



# NEHAWU Weekly International Monitor

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

VOLUME 3. NUMBER 19

14 - 21 JUNE 2015

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### 1.1. MORE CUBAN HEALTH SPECIALIST ARRIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA

13 June 2015

[Cubainsidetheworld.wordpress.com](http://Cubainsidetheworld.wordpress.com)

The number of Cuban health specialists in South Africa has reached 210 with the arrival of a new group of 16 professionals. They will serve in five of the country's nine provinces.

The specialists arrived in the South African territory yesterday, and will work in Free State, North West, Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga, as medical services of Cuba, physician Alex Carreras, head of the Caribbean island's mission, told Prensa Latina.

“We will receive another 25 physicians” before the end of this month, with which this collaboration will continue expanding, Carreras said.

The island's physicians have earned respect in South Africa, where there are great expectations about the work they are carrying out, taking into account the need of health professionals this nation has, he stated.

“The population here see Cuba as the health model to follow to move forwards and give a solution to their health problems,”

Carreras noted.

They recognize much “our contribution, help, the response in training physicians, taking into account that about 2,500 South Africans are studying medicine in Cuba,” he stressed.

More physicians of the island keep on arriving in here to continue the long history of collaboration we have, which date from 1996, almost two decades, he emphasized.

Source: <https://cubainsidetheworld.wordpress.com/2015/06/13/more-cuban-health-specialists-arrive-in-south-africa/>

## 1.2. SOUTH AFRICA: WFTU PARTICIPATES AT THE 8<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL CONGRESS OF POPCRU

13 June 2015

### WFTU Statement

Heading the WFTU delegation participating at the 8th National Congress of POPCRU on 14 - 19 June 2015 in South Africa, the WFTU Delegate, comrade Nikos Theodorakis addressed the 8th POPCRU Congress:

“Amandla!

Dear comrades,

Brothers and sisters of POPCRU,

Delegates and guests,

Allow me to transfer to you the best wishes of the 92 million members of the WFTU, from 126 countries all over the world, and the personal wishes of the GS of WFTU to POPCRU and to the POPCRU leadership for a successful congress.

Your congress, your decisions and resolutions will become a valuable asset, not only for your members but to the class trade unions of the world, as your congress takes place in a very special period.

Firstly, as you discuss, your congress takes place in a period when the international capitalist crisis has advanced a new attack against workers all over the world. From wage cuts and layoffs in Europe and North America, to wars, starvation and poverty to Asia, Middle East, Africa. Under the crisis of capitalism, we witness the rottenness of system that feeds from our flesh and blood. We witness wealth, enough to feed the masses, to be spent for the provocative luxurious life of the few. The few who do not work, do not contribute the advancement of humanity. The few, for whom does not apply your slogan, JUSTICE FOR ALL, but the few who thrive through injustice and exploitation.

This phenomenon of injustice, of poverty for the many, and provocative wealth for the few, is the main cause that leads to crime, racism, xenophobia. The few, who in order to keep their power support neo-nazi forces, who attack immigrants, trade unionists, communists. They promote a rise of oppression, a new attack against trade union rights and freedoms.

This attack has the shameful backing of organisations that call themselves, workers’ representatives. Great example is the ITUC’s role in undermining the right to strike, as the ITUC has accepted the oppositions of the employers and the ILO on the right to strike. This is a development we will not accept. The growth of the attack we suffer, grows the need for a unified, organized class response by the working class. A response that the WFTU and its members have been fighting for 70 years now.

Dear comrades, this year our organization, WFTU, celebrates 70 Years of continuous fight for the rights of the working class. 70 years of fight for the abolishment of exploitation of man by man. 70 years that connect the struggles of the South African Workers, with the working class of Chile, Palestine, Nepal, Greece, of the heroic Cuba, as we all together in the great family of WFTU united our voices against fascism, against colonialism, against military dictatorships, against the apartheid, against imperialist wars, against the exploitation of Africa’s natural resources by monopolies. And today we continue to support the peoples who fight against imperialism. The people of Syria, of Palestine. Support not just in words, but with action. That is why the Israeli state arrested a WFTU cadre last Friday. They arrested, held and deported our comrade, because WFTU is a danger to the Israeli State, as they said. This provocation will not go unanswered. We will not be intimidated. We continue our unwavering support to the people of Palestine.

That is why this anniversary of the WFTU is not a typical issue. With events from India to Turkey, from Australia to Russia and from Egypt to Brasil the WFTU educates the new generation of trade unionists about the history, the struggles and the heritage of our movement. We make our history weapon against the lies, the slander and misinformation of the capitalist system. On the 70th anniversary of the WFTU, special part has the role and contribution of the South African trade union movement, of

SACTU, of comrades like Moses Mabhida, Eric Stalin Mtshali and so many others. All these lead to the duty we have today to continue their struggle, until the historic demands of the working class are realized. And allow me to say, that POPCRU has played an important role for this goal. POPCRU, along with NEHAWU, SEPAWU and of course with the great contribution of the SACP have played a key role for the South African trade union movement to become an important factor in the international trade union movement.

