

Africa Workers Organizer

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*Forward to an international general
strike against fascist Israel!*



Furkan Dogan, 19, US-Turkish youth, who had the ‘audacity to hope’ for an end to the Gaza blockade, shot in the back, one of 19 murdered in international waters by Israeli fascist troops 31.5.2010

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Editorial

Another political defeat for the SACP

During May the Cosatu CEC met while the strikes of the rail and dockworkers were in full swing. We will publish our assessment on these strikes and that of the recent municipal workers strikes in due course. But in the face of silence from the SACP, who refused to come out in support of either the municipal or transport workers strikes, they suffered another political defeat at the hands of the strikers. The Cosatu CEC was forced to issue a statement against any notion of 'labour peace' during the FIFA 2010 world cup. Further, the settlement of 11% for the rail and transport workers is a blow against the ANC-SACP regime which last year unilaterally declared that public sector workers increases of 8% for 2010 would be reduced to 7%. The drive by the ANC-SACP and by Vavi himself, for workers to accept cuts in wages and cuts in bonuses, was defeated by the workers actions themselves, it was defeated in the streets. In this sense the Cosatu workers are breaking the alliance with the ANC and SACP. The working class needs to study the example of Zimbabwe, Greece, Kirgystan where the working class are increasingly taking the path against the leadership pact with imperialism, and are breaking with the bourgeois forces. It is in the coming decisive battles that the Fourth International is being refounded.

On the massacre of the Gaza Aid convoy by the shock troops paid by US imperialism

The good intentions of the pacifist Gaza Aid convoy, staffed by volunteers from 36 countries, was met with an iron, bloody fist by the fascist troops on the payroll of US and other imperialists. Dozens are injured, still being tortured in the fascist clutches, while 6 are still missing, probably killed and dumped into open sea. This is but a glimpse of what Palestinians face every day. We salute the Swedsich port union and the Satawu members for now deciding to take up collective worker action against fascist Israeli goods. The fundamental point is that the source of the sustenance of Israeli fascism, namely US and other imperialism, needs to be challenged; it is in this sense that we feel that the call for an international general strike has to be made, centred around the tearing down of all the borders of Gaza, tearing down the wall and the hundreds of checkpoints in the West bank, tearing down all the borders of 'Israel' and opening the way for all the Palestinian refugees to return home; despite all the loss of life and all the convoys, the cement supply is still stuck in Ashdod while the buildings in Gaza are on the point of collapse on children, the aged and the sickly; for those who are serious about breaking the blockade, let us make a start by sending international brigades to Egypt to tear down, once and for all the Rafah border. Forward to a united, secular Palestine, free, from the river to the sea- this central demand is only possible if the working class takes power, smashing the Israeli fascist regime, together with the workers taking power against all the capitalist regimes in the region; this in turn is connected with the working class taking power in the imperialist centres. This will open the path to world Socialism.

Statement on the Gaza convoy massacre by fascist Israeli troops

Clear evidence has now emerged from the hostages who were released (some still remain in detention under the most barbaric conditions of psychological torture) that after the flotilla had moved back into international waters, away from Gaza, the Israeli fascist troops attacked with the deliberate aim to kill; one of those killed had 4 bullet wounds to the head; most were shot in the back; volunteers only had sticks in hand to fend off automatic weapons of the fascist troops; it has also emerged that the survivors of the massacre had been psychologically tortured, kept for hours in the sun until dehydrated then taken down in the men's quarters and the air-conditioning turned off; Cape Town activist, Gadija Davids, asked for access to the SA ambassador, she was denied and told that "this is Israel, you have no right", when she asked for a lawyer, she was denied access and told, "this is Israel, you have no right". The wounded were kept waiting and medical care was delayed to them for several hours. Six volunteers are still missing and are feared to have been killed and dumped into the open sea.

Well, all of this symbolises what the Palestinians have to go through every day of their lives.

Symbolic recall of ambassadors by the friends of US imperialism (the SA, Turkey, Spanish governments) are an insult to the Palestinian cause and opens the door for fascist Israel to murder with impunity around the globe, including and especially in the region of historic Palestine. Clearly, capitalist governments are tied to their imperialist masters and will not lift a finger against them. We call for the cutting of all ties with fascist Israel. We call for an immediate international general strike against fascist Israel. The central task of the working class is to deal a decisive blow against imperialism which is the main sustaining force behind Israel. The Swedish Port workers union, by refusing to handle Israeli goods between 15- 24 June have made an excellent start to this call for workers action.

