

No war in Ukraine, no to all kinds of warmongering!

The tension in Ukraine, which has been on the agenda of Europe for several months, has become alarming with the military intervention that Russia launched in this country from air, land and sea after recognizing the two self-declared "republics" in eastern Ukraine.

The tension began when Russia annexed Crimea and supported the two self-declared "people's republics" (Donetsk and Lugansk) in eastern Ukraine in response to Ukraine turning to the West with the US-and-EU-backed "Maidan Coup". And when, with US encouragement, Ukraine's ambition for NATO membership and the deployment of long-range missiles on its territory were on the table, Russia has declared these its 'red lines'.

The long-standing tension was rekindled as Russia amassed a large number of troops near Ukraine, and was fuelled even further by its decision to move troops into Donbas (Donetsk and Lugansk). However, Russia did not stop in Donbas and proceeded to destroy Ukraine's military infrastructure in order to force Ukraine and the West to give up their plans on that country's NATO membership, claiming that this poses a security risk for Russia. NATO countries, especially the US and UK, are content with the economic (and political) sanctions, which they said would intensify. Russia, on the other hand, forces Ukraine, whose ruling bourgeoisie has been divided for a long time, for a change of stance through military pressure. Russia seems to aim to persuade the Zelensky government to a compromise that will accept Russian impositions, or bring about a change of government that will do exactly that.

We have witnessed a new "cold war" intensified by the US until Russia recognized the Donbas "republics" and launched a military intervention. The US and its close allies such as the UK had been suggesting since early January that Russia would invade Ukraine, even giving approximate timelines such as 'soon' or 'within 48 hours'. Although Russia's entry into the territory of Ukraine with its military units seems to have justified the US-UK centered western imperialists, these two countries and NATO openly provoked a war by insisting on Ukraine's NATO membership and heightening the propaganda of a "Russian invasion".

*

The Ukraine issue certainly concerns this country in particular and Europe, but it is not an isolated problem. It is part of a "big picture" just like the current Syria problem, the "trade wars" that the US has initiated against China in particular, but also against Europe, and more recently, China's arming of artificial island bases in the South China Sea, where Japan and Vietnam also claim rights. The "big picture" is the struggle for the economic and territorial redivision of the world between the major imperialist countries, with their own zones of hegemony. Russia participates in this rivalry, first by pushing back the West's advance in Georgia, and then by confronting it head-on in Syria, and now in Ukraine.

The two main actors in the inter-imperialist struggle for the redivision of the world are the US and China. Although the US has been weakening, it maintains its leading position both economically and political-strategically. China is advancing with giant steps and has already extended its economic influence to all continents. It still lags behind the US, but the US is aware that China will overtake it in the near future, perhaps within a decade.

China has pushed back old problems with Russia and has shown solidarity. It needs Russian energy resources as well as the protection of Russian nuclear weapons as a counterweight to the US. Russia, for its part, needs China's economic might. Together, they pose a major threat to the United States.

In the face of China and Russia, the US is trying to gather its former European allies, who strongly signal to go their own way and tend to pursue independent policies because of their different interests.

And the US knows that it has to defend itself against the threat posed by China and Russia to its global dominance, before China becomes too strong to be stopped. Therefore, by showing them the tip of a gun, the US is applying power politics and is trying to force them into a battle before they are strong enough or back down and accept its terms. The fact that Russia did not only send troops to Donetsk and Lugansk but also advanced into the rest of Ukraine, at the risk of being the target of the reaction of the peoples of Europe and accused of being an "invader", shows that it does not hesitate to follow power politics either.

*

The tension in Ukraine makes sense with this full picture.

The US wants to divide the rival bloc and target and repress the relatively weaker one by surrounding it. After the disintegration of the USSR, the US took steps to weaken Russia and encircle it, by turning the former Soviet and people's republics to the west through "colourful revolutions" and adding them to NATO one by one. The US and its close allies, especially the UK, seek to isolate Russia and force it to back down by severing all ties with EU countries and portraying it as an aggressive power with a tendency to start a war in Europe. With this, the US also aims to destabilise Russia economically, as its main source of income is oil and natural gas sales.

If it succeeds, it will not only have Russia set back, but will also succeed indirectly against China. China is aware of this and while it has avoided getting fully involved in the Ukraine problem, it stood alongside Russia against the US's "cold war" tactics.

The US also aims to cut off the flow of gas from Russia to Europe, especially to Germany, whose industry needs relatively cheap Russian gas, via Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2. By doing this, the US wants to force Germany, which has always pursued a different 'ostpolitik' (Eastern policy) towards Russia, and other European countries to close ranks with the US. With Germany having reluctantly halted Nord Stream 2's approval process after Russia's entry into Ukraine, the US appears to have succeeded to a certain extent, even though temporarily. On the other hand, it is obvious that Germany and France, the leading powers of the EU, are also imperialist countries that pursue their own interests, arm for that purpose, and have made Ukraine change its axis with an uprising to join the EU.

Just like Syria and Libya before, now Ukraine is the scene of the inter-imperialist conflict for the redivision of the world. In these confrontations the workers and peoples of Ukraine, Syria and Libya are involved as troops and cannon fodder in favour of one or the other imperialist country, they are dragged along by the different sides and suffer the consequences of the war.

*

None of the parties involved in the Ukraine issue pursue policies that are in favour of people: neither the US and its main allies, which are the main forces pursuing power politics, nor Russia and China or the European imperialists led by Germany and France, which do not prefer an all-out war today, despite reacting from time to time, as

in the case of Russia in the Ukraine problem. None of these parties can be supported for any reason. The thesis that Russia and China are friends of the peoples is as much a lie as is the idea that the West is the "defender of sovereignty and democracy".

The peoples of the imperialist countries that are party to the problem do not have the slightest interest in the Ukraine policy pursued by their ruling classes. Moreover, the peoples of all countries, especially those of Europe, suffer from rising inflation, falling wages, deteriorating working and living conditions - driven by arms spending - and the growing trend of fascism. Added to this is the chain price hikes triggered by rising energy prices, already aggravated by cuts in transport routes as a result of Russia's attack on Ukraine.

While the US and its allies continue to use proxies (the Zelinsky regime) in Ukraine, the direct use of weapons by Russia reveals that the inter-imperialist fight for the redivision of the world is getting tougher. At the same time, this shows how easily this imperialist fight can turn into an armed conflict, completely ignoring the people's struggle for their livelihoods.

The international working class and the peoples of the world are undoubtedly in favour of peace, where they can work and live humanely without exploitation and oppression. We, the Marxist-Leninist communists of the world, whose only concern is the interests of the international working class and the peoples, are, of course, in favour of peace. It is also for this reason that we oppose military interventions, invasions and wars that cover up and complicate the struggle of the working peoples of all countries against exploitation and tyranny, as well as the obligation to defend the right of each nation to self-determination. We condemn the Russian attack on Ukraine.

The working class and the peoples of all countries need to unite their forces and struggles for socialism, demanding jobs, bread and political democracy as well as an end to the imperialist fight for the redivision of the world - not limited with Ukraine - and an end to the rattling of weapons for that purpose.

Russia must unconditionally withdraw from Ukraine.

No more war spending!

Dissolve NATO-type military pacts and withdraw foreign troops from all countries!

Long live the struggle of the international working class and the oppressed peoples for jobs, bread, democracy, peace and socialism!

**The Coordination Committee
of the International Conference of Marxist Leninist Parties and Organisations
[ICMLPO]**