Comrades, here, from the 8th National Congress of POPCRU announce a great decision, for which you have played a key role. The Presidential Council of WFTU, which convened in June 6, accepted the request of COSATU for South Africa to host the 17th World Trade Union Congress of WFTU, in October 2016. This means, that for the next year and we wish also for the years to come, the Trade Union Movement of South Africa, will be the center of the world. Comrades, the world trade union congress will bring hundreds trade unionists from all over the world to South Africa. Trade unionists who are on the van guard of the workers' struggles. Trade unionists from Cuba, Palestine, Vietnam, Venezuela, Greece, from wherever the workers are fighting against capitalism. But they will all come here, in South Africa. This brings a great duty to the trade unions of South Africa to represent, not only their homeland, but the whole African Region. To highlight the struggles of the working class of Africa against capitalism today. To propose action for the working class of the world. That is the role WFTU wants for you. To be the voice, the leader of the oppressed and the exploited not only of your country, but to be a loud voice, a strong voice for the workers of the world.

Dear comrades, this invitation is only one small part of the work we have done together the recent years. We, together, organized meetings, seminars, schools. We strengthened the exchange of information and experience, the support and solidarity of workers from all over the world. However, we cannot be satisfied. We must see our weaknesses, our delays. And by overcoming them, we will become stronger, more capable in our struggle.

In the next period, the trade union movement of South Africa will become the trade union center of the world. We trust though the World trade Union Congress you will be successful in promoting the interests of the working class of Africa, and pushing the whole trade union movement one more step forward. It is a great task, but your congress today, the steps you plan for the next period make us optimistic.

The success of your congress, your resolutions, your decisions will contribute a year from now to the 17th World Trade Union Congress of WFTU.

So dear comrades, be strong, keep the fire burning, we are with you!

VIVA POPCRU viva

VIVA THE 8th National Congress of POPCRU

VIVA WFTU VIVA

Welcome the 17th World Trade Union Congress of WFTU in South Africa”

Source: <http://www.wftucentral.org/south-africa-the-wftu-delegate-addressed-the-8th-national-congress-of-popcru/>

### **1.3. AFRICAN LEADERS ADOPT EXPERT REPORT TO END AIDS, TB AND MALARIA BY 2030**

16 June 2015

African Union Summit Statement

African leaders on Sunday during the statutory AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) luncheon meeting adopted the report of AIDS Watch Africa Member States Experts on AIDS, TB and Malaria. The report comes at a critical juncture when the African Union is reviewing its key health frameworks that will come to an end in 2015. At the global level countries are finalising negotiations for the Sustainable Development Goals that will supersede the Millennium Development Goals at the same time.

“Both the African Union Common Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the 2013 Abuja Declaration prioritise health as central to Africa’s development” said the Chairperson of AIDS Watch Africa President Robert Mugabe. “These frameworks recognise the urgency of speeding up action to strengthen our health systems, provide comprehensive and integrated health care services and improve universal access to essential services, with a focus on elimination of HIV/AIDS,

tuberculosis and malaria by 2030” he added.

The Victoria Falls experts report highlights the key progress and challenges in the implementation of the African Union roadmap to end the three diseases and provide key recommendations for addressing AIDS, TB and malaria. The African Union has already started the process of developing the new framework to end AIDS, TB and malaria by 2030 in line with the 2013 commitment by the African leadership in Abuja, Nigeria.

“While it is indisputable that the last decade has seen unprecedented decline in the incidence of these diseases, we cannot be complacent. In fact, we need to redouble efforts and embrace ambitious targets, so that we can succeed in eradicating the three diseases” said Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, the Chairperson of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance while urging the African Union Commission to prepare a roadmap, with clear targets and timelines on eliminating malaria.

The meeting recommended the extension of the African Union Roadmap for Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for AIDS, TB and Malaria Response to 2020 to ensure its full implementation. The three pillars of the AU Roadmap are diversified, balanced and sustainable financing models, access to medicines through local production and regulatory harmonisation and leadership, governance and oversight for sustainability.

For further information contact

Source: <http://summits.au.int/en/25thsummit/events/african-leaders-adopt-experts-report-end-aids-tb-and-malaria-2030>

#### **1.4. STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION TO THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ORDINARY SESSION OF AFRICAN UNION**

14 June 2015

African Union Commission Statement to the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of AU

Your Excellency, President Robert Gabriel Mugabe, Chairperson of the African Union and President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of South Africa, our host country

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the African Union;

Deputy-Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Jan Eliason

The Secretary General of the Arab League, Mr Nabil Elaraby

Representative of the Palestinian Authority

Visiting Heads of State

Excellencies, Former Heads of State and Government and former Secretaries General and Chairpersons of the OAU and AU

Dr. Lopes, Executive Secretary of the UNECA

Dr. Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank

Excellencies, Members of the Executive Council and other Ministers;

Representative of AU Organs

Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha and fellow Commissioners

Visiting Ministers

CEO of the NEPAD Agency, Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki

Excellencies, Heads of African Regional Economic Communities and African Union Specialised and Representative offices;

Excellencies, members of the Permanent Representatives Committee;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Distinguished invited guests;

Distinguished Guests

Officials from Capitals

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me welcome all of you to this 25th Summit of Heads of State and Government. Karibuni Aukana!

