in Marinka, approximately nine miles west of the rebel stronghold of Donetsk.

Yuriy Biryukov, an adviser to Poroshenko, reported on Thursday that five Ukrainian soldiers had been killed in the fighting, and another 39 wounded. Eduard Basurin, deputy defense minister and spokesman for the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), told Interfax that 16 rebel fighters and five civilians had been killed.

Ukrainian forces also fired artillery at the rebel-held city of Donetsk on Wednesday. Shells landed in the southwest districts of Kirovsky and Petrovsky, killing 6 people and wounding at least 90 others. The city's Sokol market was severely damaged, with several rows of shops burned to the ground.

Responding to Wednesday's developments, members of the fascistic Right Sector militia have been called to mobilize for battle. Andrey Stempitsky, commander of the militia's paramilitary battalion, posted a message on Facebook calling on those who went home during the cease-fire to "return to their combat units." He warned that the Right Sector would "wage war, ignoring the truce devotees."

Source: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/06/05/ukra-j05.html>

1.9. LESOTHO: ABDUCTION AND ARRESTS OF OPPONENTS CONDEMNED

03 June 2015

James Tweedie, Morningstaronline.com

ACADEMICS in Lesotho have accused a military faction of abducting and wrongfully imprisoning political opponents.

In a letter sent to the government, African Union, the UK High Commission and embassies of major nations, the EU representative and various civil society organisations on Monday, the National University of Lesotho Community said that Basotho people "once again live in fear."

It said the kidnappings were confirmed by local watchdog organisations.

Defence Minister Tseliso Mokhosi told parliament that the alleged abductions were lawful arrests, but the academics said the individuals were being denied their rights.

They said that prisoners were brought to court chained and blindfolded by masked guards brandishing automatic weapons, in such poor condition that judges ordered that they be given medical attention.

They further alleged that defendants were threatened with abuse in front of judges and that they were forced to confess at gunpoint. One prisoner is said to have died in custody.

The abductions followed the May 9 murder of leading businessman Thabiso Tsosane, a staunch supporter of the opposition All Basotho Convention (ABC) party. No-one has been arrested for the crime.

Lesotho, a small, impoverished mountain kingdom within the borders of South Africa, has suffered years of political instability.

The Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) and Lesotho Correctional Service (LCS) are each said to be split into two or more factions. The LCS has been on strike since December and LDF and LMPS personnel have been used as scabs.

Last August Prime Minister Tom Thabane of the ABC alleged a coup attempt had been made against him. Deputy PM Mothetjoa Metsing of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) assumed control of the government the next day.

Intervention by the South African Development Community led to a snap general election being called for February of this year.

The ABC party made major gains, increasing its share of seats from 30 to 46 at the expense of the LCD and the Democratic Congress (DC), which came first with 47 seats.

However, the ABC, which had been part of the previous governing coalition since 2012, was controversially excluded from the

government formed by the DC, LCD and five smaller parties.

Source: <https://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-dcf2-Lesotho-Abduction-and-arrests-of-opponents-condemned#.VXFow8-qqko>

1.10. SAUDI ARABIA'S YEMEN STRATEGY: DIVIDE AND DESTROY

03 June 2015

Michael Horton, Counterpunch

“Donkey breeders and solar panel dealers are the only one’s making any money at the moment,” says Salim, a resident of Sana’a. Salim is eluding to the fact that most of Yemen, a country of 26 million, is without gasoline and electricity. “We are back to using donkeys to move supplies but I guess the solar panels are a step forward,” he says with a laugh.

While eleven weeks of airstrikes and a punitive naval blockade have laid waste to much of Yemen, most people remain resolute and what is a distinctly Yemeni sense of humour is intact. This is despite the fact that more than 2000 people have been killed, over half of which are civilians, and billions of dollars of infrastructure have been destroyed since the Saudi led “Operation Decisive Storm” began on March 25.

The World Health Organization estimates that 8.6 million Yemenis are now in urgent need of medical help as hospitals struggle to operate without medicines and without electricity. Oxfam estimates that two thirds of Yemen’s population of 26 million, do not have access to clean drinking water. The streets of Yemen’s cities are choked with mountainous piles of trash due to the lack of fuel for garbage trucks. The severe conditions in Yemen could lead to a nationwide outbreak of disease.