Anglo American (whose main shareholder is JP Morgan Chase, with its side-kick Goldman Sachs) sends most of its diamond production to Israel. Israel imports USD 10 bn in diamonds (20% of total) and exports USD 14.5 bn in diamonds (33% of total exports). Coal from Anglo American mines power the electricity of fascist Israel; US imperialism has written off USD 42bn in loans to Israel (contrast this to the threat to the Greek working class, the East European workers, the workers in Spain and Portugal, etc to pay or face retribution). Every year, according to Jewish voices for a Free Palestine, USD 15 bn from the US taxpayer (principally the working class) subsidizes fascist Israel- at the same time the working class in the US faces cuts in wages, cuts in healthcare, cuts in education, brutal unemployment; but fascist Israel gets higher priority. A US citizen, 19 year old youth, was also butchered on the convoy but this leaves Obama cold.

We call for the immediate occupation and siege of all Anglo American and JP Morgan Chase offices and company operations. We call for marches to the offices of Anglo American, Goldman Sachs, Hsbc, Credit Lyonnaise, Bundesbank.

We salute the workers of Satawu (SA Transport and Allied Workers Union) for their decision to 'hot handle' all goods bound to and from Israel; we call for sustained action and not just a one ship symbolic action. We call on the workers of the world for a complete shut down of all links with fascist Israel.

The central call of the general strike is for the siege of Gaza to end for all the borders around it to be torn down, for all the checkpoints and the wall in and around the West Bank to be torn down, for all the borders around Israel to be torn down to enable the immediate return of all Palestinian refugees.

Now that the Israeli peaceniks on the Gaza convoy were brutalised and tortured the question arises about the true role of zionism and the zionist state, namely that it is the fascist jackboot of imperialism in the Middle East, able to crush any workers uprising in the region, within hours. All the cement brought by the Gaza convoy is still lying in Ashdod while the buildings in Gaza are in danger of collapsing onto the children, the aged and the sickly- such is the naked brutality of the Israeli fascists. We call on the class conscious Jewish workers to break with zionism, to break with the Histadrut, to join Palestinian unions and to go over to the side of the Palestinians, arms in hand against the fascist state. But such a struggle can only succeed if the working class in the imperialist centres rise up against the very foundation of fascism in the Middle East, namely world imperialism.

For international brigades to be sent to Egypt to assist with the tearing down of the Rafah border; camp at the border like the Thai workers occupied the centre of their capital; the Egyptian worker will support you; Forward to an international general strike against fascist Israel! Forward to a united, secular Palestine, from the river to the sea! A united Palestine is only possible with the working class taking power! An assembly of delegates of Palestinian workers and poor peasants can only be guaranteed by the working class taking power and the destruction of the fascist Israeli state. For an Organising committee to refound the Fourth International! Forward to a Soviet Palestine! Forward to a federation of Soviet states of Europe! Forward to a federation of Soviet states of the Americas! Forward to Soviet Japan. The over throw of imperialism in its heartlands opens the door for world Socialism.

Workers of the world unite; we have nothing to lose but our chains and we have a world to win. 4.6.2010



The Greek working class is not being 'bailed out' but Goldman Sachs and the Bundesbank

When the Euro was being set up at Maastricht, it was with the agreement of US imperialism, who agreed to intervene in countries where they could not meet the set limits. This was how Goldman Sachs intervened in Greece from the moment that they became part of the eurozone (as their deficit was more than the 3% of GDP). Goldman Sachs charged Greece 13 ½ % interest when the going rate was 3%. In the process, Goldman Sachs took over the income of the entire Greek import and export taxes, as well as all the income from the lottery (the funds go direct to Goldman Sachs and not even via the Greek government). The Greek debt was not created or owed by the working class but is an artificial means by Goldman Sachs to plunder the wealth of the masses in Greece, to plunder the national treasury in broad daylight. The bundesbank similarly overcharged Greece for loans at more than double the going rate in Europe. The whole cry by the imperialists (Greek, US and EU) of 'saving' the Greek nation is nothing but a cover for bailing out themselves by putting the burden on the masses in Greece. The loans by the IMF (largely US imperialism) and the EU (largely German imperialism) will not even go into any productive activity but directly into the coffers of Goldman Sachs and the Bundesbank! The working class owes nothing! Deutsche bank, JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs (and other major imperialist banks) are the ones with the fake balance sheets, consuming 90 trillion dollars that the world working class has not yet produced. For capitalism-imperialism they need the working class reduced to barbarism; for the working class to live, imperialism must die.