I would like to thank the President, the government and the peoples of the Republic of South Africa for the excellent hospitalities and facilities extended to all of us.

A very warm welcome and congratulations to the Presidents who are joining us following elections in their countries: President Muhammadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Hage Geingob of the Republic of Namibia, President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi of the Republic of Mozambique and Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili of the Kingdom of Lesotho. We also congratulate Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, President Faure Gnassingbé of the Togolese Republic and Omar al-Bashir of the Republic of the Sudan for their re-election.

Excellencies, when we met in January this year, we were still in the throes of the Ebola epidemic. But, thanks to the resilience, and hard work of the peoples and governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, to the young African men and women of ASEOWA, to Member states, the private sector, to the international community and to the African citizens; Liberia has been declared Ebola free for the last 78 days. We congratulate President Sirleaf Johnson, her government and the people of Liberia for this achievement.

In the other two countries Sierra Leone and Guinea, numbers have significantly reduced. We should not get complacent. We must stay the course until the other two countries are also declared Ebola-free.

The lesson from the Ebola Virus Disease is that with African solidarity and resolve, we can find our own solutions to our challenges. The disease also exposed the weaknesses of our health systems, especially public health. As we move towards recovery, we must train more health workers, and build and strengthen our health systems and infrastructure.

Excellencies,

We've been faced by the incidents of xenophobia, and the tragedy of many people dying in the Mediterranean sea, leaving their countries out of desperation, to make a living elsewhere.

In 1906, one of the finest sons of our soil, Pixley ka Isaka Seme in his George Wilson Curtis Medial winning essay at Columbia University said,

The African people, although not a strictly homogeneous race, possess a common fundamental sentiment which is everywhere manifest, crystallizing itself into one common controlling idea. Conflicts and strife are rapidly disappearing before the fusing force of this enlightened perception of the true intertribal relation, which relation should subsist among a people with a common destiny.

It is this common destiny that should guide us towards an integrated, prosperous, peaceful and people-centered Africa which is

a dynamic force in the world. Of course for this to happen we should refuse to camp forever on the borders of the industrial world, and having learned that knowledge is power, educate our children and youth, as Pixley ka Isaka Seme said, in 1906.

Indeed, if we educate and skill our people, with an emphasis on science, engineering, technology, maths resource and innovation, including technical and vocational skills; our people will stop undertaking the perilous journeys across the Sahel and the Mediterranean sea.

When we undertake this skills revolution, extremists, armed groups and terrorists will find it difficult if not impossible to recruit our young women and men.

Instead, our youth will have the skills to generate electricity, including renewables.

They will produce enough food for the entire Africa, as they modernise and grow agriculture and agroprocessing, and agribusiness.

They will stop camping at the borders (and shores) of the industrial world, but will transform our economies through industrialisation, manufacturing and by adding value to our natural resources.

They will develop our blue economy and build our infrastructure, connecting our capitals and commercial centres through ICT, and through highways, rail, aviation and oceanic and waterways. They will ensure that this is done through the most modern of technology, including the Pan African high speed rail network.

They will create a uniquely African continent whose economic development will not only be based on profit, but on the needs of the people, driven by the youth and women. They will create a prosperous and non-sexist continent. They will take charge of our outer space.

#### Excellencies

To achieve Seme's dream, there are a few hurdles we have to overcome. We must believe in ourselves. We have to realise that the demographic dividend is possible if we adopt the right policies, manage our diversity and make every citizen feel valued and part of the driving forces for change and progress, irrespective of tribe, religion, colour or creed, and whether they are man, woman, boy or girl.

In the world today, the countries that now drive the world economy are those with huge populations, such as the emerging economies of China, India and Brazil. Even in Africa, the largest economy (Nigeria) has the largest population.

They are in the same league in terms of population as Africa, but they have the advantage that they are united.

It is for this reason that even though we cannot be one country, we need to speed up our integration and unity.

We must recall Kwame Nkrumah's words that Africa must unite or perish.

Excellencies, this is why we are so excited about the signing of the trade agreement by the twenty- six countries that make up the Tripartite of COMESA, EAC and SADC in Shamal Sheik this week. This indeed is a good basis for the launch of the Continental Free Trade Area. Of course, if we add ECOWAS - it will be 41 countries, making the Continental Free Trade Area well within reach. This will not only boost intra-Africa trade, but also boost investment. In a similar vein, if we move faster on the free movement of people, goods and services, and the African passport, we are sure to see an increase in trade, as well as tourism and economic growth.

Excellencies, the adoption of the First 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, the Africa we want, will signal a new determination and a desire to bequeath a better Africa to the next generations.

