



NEHAWU

Weekly International Monitor

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

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1.1. AU COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON HORRIFIED AT THE ASSASSINATION OF GENERAL ADOLPHE NSHIMIRIMANA IN BURUNDI

02 August 2015

African Union Commission Statement

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, is horrified at the assassination of Burundi's General Adolphe Nshimirimana, a former army Chief of Staff and head of Burundi's Intelligence Service. The assassination of General Adolphe Nshimirimana and his bodyguards took place on Sunday, 2 August 2015, in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission expresses her sincere condolences to the families of the deceased, and to the Government of Burundi.

The AU Commission Chairperson strongly condemns this barbaric act that is likely to further destabilize the country. She calls on all Burundians to exercise utmost restraint, not be provoked and to refrain from any acts of retaliation that would only further escalate and complicate the already bad situation.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission urges the Burundian government, the opposition political parties and civil society to work very closely together to find a lasting solution to the current crisis.

To this end, the Chairperson of the AU Commission reiterates the AU's commitment to continue working with all parties to

help bring back peace and stability to Burundi and end the suffering of its people.

Source: <http://cpauc.au.int/en/content/au-commission-chairperson-horrified-assassination-general-adolphe-nshimirimana-burundi>

1.2. WFTU SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE IN INDIA ON SEPTEMBER 2ND 2015

03 August 2015

WFTU Statement

The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) that represents more than 92 million workers all over the world expresses its strong solidarity with our class brothers and sisters of India, who prepare a National General Strike for September 2nd.

During the last years India has met great financial rise. It is member of BRICS, has nuclear arsenal and space program. But this financial boom is not a benefit for most of the one billion people of India. Skyscrapers are built next to the slums. Extreme wealth is gathered next to starving people. While the rich become richer, the wretched are once more the victims. The growth of the capitalist economy is always based on the escalation of the exploitation of the working class. Today that India and its bourgeois political forces take pride on the economic and military strength of the Indian Nation; the vast majority of the people live the contradiction of pauperization.

In these conditions the struggle and the demands of the Trade Union movement of India is just. The WFTU affiliates in India have been preparing this strike for months, showing the determination and the will of the class forces to mobilize the great force of the working people. The success of the National General Strike in India, on September 2nd will be a success for the working class of the world.

Especially this year, when the WFTU celebrates its 70th Year Anniversary, we would like to highlight the historic contribution of the class trade union movement of India to the World Federation since its foundation. It is a fact that without the struggles and the contribution of the trade union movement of India, the international class trade union movement would not be the same.

The WFTU expresses its internationalist support and solidarity to the struggle of its Indian brothers and calls all trade union organizations of WFTU to stand in solidarity with the National Strike of the Indian working class.

Long Live International Solidarity!

Long Live the class trade union movement of India!

All success to the National General Strike of September 2nd!

THE SECRETARIAT

Source: WFTU

1.3. WFTU INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH POLITICAL PRISONERS OF THE CURUGUATY CASE IN PARAGUAY

05 August 2015

WFTU Statement

From the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) we express our concern for the trial that has started for the “Curuguaty Massacre” and at the same time our full solidarity with Felipe Benítez Balmori, Arnaldo Quintana, Alcides Ramírez, Luis Olmedo, Lucía Agüero, Juan Carlos Tillería, Fani Olmedo, Adalberto Castro, Dolores López, Néstor Castro, Nery Urbina, the adolescent R.R.VO (who will be tried as a minor) and Rubén Villalba, member of the Paraguay Agrarian Movement (MOAPA),

organization affiliated to WFTU.

During 2014, two WFTU delegations, one headed by WFTU General Secretary George Mavrikos and the other by Valentin Pacho - Deputy General Secretary of WFTU-, visited Paraguay and noted the arbitrariness and illegality of the judicial process carried out by the Paraguayan State against the farmers who survived the occupation that in 2012 was evicted when they legitimately had claimed the recovery of lands known as "Marina Kue" usurped by the company belonging to the Riquelme family.

This eviction resulted in the death of 17 people and unleashed some days later the parliamentary coup executed by the Paraguayan Congress.

As WFTU we promote the active solidarity with the land workers, who while defending the life of their communities and the sovereignty of Paraguay, suffer persecution and imprisonment or even death.

We demand that the Paraguayan state ends the persecution of land workers and the immediate annulment of the irreparably unfair trial carried out in Curuguaty case.

Paraguay has inescapable obligations and responsibilities of respect for due process and fair trial and reasonable time of their citizens, obligations under international standards such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Pact of San José de Costa Rica.