The imperialist Greek regime is responsible for the bombing attacks in the immigrant neighbourhood; such acts provide them with a pretext for greater repressive measures against the revolutionary masses. As the class conflict intensifies, the very Goldman Sachs and Bundesbank, that is the main prop of the imperialist Greek regime, will not hesitate to finance fascist bands against the working class. The prospect of Socialism or fascism would then face the working class.

Who is Goldman Sachs and how do they operate?

Goldman Sachs is one of the major imperialist banks; it acts in collusion with one of the other US imperialist banks, JP Morgan Chase. Chase Manhattan and Citibank were part of the group of imperialists directly responsible for the bloody overthrow of the Allende popular Front in Chile in 1973. Goldman Sachs was recently found to have deliberately lured minor investors (like pension funds) into fake investments (that they knew were unsound). They lured the pension funds into investing in a company called Abacus, to the tune of USD 1 billion; within one year, 99% of the housing loans administered by Abacus failed; the pension funds lost all their money; meanwhile Goldman Sachs had taken insurance with AIG against the loans failing; in the process, Goldman Sachs gained USD 1 billion from the insurances. Not surprising, after a number of such scams, AIG had to be bailed out by the US government. The Papandreu government has just appointed an ex manager of Goldman Sachs to oversee the debt of the Greek government!

Down with the imperialist agent Papandreu, forward to a workers government based on workers councils! Industrial workers to the centre of the resistance!

Why should workers have to bail out the debt of Goldman Sachs and the Bundesbank? This is odious debt made by collusion of the Greek bourgeoisie and US and German imperialism. Workers should say no to any single cent of loans from the IMF and EU! Don't pay the debt- this debt is open robbery by the imperialist

gangsters of the wealth created by the masses in Greece. Why must generations of the masses in Greece, be held hostage to the naked plunder by the imperialist gangsters?

The bourgeois 'analysts' will say that the Greek currency and stock exchange will collapse. But who has funds on the stock exchange, who holds the paper money of the currency? It is mostly the Greek bourgeoisie and the imperialists. The bourgeois 'analysts' say that the bosses will close the companies. We say, if they close a single company, if they want to touch a single part of the wealth produced by the masses, the working class should take over the banks, the companies, expropriating the capitalists, without compensation.

It is not good enough to march in the streets, we must take over all the workplaces. For this immediately the factory committees that exist in the docks areas (of immigrant and local workers) should be extended to every workplace, there should be immediately set up councils of worker delegates from each workplace in every town and city and village.

These councils of worker delegates should immediately convene a national council of delegates to co-ordinate the fightback against the imperialist attacks. The first task of this National Workers Congress is to prepare to disperse the parliament of lackeys of Goldman Sachs and the Bundesbank, to topple the government of Papandreu, chief local bandit for Goldman Sachs, and to take power into its own hands. They should repudiate all loans taken from the IMF and EU, repudiate all the debt with imperialism and take control of the entire means of production in Greece, establishing a state monopoly of all foreign trade, severing all imperialist control over it. Worker delegations should immediately be sent to the barracks of the army and navy to come out in support of the Greek masses, disarming the police and putting an end to capitalist slavery of the next generations! The core of the resistance will be the industrial workers- urban and rural. For workers delegates from across Europe to join the national workers congress, to break the isolation of the Greek masses and to take the struggle for workers power to every country in Europe, from Lisbon to the steppes of Russia! For an Organizing committee to refound the Fourth International. Let the spark from Athens burn in Paris, London and Berlin!



Anti-Israel demonstration in Sweden

Mayday 2010 statement of the FLTI (Internacional Leninist Trotskyist Fraction)

To the workers of Zimbabwe, South Africa, the entire African continent, the workers in the heart of imperialism and the world over.