We should chart a new unique Africa, without comparison. Our ancient civilizations cannot be compared to any other.

For instance, the obelisk of Axum, the civilizations of Egypt, the Nok and the Ashanti; the Empires of the Shongai, Mali and Monomotapa, the Royal Houses of Nubia, d'Oyo, Benin, Kongo, Kanem-Bornu and Dahomey; Abyssinia, Zimbabwe and Mapungubwe compared to no other; the Egyptian, Ethiopian and Sudanese pyramids; the mosques of Timbaktu, our languages,

our art, music and dance; our geniuses created what is uniquely African.

As the leading generations of our time, it is upon us to help chart our uniquely African path and place in the world today. Agenda 2063 is our roadmap and beacon.

Seme also said:

“In all races, genius is like a spark, which, concealed in the bosom of a flint, bursts forth at the summoning stroke.”

It is our responsibility in all sectors to create the conditions that act as a summoning stroke for the human genius of Africans. It will be contributions of Africa’s young people, its men and women, its intellectuals, its entrepreneurs, its artists, and its sports people today that will shape our destiny.

We are a century late in terms of Seme’s dream, but we can see in the cities and towns, in rural areas, the spark of this brighter Africa.

In building our shared prosperity we must be uniquely African, by placing the human being, rather than only profit at the centre.

As Seme said: The most essential departure of this new civilization is that it shall be thoroughly spiritual and humanistic - indeed regeneration moral and eternal!

Excellencies,

By January next year we shall present the comprehensive strategy to build African capacity and skills for implementing Agenda 2063. This capacity and skills plan shall be geared towards the empowerment of Africa’s young people, women and girls, creating an enabling environment for them to become the drivers of our transformation and development.

Over the last fifteen years, our development agenda has focused on primary education, its now time we urgently paid attention to vocational and higher education. We cannot drive our economic development only through primary education. We need champions for higher education, to help steer and support the African higher education sector. At the Universities Summit hosted in Dakar Senegal by President Macky Sall in March 2015, His Excellency graciously accepted to be one of these champions, who paying special attention to the issue of harmonization of higher education.

This will enable our young people to study and apply their skills anywhere on the continent. We need more such champions. I am sure we shall have more champions volunteering to join him in this task.

Between now and January, we must also do more to popularise the 10-year plan, to align Agenda 2063 to our national and regional strategies and report on our recommendations on the allocation of roles and responsibilities between the RECs, the AU Commission and the Nepad Agency.

We will send teams to the countries that ask assistance to domesticate their plans. We will undertake that exercise together with NEPAD.

The AU Commission and other organs will also align their Strategic plans with Agenda 2063.

Excellencies

Our coastline and waterways are amongst the largest in the world and offer for us much opportunity. Consequently, on 25 July this year we shall launch the Decade of African Oceans and Seas. We will also celebrate that day annually as the Day of African Oceans and Seas, so as to fully utilise and create awareness on the opportunities presented to us by the ocean and seas. We therefore call on all coastal countries, island states and countries with waterways to join us in launching this important decade, so that Africa can be part of this Blue economy.

Already, African women in maritime met in Luanda, Angola earlier this year, refusing to camp at the borders, but instead charted areas of cooperation for women in shipping, port management, fishing and other areas of the blue economy. We have to take charge of our oceanic space.

Excellencies

Africa has many examples of indigenous and good farming practices, some of them climate smart and we must share these experiences, and replicate and upscale them.

In addition, more must be done on agro-processing and businesses, as part of building our collective food security, to reverse our high food imports bill and as part of industrialisation and job creation.

We look forward to the recommendations from the High Level Gender Panel and Ministers of Women on financial inclusion and agro-businesses to this Summit.

Excellencies,

We announced in January that the Pan African Parliament will host the 3rd AU Intergenerational dialogue, and we are glad to report that this indeed took place. The young men and women from across the continent met with the Parliamentarians from PAP, a target for youth employment and investment in our Agenda 2063 first 10 year plan and for an annual report on the status of the continent's youth.

In my 2013 email to Kwame Nkrumah, I spoke about students forming AU clubs. I am happy to say there is a delegation from the University of Cape Town's AU club who are present here. We would like to know about similar clubs in other universities. We welcome the UCT AU Club delegation, and we encourage all students and youth to form AU clubs at their institutions and communities.

We are also happy about the numbers of women at this Summit from all over this continent. As they say in South Africa: Malibongwe, Igama lamakhosikazi - We praise the Women!

Excellencies, Seme contended that 'the victories of peace are greater and more abiding than the spoils of war.'

It is for this reason that our Peace and Security Council, our peacekeepers, mediators and our high representatives are working tirelessly to silence the guns within the five years we have pledged.

But, as political leadership, governments, political parties, faithbased organisations and communities, we must play our part, to build tolerant, inclusive and democratic communities and societies, where the dignity and rights of all are respected.

Unfortunately, women and children are the main victims of conflicts, enduring untold miseries, hardships, sexual and other forms of violence, in wars and conflicts which they played no part in starting.