The WFTU also reiterates its solidarity with the six peasant leaders carrying nine years of arbitrary and illegal detention in Argentine and Paraguayan prisons: Agustín Acosta, Roque Rodríguez, Basiliano Cardozo, Gustavo Lezcano, Arístides Vera and Simeón Bordón.

Source: <http://www.wftucentral.org/wftu-international-solidarity-with-political-prisoners-of-the-curuguaty-case-in-paraguay/>

1.4. SOUTH SUDAN'S WARRING SIDES RESUME TALKS IN ETHIOPIA

06 August 2015

Prensa Latina

South Sudan's rival factions resumed peace talks today to end 20 months of bloodshed, under growing international pressure and the threat of further sanctions if an Aug. 17 deadline is not met.

Fighting broke out in the world's youngest country at the end of 2013 between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and rebels allied with his former deputy Riek Machar, reopening ethnic fault lines that pit Kiir's Dinka people against Machar's Nuer forces.

Several rounds of talks in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa have failed to break the deadlock, with both sides violating repeated ceasefire deals.

"A perfect solution to a problem like that of the ongoing crisis in South Sudan is impossible to achieve," Seyoum Mesfin, the chief mediator with IGAD, the East African bloc mediating the talks, said as he opened the latest round of talks.

"Compromise solutions, however, are reachable."

Last month, IGAD presented a compromise proposal to Kiir and Machar to end the conflict, which was sparked by their power struggle.

The proposal includes a 30-month interim government that would allow both men to stay in power, with Kiir remaining president. Elections would be held two months after the close of the interim period, and both men would be eligible to run.

Kiir's delegation has criticised aspects of the proposal, including an 18-month deadline for the integration of armed forces, saying this must be done in fewer than six months, and details about the distribution of power.

"The mechanisms for decision making that IGAD's proposal prescribes are a sure recipe for gridlock," said Nhial Deng Nhial,

head of the government's delegation at the talks.

Another bone of contention is the status of Upper Nile and Unity states, where there is oil, as well as Jonglei. The proposal suggests governorship of the three be handed to the rebels during the transition period, but the government objects.

Source: http://www.plenglish.com//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4051831&Itemid=1

1.5. IMPERIALIST POWERS PREPARE FOR ANOTHER MILITARY INTERVENTION IN LIBYA

05 August 2015

Jean Shaoul, WorldSocialistWebsite

A joint US-European mission to Libya involving soldiers from six countries is being hatched under the pretext of combating Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and with the aim of establishing a pliant pro-Western government and “stabilising” the country.

On August 1, the London Times reported, “Hundreds of British troops are being lined up to go to Libya as part of a major new international mission.” It stated that the UK soldiers would join “Military personnel from Italy, France, Spain, Germany and the United States...in an operation that looks set to be activated once the rival warring factions inside Libya agree to form a single government of national unity.”

It is part of an expansion of imperialist military interventions in the resource-rich Middle East and North Africa, coming on top of the war in Iraq and Syria, in which Britain and the other powers are pursuing their own geostrategic and commercial interests.

The Times notes that Italy, the former colonial power in Libya, is expected to provide the largest contingent of ground troops. France has colonial and commercial ties with Libya's neighbours, Tunisia, Mali and Algeria. Spain retains outposts in northern Morocco and the other major power involved, Germany, is once again seeking to gain access to Africa's resources and markets.

The new mission follows proposals earlier this year to launch a “humanitarian” military operation targeting people traffickers bringing impoverished migrants in unsafe boats from Africa and the Middle East to Europe. Such justifications can now be seen a part of a softening-up process to legitimise yet another criminal and unpopular imperialist venture.

The five European forces will work with US forces, the European Union and the United Nations (UN), under the moniker of “P3+5,” in an operation expected to number several thousand. A UK government source said, “You might see movement towards the end of August.”

The US and European powers are using the UN to broker a peace deal between Libya's warring factions aimed at establishing a national unity government.

A spokeswoman for the UK's Ministry of Defence said that Britain, “along with international partners, is supporting the process to form a recognised Libyan government and we are developing plans to provide support once this is done; it is too early to discuss the exact nature of this.”

Last month, UK Prime Minister David Cameron admitted that he was considering military action in Libya. He said, “If there is a threat to Britain or to our people or our streets and we can stop it by taking immediate action against that threat, then I as Prime Minister will always want to try to take that action and that's the case whether that problem is emanating from Libya, from Syria, or anywhere else.”