Today, the 1st May, we gather in our respective venues (across the world) to commemorate the day which comes to be after heroic fights by our class brothers and sisters over a century ago. As we commemorate we should reflect for a moment our challenges to realise and consolidate the achievements made so far. Day by day capitalism-imperialism, with the able assistance of fake Trotskyists, Stalinists, labour aristocracy and many other counterrevolutionary currents mushrooming in the entire modern world today, is violently reversing those gains.

Nevertheless, recent events proved that such dogmatic acts will never detour the working class from the revolutionary road, they would only succeed in delaying the revolution, the radical social revolution. The working class struggles in Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Australia show that the writing is on the wall. The world capitalist is in bankruptcy, its crisis is approaching a dead end. We are now passing through one of those great historic hours upon which the fate of the Zimbabwean working people, the fate of Africa, and in significant measure the fate of the whole humanity, will depend for decades.

Veteran revolutionary socialist fighter and theoretician comrade Leon Trotsky when describing the options of the Germany crisis in December 1931 in a perspective report "What's Wrong With the Current Policy of the German Communist Party?" said; "If you place a ball on top of a pyramid, the slightest impact can cause it to roll down either to the left or to the right. There are forces which would like the ball to roll down towards the right and break the back of the working class. There are forces which would like the ball to remain at the top. That is a utopia. The ball cannot remain at the top of the pyramid. The (working class) want the ball to roll down toward the left and break the back of capitalism".

That is the situation approaching with every hour in Zimbabwe, the whole of Africa and the entire globe today. Today the world situation is pregnant with exactly, if not more ripened, Germany possibilities of 1931; the world working class no longer want to be ruled under the old order, they are questioning their loyalties to the popular front parties which, in Africa are fast replacing the discredited national liberation movements. In Africa, and in Zimbabwe in particular, there is an unholy alliance between employers and the government constituted by the three political parties namely; the two formations of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Zimbabwe African National Union -(Patriotic Front) (ZANU(PF)), to attack the workers.

Recent utterances by some high profile figures, including the Finance Minister (Tendai Biti of the MDC) which gave license to employers / business to downsize so to continue maximizing their super-profits –coupled with now common practice by employers to refuse to pay or to stagger wages and salaries, the imposition of short time work schemes with loss of wage/salary, also the imposition of wage and salaries freeze of both public and private sectors– only point to one direction: attack on the working class who are the majority poor - serving the interest of capitalism-imperialism -Anglo-American imperialism in particular.

Indeed they (our class enemies-the government and the business) are aware the ball cannot remain on top of the pyramid for a while hence they want it to roll towards the right and break the back of the worker. Already some companies, in the textile, food, clothing, steel have started to heed the minister's call by sending workers home with some retrenching;

why would they wait to begin acting when their protection is guaranteed? Workers and their leaders are victimized, persecuted, killed for demanding what is due to them.

On the other hand the different gangs of all the bourgeois parties and the capitalists are busy plundering and sharing the country's natural capital amongst themselves. The objective is self-enrichment; they, in the name of addressing historical injustice take land and distributed amongst themselves, however, as usual they did not dare touch the land of imperialist nor their mines and factories. Their target was the property of some small capitalists. They are in Chiyadzwa where the different gangs are quarreling about who should be in charge of the diamond fields on behalf of Anglo-American/JP Morgan Chase. In the ZANU (PF) mouthpiece (the *Herald*) it was reported that "the government appointed company (IDC) could extract diamond worth over USD650 000 per week when fully capacitated". If these mineral and the proceeds from the sale of the precious stone were properly planned for, the country could feed not only its citizenry but the entire population of the continent. There would be no need to freeze wages / salaries of the civil servants, our children could enjoy free education, free access to health etc. While Biti is calling for companies to downsize (workforce and the wage / salary bill) the Prime Minister (Tsvangirai) and the President (Mugabe) are calling Zimbabweans in foreign lands where they are subjected to slave-like conditions offering cheap labour to return arguing that the economic and political situation has improved / stabilised. The Labour Minister too is quoted saying many companies are applying for retrenchment, but does this mean companies are operating at a loss? No, it is their policy to pay slave like wages / salaries, in fact they want free labour. The same Finance Minister went further to attack the few minimal 'favourable' provisions of the labour laws of the country (Zimbabwe), which he describes as too protective; clearly the minister as a servant of Anglo-American/JP Morgan Chase, wants the ball to break the workers' backs.