Our resolve to silence the guns, must therefore give hope to women and children suffering from the terror of Boko Haram and Al Shabaab. Our resolve must provide renewed hope to the peoples in conflict ridden areas in Darfur, East DRC, Libya, Mali, Somalia, and South Sudan, where lives and livelihoods have been shattered.

We must in the words of Seme ensure that 'conflicts and strife rapidly disappear before the enlightened perception...among a people with a common destiny.'

Excellencies

We are encouraged by the movement on the decision on Alternate sources of funding, to incrementally provide more domestic resources for the AU and its organs. Starting from next year, we will take the first step in this direction, which is testimony the determination of Africans to take charge of their destiny.

We thank the South African government for the Golf Day and fund raising dinner last night, and for all the individuals pledges.

Excellencies, we welcome the fact that we shall debate the Summit theme Women's empowerment for the realisation of Agenda 2063 later today. Agenda 2063 is about the people, we cannot leave out half of the population. May I also remind all of us, that women and youth form the majority of the voters.

We should therefore heed President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela's words when he said:

The legacy of oppression weighs heavily on women. As long as women are bound by poverty and as long as they are looked down upon, human rights will lack substance.

As long as outmoded ways of thinking prevent women from making a meaningful contribution to society, progress will be slow.

As long as the continent refuses to acknowledge the equal role of more than half of itself, it is doomed to failure.”

Ngiyabonga

Asante sane

Ke a leboga

Shukran

Mercie

Muchos obrigade

Kanimambo

Source: [http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=3874301&Itemid=1](http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3874301&Itemid=1)

## **1.5. THE ISRAELI POLICE AT TEL AVIV AIRPORT ARRESTED AND ILLEGALLY DEPORTED WFTU CADRE**

14 June 2015

WFTU Statement

The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) denounces the illegal and undemocratic act of the Airport Police in Tel Aviv against comrade Alexandra Liberi who was legally travelling with all the necessary travelling documents to Palestine.

Sister Alexandra Liberi as a Journalist was yesterday Saturday 13th June, in a mission of WFTU in Ramallah of Palestine to participate with other WFTU representatives in a seminar of the WFTU for the IT and Internet training of young trade unionists.

Upon arrival to the airport of Tel Aviv she was arrested from the airport security under the justification that “WFTU is putting in danger the safety of the State of Israel”. A team of 15 policemen and one women was trying to terrorize and intimidate her with threats and verbal abuse, they made efforts to apply physical checking on her and take away trade union documents and materials of the WFTU.

She was kept in the Security of the Airport for 11 hours and when she was escorted and boarded against her will in an airplane and send away from Israel. Under escort from Israel though Istanbul until Athens she return on Sunday a few hours ago in Athens, Greece.

This incident is another cause for the International Trade Union Movement to denounce yet again loud and clear with all means possible:

- the undemocratic and illegal practices of the Governments of Israel
- to strengthen our internationalist solidarity with the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people
- to demand from the International Organizations that the International laws will be applied everywhere without exceptions.

Dear brothers and sisters, fellow workers,

We the members and friends of the WFTU celebrate this year the 70th Anniversary since the foundation of the WFTU and we announce once again that we are proud for our solidarity with the Palestinian people, with all the Arab Workers. Such practices of the Israeli government will not intimidate us, will not stop us. On the contrary they make us more strong and they show us we are on the right way.

We continue the struggle. We strengthen our internationalism.

THE SECRETARIAT

Source: <http://www.wftucentral.org/the-israeli-police-at-tel-aviv-airport-arrested-and-illegally-deported-wftu-cadre/>

## **1.6. THE AFRICAN UNION CALLS FOR RESTRAINT AND A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY IN MADAGASCAR**

17 June 2015

African Union Commission Statement

The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, is closely monitoring the evolution of the situation in Madagascar, after the decision issued, on 12 June 2015, by the High Constitutional Court (HCC), following the resolution for the impeachment of the President of the Republic, filed on 27 May 2015 by the Malagasy National Assembly.

The Chairperson of the Commission recalls that at the AU Summit which ended in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 15 June 2015, the Heads of State and Government, having reaffirmed their support for the efforts towards stabilization and socio-economic recovery in Madagascar, requested all the Malagasy political stakeholders to respect the decision of the HCC and to work toward the creation of the climate of stability necessary for Madagascar to continue to benefit from international support. The Summit also called on the Malagasy political stakeholders to exercise restraint, in order to allow the proper functioning of the institutions of the country.

The Chairperson of the Commission echoes the appeal of the Summit and the statement made, on 13 June 2015, by the International Support Group for Madagascar (GIS-M), chaired by the AU. She urges the Malagasy political stakeholders to demonstrate a high sense of responsibility and to spare their country a new cycle of instability, which could only complicate the mobilization of the support that Madagascar needs for its socio-economic recovery, after several years of crisis. She emphasizes the imperative of stability and of the proper functioning of the Malagasy institutions, as well as the duty of all Malagasy actors to contribute to the consolidation of the gains made within the framework of the crisis exit process in their country. In this regard, she reiterates the AU's support to the Malagasy institutions and people.