While UK forces will “train” the army, coast guard and police and provide “counterterrorism” units, alongside Special Forces units from France and the US, it is not expected that the British air force will be involved, as it is already fully extended in Iraq and in Syria.

Following the 2011 NATO-led war to topple the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, government and rule of law collapsed, and the country has descended into complete chaos that has inflicted untold suffering on the Libyan people, and spread to

Mali and the Central African Republic in the Sahel.

Rival militias are fighting for control of the country's oil, estimated at 46.4 billion barrels of proven reserves, the largest in Africa.

The Islamist-backed Libya Dawn regime, made up of the General National Council (GNC) that refused to recognise the outcome of the 2014 elections, took control of the Libyan capital Tripoli in the west. Meanwhile, the internationally recognised government is holed up in Tobruk, a city of about 120,000 people more than 1,000 km away in the east and one of its last toeholds. Egypt and the United Arab Emirates have backed the Tobruk-based authorities, who accuse Qatar, Turkey and Sudan of backing the Islamists in Tripoli.

There are frequent clashes between the various militias in different parts of the country, while fighting continues on an almost daily basis in the eastern city of Benghazi. The country is awash in arms, narcotics, people traffickers and smuggling of all kinds, and kidnappings to extort ransoms are rife.

Libya has also seen the emergence of militias affiliated to ISIS, which have taken control of the city of Sirte—midway between Tripoli and Tobruk—where 21 Coptic Christian workers were beheaded last February. This was just one of a string of atrocities carried out by Islamists trained in Libya, both within the devastated country and in France and Tunisia.

The major powers believe that UN envoy Bernardino Leon is close to reaching an agreement between Tobruk and Tripoli over the formation of a national unity government, whose permission will be necessary if the US-European task force is to have any legal cover.

But success has so far eluded Leon, as Tripoli is demanding a greater role in any such a government and rejects the dominant role given to the so-called Libyan National Army headed by CIA asset, former Libyan General Khalifa Hiftar, allied to Tobruk.

Should an agreement be reached, a UN resolution will be sought to authorise the “P3+5” military intervention, which will include the patrol of Libyan waters by European aircraft and gunships, including Britain's flagship helicopter carrier HMS Bulwark. This can only lead to further atrocities and the intervention of NATO.

This week, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon also announced that Britain will extend its air campaign in Iraq against ISIS militants by a year, adding that it would use its eight ageing Tornado fighter jets, originally due to be taken out of service last March, to conduct strikes until at least early 2017.

He ruled out any possibility of British ground troops joining the fight against ISIS. This is another lie, as Britain has about 150 military “advisors” training the Kurdistan Regional Government's Peshmerga forces. Their effectiveness and role is now being undermined by Turkey's bombing of Kurdish forces in Iraq and Syria.

Despite inflicting death and destruction on the Iraqi people and their homes, the US-led forces have made little headway against the Sunni Islamist forces that have captured huge swathes of Iraq, including its second city Mosul, from which it has been able to generate \$40 million a month in oil revenues.

Several commentators have criticised Britain's policy as incoherent and called for “boots on the ground.” Former Chief of Defence Staff Lord Richards recently argued that the West needed “tens of thousands” of trainers on the ground if it wanted to make a difference. He said that the West's efforts against ISIS were “woefully insufficient,” and “If you want to get rid of them [ISIS] we need to effectively get on a war footing.”

Britain's expanded military ventures are going ahead with virtually no public discussion, let alone approval or popular support, and in the case of Syria, in defiance of explicit assurances to the contrary.

Britain only has parliament's authority to carry out air strikes against ISIS in Iraq, as part of the US-led coalition, but not in Syria. Nevertheless, Prime Minister David Cameron and Defence Secretary Michael Fallon covertly authorised the participation of British pilots, embedded with US, French and Canadian forces, in bombing operations against ISIS positions in Syria in defiance of parliamentary votes in 2013 and 2014.

Source:

1.6. CHAVEZ IS GONE, BUT CHAVISMO IS HERE TO STAY

03 August 2015

Federico Fuentes, TeleSurtv.net

Despite all the opposition's attempts to overthrow Chavez, this political force is rooted in Venezuela's poor majority, mobilized within the state and on the street to defend the Bolivarian revolution and advance its revolutionary aims.

Had Hugo Chavez not passed away in 2013, the former Venezuelan president would have turned 61 on July 28. However, even though Chavez is gone, his indelible imprint on Venezuela's political landscape endures.