While all this is said, they continue milking from the very meager income of the toiling masses got from selling wares and from the flat envelope they receive from the insane employer, the government, through its various departments are charging astonishing exorbitant, anti-poor fees / rates. We have repeatedly warned that workers will painfully pay for these secret deals this capitalist-imperialist government is entering with imperialist corporations. The government receive with much ululation the news that Zimbabwe's voting rights have been restored, it welcomes with enthusiasm the IMF delegation last year and receive with no hesitation the IMF loan of USD500million – ooh who does not know the negative impact of the policies of these so-called good Samaritans (International Financial Institutions)? they reap where they did not sow. Least we forget the effects of ESAP (Structural Adjustment Programmes) which has contributed wholesomely to our present suffering, including operation Murambatsvina. Now we are paying by our blood; massive retrenchments, wage / salaries cuts, freeze of wages / salaries and low (no) expenditure by government on public services. It's a death penalty, under these conditions, if remained unchallenged, we are therefore only living on hired time.

The workers of Zimbabwe likewise their class brothers and sisters internationally always enter the revolutionary path but as usual the counterrevolutionary, reformists, fake Trotskyists, Stalinists strangle and divert the agenda of the working class by collaborating with the workers' class enemy. They impose their minimum, class collaborationist programme to be the ultimate mission of the struggle of the working class. They confuse workers by adulterating Marxism, by reducing the struggle for the conquest of power to pure economic struggle. The period we are, the period of capitalism-imperialism decay, is a period when even the 'democratic' demands have to be fought for.

But the workers cannot achieve these 'democratic' demands by reconciling with imperialism – no, we don't reconcile with our class enemies, butchers of the mine workers in Shabani, of

poor masses who are panning (for minerals) for survival in Chiwadzwa. We cannot reconcile with counterrevolutionaries who are our enemy within – they are the most dangerous type as they, for crumbs, are the servants of capitalism-imperialism. The workers of Zimbabwe, of the world have ahead either barbarism or socialism: the fight against imperialism barbarism is a matter of life and death. We are the only class with class interests to take the fight for total liberation (economic, social and political), to its logical conclusion through the conquest of power by the proletariat. Only when the working class organised independently, becoming the leader of the broader masses through taking power into its own hands, then we can have democratic demands (jobs, shelter, education, health, a people driven constitution) met, being themselves transitional demands towards socialist demands. The suffering poor people want a different society, a socialist society order; they are sharply opposed to the parasitic system of imperialism-capitalism.

“But it is not enough to want; one must know how”. Let us calmly reflect once more: is the policy carried on at present by the leadership, of MDCs or ZANU(PF) correct or incorrect? Who are they serving, who benefits from their policies, which are frankly anti-working people - the majority poor? Can we say recommending companies to downsize is pro-working class/poor? Can we say evicting tenants from their houses is pro-working class/poor. Can we say freezing wages / salaries of the ordinary civil servants pro-working class/poor? The government, instead of taxing the rich to fund pro-poor developmental projects, is doing the opposite. The Finance Minister in his monetary policy, categorically stated that the government gets over (50%) of its income from the workers as PAYE while companies are paying a small (14%). Zimbabwean workers are the highest taxed in the continent if not the world over! If the government taxed the big monopolies such as the diamond, platinum, cotton, tobacco companies at even 50% of their profits, that would immediately take Zimbabwe out of its crisis; but even this minimal bourgeois democratic measure is something the government will not do.

To the world producers of the wealth, let’s calmly reflect once more, where are they (managers of capitalism-imperialism and their counterrevolutionary friends) heading us? – capitalist barbarism or socialism. Enough is enough comrades – we have nothing to lose but the chains of bondage; we organize or we starve!

The policies of all the political parties in Zimbabwe and internationally are pro-capitalist-imperialism and they could continue as such unless and until the working class break with these bourgeois, popular front, liberation movement parties. The workers can only triumph by conquering power through organising by themselves independently and without any grain of class distortions/contradictions. In Zimbabwe, the workers must build an alternative, revolutionary independent working class movement for workers' power alternative to both formations of MDC and ZANU(PF).