Source: <http://cpauc.au.int/en/content/african-union-calls-restraint-and-sense-responsibility-madagascar>

## **1.7. CUBA EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY IN SUPPORT TO ECUADOR**

18 June 2015

Prensa Latina

Ecuadorian Ambassador to Cuba, Edgar Ponce, highlighted today that the Cuban people are once more showing their solidarity and support to his nation and the government of President Rafael Correa.

In a ceremony held at the monument to Gen. Eloy Alfaro, in main Presidentes Avenue, in Havana, the diplomat told Prensa Latina that in Ecuador the counterrevolution is trying to shatter the dreams of the entire people and what is really happening is that voices worldwide have joined in solidarity with the Citizens' Revolution of Ecuador.

The homeland is suffering an onslaught by oligarchic groups with the total complicity of the right wing-promoted media that are trying to make the Citizens' Revolution collapse and strip the nation of the hope and dignity regained with the Government

of Correa, he said.

Ponce appreciated the regional and international solidarity expressed to Ecuador in its struggle to preserve its sovereignty, self-determination and gains.

Reverend Raul Suarez, from the Martin Luther King Center, stressed the active solidarity in rejection of the offensive launched against a process that has the humane, Christian, ethical, moral and spiritual intention to do something for the poor and needy, the excluded and marginalized.

Jose Rubiera, president of the parliamentary group of friendship with Ecuador, expressed the commitment to that government and the important transformations implemented by Correa to benefit the majorities.

Meanwhile, Kenia Serrano, President of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples, highlighted that the bill to redistribute wealth and the tax on capital gains have been manipulated with negative, malicious interpretations in order to topple the Revolution.

Serrano made emphasis on Cuba's support to just causes like that defended by Ecuador, and extolled the role played by that nation in Latin America as a member of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America, and currently at the helm of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Source: [http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=3906111&Itemid=1](http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3906111&Itemid=1)

## **1.8. CUBA CALLS FOR RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY**

17 June 2015

The Morning Star

Cuba's representative to the UN urged greater respect for nations' sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity in Geneva on Monday.

Permanent representative Anayansi Rodriguez said: "The imposition of unilateral coercive measures or sanctions which violate human rights should be set aside.

"Nobody has the right to intervene in the internal affairs of a state," said Ms Rodriguez in her intervention in a general discussion with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Responding to allegations made against Venezuela, she stressed: "Cuba reiterates its full support and that of our people for the Bolivarian revolution, the legitimate government of President Nicolas Maduro and the heroic sister nation of Venezuela."

Ms Rodriguez recalled that almost 10 years had passed since the UN Human Rights Council was founded to replace the old Human Rights Commission, which was accused of politicisation, double standards and selectivity, but that the same problems had taken hold in the new body.

Source: <http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-4141-Cuba-calls-for-respect-for-sovereignty#.VYD-svmqqko>

## **1.9. GREEK CENTRAL BANK WARNS OF "UNCONTROLLABLE CRISIS"**

18 June 2015

WorldSocialistWebsite

Ahead of today's meeting of the euro zone's finance ministers; the Bank of Greece warned that the country faces imminent economic collapse.

Months of talks between the Syriza-led government and its international creditors, the European Union (EU), European Central Bank (ECB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF), over the terms of an austerity programme broke down acrimoniously at the weekend. The talks, ongoing since February, centred on whether Greece would receive €7.2 billion from the institutions, if Syriza agreed to impose further cuts. On June 30, the existing programme expires, with Athens due to make a payment of €1.6 billion to the IMF.

Athens could be forced into default within weeks. On Wednesday, Syriza's top negotiator Euclid Tsakalotos bluntly stated, "At the moment we haven't got the money," as Syriza has already repaid more than €13 billion since coming to power. However, Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis said his government would not table any new proposals at today's Eurogroup meeting.

Greece's Central Bank bluntly warned in its regular monthly statement that, "Failure to reach an agreement would... mark the beginning of a painful course that would lead initially to a Greek default and ultimately to the country's exit from the euro area and, most likely, from the European Union."

In stark language, the statement warned that without an agreement, a "manageable debt crisis... would snowball into an uncontrollable crisis, with great risks for the banking system and financial stability. An exit from the euro would only compound the already adverse environment, as the ensuing acute exchange rate crisis would send inflation soaring."

The bank continued, "All this would imply deep recession, a dramatic decline in income levels, an exponential rise in unemployment and a collapse of all that the Greek economy has achieved over the years of its EU, and especially its euro area, membership. From its position as a core member of Europe, Greece would see itself relegated to the rank of a poor country in the European South."

The Financial Times noted that this statement was "the first time any Greek authority has publicly broached the possibility the country could face ejection of the 28-country club that Athens joined shortly after its return to democracy in 1981."