The Saudis and their coalition partners—and this includes the US military which is providing intelligence and logistical support—have, in the space of eleven weeks, erased fifty years of progress in Yemen. Airstrikes have destroyed roads, bridges, universities, museums, historical sites, factories, and hundreds of homes and even entire villages. Yet, despite the destruction, many Yemenis are determined not to let their country become another Iraq, Syria, Libya, or Afghanistan, all of which have been on the receiving end of the disastrous interventionist foreign policies of the US and Saudi Arabia.

“Talking is the only way out of this quagmire,” explains a former Yemeni MP. “No one group in Yemen has the power to defeat the other. We have two choices: to go on fighting for the next decade and give the world another Syria, or talk. Our history favors the latter. But I don’t think our Saudi friends have any interest in letting us solve our own problems.”

There is some hope that Yemen and its people will learn from what has transpired in Syria, Libya, and Iraq and draw on their own rich traditions that favor conflict mediation and negotiated settlements. According to former UN Special Adviser on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, Yemen’s major factions—including both the Houthis and representatives from south Yemen—were near signing off on a power sharing agreement before Saudi led airstrikes brought the negotiations to an abrupt end.

The Zaidi Shi’a Houthis, who control much of northwest Yemen, were, before the start of Operation Decisive Storm, on relatively good terms with much of the leadership of Yemen’s various southern secessionist movements. However, partly as a result of the Saudi led aerial campaign, the Houthis went on the offensive in south Yemen, largely in order to prevent Saudi Arabia from installing and backing an alternative government in the southern port city of Aden.

The Houthis, whose membership is largely drawn from northern based tribes, are now locked in a deadly battle with southern militias who are mostly fighting for an independent south Yemen, not for the exiled government of President Hadi. Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen has not only led to the wholesale destruction of much of Yemen’s already fragile physical and social infrastructure, it has also ignited a long simmering civil war between northern and southern based forces that neither side can win.

“The Saudis bait us like dogs, pitting one side against the other,” explains a former colonel who served in the army of the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). “This has always been their game in Yemen: get us to fight one another so that we’re never a threat to them. So far it has worked. The last thing that they want is for us to negotiate and unite.”

Saudi Arabia has a long history of playing all sides in Yemen. For much of the last fifty years the Saudis have maintained a largely covert program whereby leading tribal, military, and government figures in Yemen receive regular payments from the Saudi government in exchange for loyalty. While many of these men are drawn from northern Yemen, the Saudis have also, at times, supported southern based Marxist hardliners who opposed unification. However, up until the commencement of

Operation Decisive Storm, Saudi policy in Yemen was largely covert and even careful. Now, with the change in leadership in the Kingdom, Saudi policy in Yemen is anything but covert or careful.

Rather than letting UN led negotiations continue, Saudi Arabia and its partners have opted for a policy whose only clear outcome looks to be the impoverishment and eventual destruction of an entire country. If the war in Yemen continues, the as yet unverified Iranian involvement with Yemen's Houthi rebels may be the least of Saudi Arabia's worries.

While Operation Decisive Storm has failed to defeat the Houthis or reinstall the exiled government of Yemeni President Hadi, it has allowed al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula—and now the Islamic State—to rapidly expand the territory under their control. Saudi efforts in Yemen effectively neutralized the two forces fighting AQAP and IS: the Houthis and the US equipped and trained Yemeni counter-terrorism forces. While a resurgent AQAP and IS may be useful temporary proxies in Saudi Arabia's war with the Houthis, both groups will—and in the past have—turn on the House of Saud.

In addition to indirectly enabling the expansion of AQAP and IS in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners are arming a host of disparate militias and tribal forces. The only prerequisite for receiving arms and cash is a pledge to fight the Houthis. A popular joke in Sana'a describes the latest get rich quick scheme: get a few of your friends together, claim you are the leader of an anti-Houthi militia, collect the money from Saudi Arabia, and promptly buy a qat farm in the countryside, far away from the falling bombs. Despite the dire situation, humor and hope persist.

“When the bombs stop falling, I think all sides in this conflict will return to the negotiating table,” says a long-serving Yemeni MP. “I think the Saudis know this. That's why they're still bombing us. They don't want a negotiated settlement to this conflict. But we have a history of defying invaders and going our own way. I'm hopeful we'll turn away from the abyss that we face.”

Source: <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/06/03/saudi-arabias-yemen-strategy-divide-and-destroy/>

ISSUED BY NEHAWU HOUSE

56 MARSHALL STREET, JOHANNESBURG PO BOX 10812, JOHANNESBURG, 2001

TEL: 011 833 2902 FAX: 011 834 0757

WEBSITE: <http://www.nehawu.org.za/> EMAIL: info@nehawu.org.za