To avoid or to guard against a replica of the results of the previous Working Peoples' Convention where the process was from the onset hi-jacked by servants of capitalism, a correct policy is necessary.

That is, we need a policy appropriate to the present situation, to the present relationship of forces, and not to the situation that may develop in one, two, or three years, when the question of power will already have been decided for a long time. We must remove any illusions to say MDC this or that is a better evil than ZANU(PF). The struggle is not to put a better evil in power but a workers' and peasants government in power. Recent developments have proved that these political parties are serving the same masters - imperialism.

“There are seven keys in the musical scale. The question as to which of these keys is “better” – do, re, or sol – is a nonsensical question. But the musician must know when to strike and what keys to strike”. The abstract question of who is the lesser evil – Mugabe or Tsvangirai – is just as nonsensical. It is necessary to know which of these keys to strike. Is

that clear? For the feeble-minded let us cite another example. When one of my enemies sets before me small daily portions of poison and the second, on the other hand, is about to shoot straight at me, then I will first knock the revolver out of the hand of my second enemy, for this gives me an opportunity to get rid of my first enemy. But that does not at all mean that the poison is a "lesser evil" in comparison with the revolver", argued Trotsky.

The workers must act independently from the leaders or policies of the political parties that represent the bosses and imperialism; they must defend their worker agenda. There is no harmony in the communities, in the factories, mines etc; workers are being attacked ruthlessly by capitalism-imperialism. We need to defend ourselves against this unholy alliance in the factories and our communities. For how long shall we drink and queue for untreated water? For how long shall our children remain out of school? For how long shall we continue destroying our forests for firewood? For how long shall the employers stagger our wages/salaries? For how long shall employers refuse to pay a wage/salary in line even with the minimal poverty datum level? For how long shall we remain without jobs? For how long shall we remain on short-time work schemes? For how long shall we live in darkness - without electricity? For how long shall we continue receiving anti-poor bills - we don't even consume what we are billed. For how long shall we remain beggars in our own country of birth? For until when shall we live in the open without a roof above and a decent floor under our bodies? For until when shall we watch our beloved class brothers and sisters die from hunger and curable diseases?

In the meantime, as we endure hunger and misery, the rich land in Zimbabwe which could feed the entire Southern Africa is still in the hands of the imperialist companies, aided by their fascistic lackeys, the 'white' commercial farmers and the new agrarian bourgeoisie, who expropriated a portion of the best land for the officers of the bourgeois army of Mugabe and company. Small peasants see that they cannot live from their tiny plot of land. The agricultural workers are used as slaves in the plantations of the transnationals and the big agrarian bourgeoisie. We cannot continue like this! Enough with hunger, misery and ruin for the working class, the poor peasants and the rural workers! Enough with opulence and concentration of the wealth in the hands of the transnationals and the native bourgeoisie!

AN APPEAL OF THE INTERNATIONALIST TROTSKYISTS OF ZIMBABWE ON THIS MAY DAY TO FIGHT TOGETHER WITH THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS

This is why we are calling all workers of Zimbabwe, the region, the continent and internationally to unite and rally together under one banner, the banner of the international proletariat, of the urban and rural working class, which for us, is the Fourth International.

We call to set up, against the bosses, the exploiters' and the imperialist parties, a new internationalist revolutionary party of the working class, a new revolutionary party, a real General Staff of the working class and their allies, in order to put an end to the catastrophe that looms upon our heads and is killing us day by day.

Far from being gravediggers of this rotten and smelly capitalist system in crisis, the world reformist left currents are tending it as caring nurses. After having long supported capitalism, now, when it is facing a thorough bankruptcy, and throwing its burdens over the backs of the working class and the oppressed people of the world, these traitors have unified their forces against the working class and in defense of the exploiters' private property.

Those wolves, dressed as sheep are calling now to set up “anti-capitalist” parties, but the “anti-capitalist” is just in name, as they refuse to touch a single interest of the transnationals, the banks and imperialism. Alas!... The workers do not deserve new obstacles on their path or new betrayers who speak on the name of socialism in order to better betray them.