The central bank's intervention was politically directed against Syriza, whose leader, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, is demanding a loosening of certain austerity measures demanded by the EU before imposing them on the working class. It points to the support that exists in powerful sections of the Greek capitalist class for a policy of capitulating to the most extreme demands of the EU.

Bank of Greece President Yannis Stournaras led the enforcement of deep austerity as the finance minister (from 2012 to 2014) in the conservative New Democracy (ND) government. He is also a member of the IMF's Board of Governors.

Syriza issued a statement denouncing Stournaras who "not only exceeded the boundaries of his institutional role, he is attempting to contribute to the creation of an asphyxiating framework in the moves and negotiating abilities of the Greek government."

Fuelled by intensifying fears over a "Grexit" (Greek exit from the euro zone), the Athens stock market again fell sharply. By closing, it was down 3.15 percent, a 17.3 percent drop just in the last four sessions. Greece's banks cut off from international money markets months ago by the ECB and haemorrhaging deposits, fell a further 1.38 percent. Their overall value has plummeted by 27 percent in the last week.

Leaders of Syriza's Left Platform, an amalgam of pseudo-left outfits who fear that Syriza will lose all credibility if it signs on to the institutions demands, called nationwide demonstrations against the troika Wednesday evening. Speaking to the Guardian, Stathis Kouvelakis, a Left Platform member of Syriza's Central Committee, said, "Either Tsipras commits political suicide and accepts these measures, or he says the big 'no'."

Thousands of people heeded Syriza's call and came out to demonstrate in front of the Greek parliament in Athens. This is only a pale reflection, however, of the opposition to further EU austerity measures that exists in the Greek working class, and that led to the voting out of the previous ND government and the collapse of Greece's long-standing social democratic party, Pasok.

Earlier another Left Platform leader, Stathis Leoutsakos, raised the possibility of the armed forces being mobilised to enforce the edicts of the EU, saying, "The proposals made by lenders can only be passed with tanks and if the lenders want to pass them they have to find the tanks." He backtracked immediately, adding, "I don't mean tanks in the classic sense of the word. Today tanks have been replaced by a communications game that they play in great skill in the euro zone."

As Greece nears default, with the threat of economic chaos across the continent, divisions within the European ruling elite on

how to manage an all-encompassing crisis are surfacing.

Greek Prime Minister and Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras received a visit from Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann yesterday. Faymann speaks for those within ruling circles who want to finalise an austerity agreement by giving Tsipras a few minor concessions, which he could then attempt to sell to the population—even though it elected him based on promises to end all austerity measures.

Faymann trailed his visit by stating he wanted to “avoid a catastrophe.” Of the EU, ECB, IMF demands of Greece, he said, “I know there were a number of proposals, also from the institutions, that I also don’t find in order.”

The institutions are calling for no let up in brutal cuts, but in Greece there is “high joblessness, 30-40 percent (with) no health insurance and then raising VAT on medicines. People in this difficult situation cannot understand that.”

In Athens, he called for a continuation of negotiations stressing, “For Europe to be stronger, it must show solidarity and support to any country which needs it.”

The Guardian described Faymann’s intervention as “a last-ditch attempt to end the standoff with international creditors” before the euro group meeting.

Writing in the Financial Times, columnist Martin Wolf warned, “Neither Greeks nor their partners should imagine a clean break if they leave the euro.” Citing the economic breakdown and resulting mass unemployment in Greece in the last five years, he stated, “Such a brutal adjustment would have shredded the politics of any country. Europeans are now dealing with Syriza because of this calamity.”

A deal being reached “now seems ever more unlikely,” Wolf cautioned, adding, “That would not be the end of the story, however. Europeans will be unable to walk away. Whether Greece stays inside the euro or leaves, much the same challenges will arise. The Europeans would still have to admit that they would not get much of their money back; and they would still have to help avoid a Greek collapse.”

Faymann, Wolf, et al. are at odds with other sections of the Europe ruling elite that are demanding a humiliating total capitulation of Syriza, whose most powerful spokesmen are elements within the German ruling elite.

Andreas Scheuer, secretary-general of the German Christian Social Union, Chancellor Angela Merkel’s sister party, said, “The Greek government apparently hasn’t realised the seriousness of the situation yet. They are behaving like clowns sitting in the back of the classroom, although they have received explicit warnings from all sides that they might fail to pass to the next grade.”

Last week it emerged that European leaders began discussion on scenarios involving a Greek exit from the euro.

With no agreement expected from today’s meeting, plans are being mooted for another summit of euro zone heads of government on Sunday. According to the FT, citing EU officials, preparations for this “were almost finalised,” with these “included laying the groundwork for capital controls to prevent a meltdown of Greece’s financial sector.”

Source: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/06/18/gree-j18.html>

## **1.10. EUROPEAN UNION EXTENDS ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA**

19 June 2015

Alex Lantier, WorldSocialistWebsite

The six-month extension of European Union (EU) economic sanctions against Russia, agreed Wednesday in Brussels by ambassadors from all 28 EU members states, marks a milestone in the war drive waged by the imperialist powers of NATO against Russia.