On December 6 Venezuelans will go to the polls for the 20th time since Chavez was first elected president in 1998. The December election for the National Assembly is shaping up to be another critical battle between forces that for 15 years either supported or opposed Chavez.

For the Chavista forces, victory is vital to defending and deepening their "Bolivarian revolution".

For the opposition, success would represent an important step towards removing Chavez's successor Nicolas Maduro, either via a recall referendum in 2016 or through the possible use of parliament to impeach him.

In most countries, incumbents have to deal with a prevailing anti-political mood reflected in greater voter volatility and more rapid changeovers in government. Even relatively quiet Australia has seen four different governments within the last decade.

Moreover, if any government had to confront some of the important challenges the Maduro government is facing - such as spiralling inflation, shortages of staple goods and high crime rates - one would almost certainly wager on them losing their parliamentary majority.

Yet, a June poll carried out by independent, Caracas-based polling firm Hinterlaces revealed that 62% of Venezuelans would prefer to trust the current government to correct their errors and resolve some of these problems.

Only 33% said they would prefer to hand over government to the opposition and have them deal with the country's difficulties.

While it is too early to tell exactly what will happen on December 6, Chavismo has undoubtedly become an enduring element of Venezuela's political landscape.

Demise of old two-party system

Chavez's election to power marked the definitive end of a two-party system that for decades had seemed impervious to change.

Throughout most of the second half of the twentieth century, two main political parties dominated Venezuela's political system: the Christian democratic COPEI and the social democratic party Democratic Action (AD).

To ensure their control over the electoral system, the two parties signed a pact whereby no matter who won future elections, both parties would essentially carry out the same governmental program and consider including members of the opposing party in cabinet.

Excluded from any real power for the next forty years was Venezuela's poor majority.

Cracks in this electoral façade began to appear in the early nineties following the 1989 popular uprising known as the Caracazo, an event many point to as the starting point of the Bolivarian revolution.

However, it was Chavez's decision to run for president that brought the entire edifice tumbling down.

Chavez, who gained national recognition due to his role in a failed 1992 military rebellion, began the campaign as a rank

outsider and with the backing of a hastily cobbled together party he registered a year out from the elections.

Yet by Election Day, Chavez was leading in the polls and both COPEI and AD had withdrawn their candidates. They decided instead to come behind another outsider candidate in a last stop bid to defeat Chavez.

Since then, neither of the two old parties has mustered enough strength to run their own presidential candidates, preferring instead to back candidates they viewed as most likely to pose a serious challenge to Chavez.

Together they won less than 10% of the seats in the last National Assembly elections and have hardly rated a mention in more recent polls regarding voters' party preferences.

In most countries, it would be almost impossible to imagine a scenario where almost overnight a new party won the presidency and relegated the traditional parties to the category of "other" in the votes tally.

Even in Greece, with the remarkable rise of Syriza, the traditional right-wing New Democracy party continues to be the largest opposition party and maintains an important level of support.

However, this is exactly what has happened in Venezuela, where elections are now largely polarized between pro-Chavez parties, particularly the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) that was formed in 2007, and an array of mostly post-1998 opposition parties grouped together in the Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD).

Leftward shift

While some say that the old two-party system has been replaced by a new one centered on the PSUV and MUD, this ignores two other important changes that have occurred in Venezuela's political landscape.

The first is the dramatic shift to the left of the overall political spectrum.

Poll after poll has shown that after nearly two decades of Chavista government, the majority of Venezuelans favor socialism over capitalism.

This shift is also reflected in support for policies that are generally viewed as left-of-center such as state ownership of the oil industry, greater community control over local affairs, and free public education and healthcare.

This is undoubtedly the result of both the policies implemented by Chavez and his constant political dialogue with the people regarding the benefits of socialism.

As such, the country's political "center" bears little in common with the policies espoused by center parties in other countries.

The best example of this is shift is the Venezuelan opposition, which has recognized the need to rebrand itself in order to appeal to the majority.

Leaving aside the actual policies of the opposition, none of their candidates are willing to openly run on the kind of pro-austerity and pro-neoliberalism platforms that are common across Europe or the US.

Instead, their emphasis is on pledging to continue many of the Chavez-era policies they previously opposed, while doing away with "corruption" and "bureaucracy", precisely the issues that critical sectors within Chavismo have been raising.

In the 2012 presidential elections, one of the main slogans of the MUD candidate Henrique Capriles was "vote to the left and from below". While the slogan was a reference to the candidates' position on the ballot paper, it was a clear attempt to present Capriles as some kind of leftist candidate.