These sanctions, first imposed amid the crisis over the still-unresolved shoot-down last July of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 in Ukraine, targeted exports of equipment to Russia’s oil industry and cut off Russian access to credit from European banks. As the EU is Russia’s largest trade and investment partner, the sanctions played a key role in the Russian ruble’s collapse last

year.

Now, EU officials pointed to ongoing fighting in eastern Ukraine, after the February peace accords negotiated in Minsk between the NATO-backed Kiev regime's forces and pro-Russian separatists, to justify maintaining the sanctions. EU sources said, "The idea is to extend [sanctions] to end-January to give time to review progress on the Minsk accord before having to take a new decision."

"EU foreign ministers will finalize the decision in Luxembourg on Monday," Poland's permanent representative to the EU said on Twitter.

Russian officials replied by accusing the Kiev regime of provoking recent fighting in east Ukraine to provide a pretext for their decision. "It's obvious there are forces in the world and in Ukraine, which are interested in the deterioration of the situation on the ground in the run-up to major international events, including EU summits, in order to urge the international community to extend sanctions and impose new ones," said Deputy Foreign Minister Alexey Meshkov.

Nevertheless, Meshkov neither condemned the sanctions nor called on the EU to stop them. He said Russian officials are "realists, we carefully analyze what our Western partners say," adding: "Russia did not impose sanctions; we are not asking anyone to lift them."

The latest EU sanctions are part of a broad drive by US and European finance capital to isolate Russia, threatening it with bankruptcy and war, in order to reduce it to semi-colonial status and establish the hegemony of the NATO powers, led by Washington, over all of Eurasia. This politically criminal policy, which NATO launched last year by backing a right-wing putsch against a pro-Russian regime in Ukraine, threatens to lead to all-out war with Russia, a nuclear-armed power.

In February, US officials discussed directly arming Ukrainian forces fighting Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine, and earlier this month, Pentagon officials testified before the US Congress that Washington is preparing missiles strikes on Russia.

The EU sanctions are the most powerful weapon in the financial arsenal NATO is deploying to wage economic war on Russia. During the ruble crisis last year, financial analysts calculated that cutting off Russian access to credit from Europe could bankrupt much of the Russian economy in as little as two years. This policy appears to be aimed at convincing the capitalist oligarchs who control Russia's post-Soviet economy to topple Russian President Vladimir Putin and install a regime that will obey all the dictates of Washington and the EU powers.

The pursuit of such an aggressive policy has vast and potentially unforeseeable implications. When the sanctions were first imposed last year, Russian officials attacked them as a campaign for regime change. "Western leaders publicly state that the sanctions must hurt [Russia's] economy and stir up public protests. The West doesn't want to change Russia's policies. They want regime change," said Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Given that previous targets of NATO campaigns for regime change—from Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic to Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya—all died in custody of NATO-backed forces, Russian officials are doubtless preparing policies as fraught as those of Washington.

The decision to maintain EU sanctions testifies to the recklessness and anti-democratic character of EU foreign policy. A recent Pew poll found mass popular opposition in Europe to a policy of stoking war with Russia. The European powers are proceeding with a confrontation that has the potential to escalate into full-scale war.

The only force that can oppose the drive to war is the mobilization of the working class internationally in a revolutionary struggle against imperialism and capitalism. Neither Russia's bankrupt capitalist regime nor critics of EU sanctions policy within the European ruling class can halt the war drive launched by the most powerful imperialist countries.

Significantly, the EU is adopting its sanctions even after significant sections of the European bourgeoisie criticized them as self-destructive and dangerous. Last year, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán attacked the sanctions as "shooting oneself in the foot," while former Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi said they amounted to "collective suicide."

"I do not support basing policy on worst-case outcomes, I think sanctions must stop," French President François Hollande declared in January. He added, "Mr Putin does not want to annex east Ukraine, I am sure of it. ... What Mr Putin wants is to prevent Ukraine from joining the camp of NATO. The idea for Mr Putin is to avoid having a hostile military presence on his borders."

Many argue that the EU sanctions are dangerous, because cutting off economic ties between Europe and Russia encourages Moscow to turn to an alliance with China against NATO.

After the announcement of EU sanctions last year, Chinese officials indicated that they could extend credit to Russia to keep it from going bankrupt. This year, Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) chief Kirill Dmitriev said China was investing tens of billions of dollars in Russia, adding: "Within 2-3 years the investment inflow from China may be equal to that from Europe in recent years."

One critic of EU sanctions against Russia, former Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, declared: "My concern is that Russia could turn to the East by strengthening their cooperation with China and playing a greater role in Asia and deciding that Europe is irrelevant. This is my concern and yet another argument to say that this policy is against European interests."

Nonetheless, on Wednesday, representatives of these governments all toed the line advanced by the United States, Germany and Britain, who have pressed for an aggressive stance against Russia.

Indeed, Italian and French officials criticizing EU sanctions are participating in the same imperialist scramble to grab resources and markets as their US, German and British counterparts.

Source: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/06/19/euru-j19.html>

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