When Capriles ran against Maduro in 2013, he tried to avoid attacking Chavez and even adopted some of Chavez's campaigning style and discourse. At the same time, the opposition sought to draw a distinction between Chavez and Maduro through the slogan "Maduro is not Chavez".

Right-wing politicians have even adapted the way they look.

Few of the leading opposition figures parade around in suits. Capriles instead regularly turns up to press conferences unshaven and wearing a baseball cap and tracksuit top with the Venezuelan flag emblazoned on it.

Under Chavez, politics shifted so far to the left that even looking or sounding like an old-style politician, let alone espousing their policies or running on their party ticket, is enough to lose you support.

New political actor

The final, and most important, change in the Venezuelan political landscape has been the emergence of Chavismo as an organized political force.

Despite predictions that the Bolivarian revolution would collapse without Chavez, two years after his death Chavismo is still the most important political force in the country.

Proof of this is that no other party alone comes close to being able to match the level of support the PSUV maintains. It is precisely this reality that keeps the bitterly divided opposition united, as they recognize the only hope they have of winning elections is by running together.

The explanation for this ongoing support is that Chavismo was never simply a project based on one man, as important as Chavez was.

Rather, Chavez served as a catalyst for Venezuela's excluded poor majority to directly intervene into the political arena.

Chavez's election represented a spilling over of peoples' social struggle onto a political arena previously restricted to Venezuela's elite.

Despite all the opposition's attempts to overthrow Chavez, this political force is rooted in Venezuela's poor majority, mobilized within the state and on the street to defend the Bolivarian revolution and advance its revolutionary aims.

Chavez's death in 2013 was obviously an important blow to this political project, and it may very well suffer future setbacks as well, including the loss of governmental power.

However there is little evidence to indicate that Venezuela's poor majority is planning to retreat from the political arena or wind down their Bolivarian revolution.

No matter who is in government, they will have to contend with a politicized and organized poor who do not want to go back to the Venezuela of yesteryear.

Source: <http://www.telesurtv.net/english/opinion/Chavez-is-Gone-but-Chavismo-is-Here-to-Stay-20150803-0010.html>

1.7. EVO MORALES CALLS TO PRESERVE HISTORICAL MEMORY OF BOLIVIANS

06 August 2015

Prensa Latina

President Evo Morales urged the Bolivian people today to preserve the historical memory of the Founding Fathers in order to restore the country's identity, sovereignty and full independence.

In a statement to the nation, on the occasion of the 190 years of independence, he said that since the establishment of the Republic in 1825, it never was consolidated as such because governments always developed through coups.

He added that Bolivian people and much less native indigenous peasants never interested the postcolonial governments, nor

the recent neoliberal ones which looted the country.

But, he said, when these social sectors demanded their rights, when there was a resurgence of struggle for the contribution of these social organizations to be taken into account, it was repressed by force and not allowed to make a contribution to the development of society.

So we have to keep in mind the story, the memory of our heroes like Tupac Katari, his struggle and sacrifice to find the full freedom of the Bolivian people, said Morales.

Now, he said, we not only have identity and sovereignty, we are also free. Now Bolivia is valued, recognized and respected throughout the world because we have lifted its image worldwide.

However, he reiterated, this success was made possible by the unquestionable contribution of social movements and the native indigenous peasants. The work done is not Evo's work; it is the Bolivian people in general.

Source: http://www.plenglish.com//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4051071&Itemid=1

1.8. ECUADOR: ALLIANCE LEADERS CONDEMN COUP IN THE MAKING

03 August 2015

Morning StarWorld

Regional leaders of the Bolivarian Alliance for Our Peoples of Latin America (Alba) spoke out at the weekend against what they called a brewing coup attempt in Ecuador.

Alba denounced recent street violence, urging supporters of President Rafael Correa to remain vigilant in the face of a possible coup.

It warned that, as in Venezuela, Ecuador's opposition is plotting to prepare the groundwork for a soft coup in the lead-up to the 2017 elections.

Hard-line anti-government groups are demanding that Mr Correa resign immediately instead of serving out his term.

Resignation demands arose initially in response to the government's proposed charges to inheritance and capital gains taxes, which would have increased taxation for the top 2 per cent as part of a range of social policies to tackle inequality.

Mr Correa has since shelved the proposals but violent anti-government protests have continued in the face of Alba calls for the opposition to respect democracy.

Source: Morning StarWorld

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