Workers who do not get their wages, enslaved rural workers in the plantations, workers who must migrate to work as slaves to neighbor countries: we must raise our fist on this May Day and take the lead to set up an internationalist revolutionary alternative.

For workers to achieve real democratic demands we call for;

- the formation of workers' defense committees in factories and in every workers neighbourhood - to defend against; dismissals, retrenchments, short-time work scheme, victimization of workers leaders, staggering of wages / salaries, wage / salary freeze, slave like wages / salaries, evictions and against power and water disconnections, i.e, against the general attack by imperialism. At the same time we must unite our struggles with the struggles of our class brothers and sisters in South Africa, UK, USA, Greece, Italy etc, where they work as slaves and second-class workers, and demand '*equal pay and equal work*'. One single class, one single struggle! Work for all! No more unemployment! The doors of the COSATU must be opened for all the African brothers and sisters to organize ourselves in a common fight! Migrant workers committees to send delegates to all the branches of COSATU!

For unemployed committees to send delegates to all unions, the National and regional workers congresses to join hands to fight for decent work for all and to share the work among all who can work!

- expropriation without compensation and put under workers' control all companies; closing down, put workers on retrenchment, victimizing workers and workers' leaders, stagger wages / salaries, paying slave like wages / salaries, impose short-time working scheme. Hundreds of thousands of workers are being dismissed in Zimbabwe by the bosses and by ZANU-PF and the MDC, and they have to migrate as outcasts in their own land to get a miserable job to sustain their starving families. To conquer food, clothing, education and all our demands, we need to expropriate all imperialist assets, without compensation and place them under workers' control. Nationalise the land and expropriate all commercial farmers, without compensation, put them under workers control; create model worker collectives and invite all the poor peasantry to join such collectives.

- They want to make us believe that there is no money. It is a lie. The parasites, the exploiters and imperialism are awash in money and wealth plundered from Africa! The question is clear: It is us or them. **It is necessary to expropriate and nationalize the banks without compensation merging them into a single State Bank put under workers' control.**

That bank will be able to give cheap credit to the poor peasants, furnish cutting edge machinery to the plantations and nationalized land expropriated from the big agrarian bourgeoisie.

- (workers) factory occupation on all companies that stagger wages / salaries, pay starvation wages / salaries, closing, retrenchment, victimize workers and workers leaders, impose short-time work scheme

- an Independent Movement for Workers Power with the following steps:

first a call for factory committees in every workplace whose task is to gather demands of the working class, to take on the tasks of organising self defence and to take steps to organise production under workers control; second, the formation of labour forums (committees of delegates) in working class communities and in all industrial areas to prepare for the convening of a National Workers Congress of delegates (1 per 100) of employed and unemployed workers, revolutionary students / youths, disabled and other socially disadvantaged groups including HIV / Aids groups, rural poor peasants and the rank and file soldiers. It is only this National workers Congress that can guarantee that the Hundreds, thousands, of exploited are already realizing that the bosses' parties are able/willing to solve absolutely nothing for them. We internationalist Trotskyists affirm that only a **government of the workers, supported by the exploited sectors and poor peasants' can give a solution to the crisis that has abated on us.**

From the International Revolutionary League (IRL-FI), we fight to build that party in Zimbabwe, in the entire Southern Africa, in the whole world and that party is for us the 4th International, which fights for the international socialist revolution.

We know that our small nucleus will not be able to fulfill this task without hundreds of thousands of exploited and revolutionary students taking it in their hands as *their task*. To set up this party where there will be no place for bosses or exploiters, or for careerists or opportunists; a party rallying the defenders of workers democracy and the fighters for the international revolution.

- break (trade unions, student organisations and other workers' organisations) with bourgeois parties (MDC, ZANU(PF), fake 'Anti-Capitalist') of the bosses that starve us. Break with their (MDCs) anti-workers pact with the ZANU(PF) and form an Independent Movement for Workers' Power. We must break the siege against the masses in Madagascar, imposed by Stalinists reformists and the agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement, the same siege imposed in Zimbabwe and in every decisive struggle by subordinating the working class to the bourgeoisie! Enough! Break with the bourgeoisie! One single class, one single struggle in the whole Southern Africa! Out French and US-UK imperialism from Madagascar! Our class brothers from Greece and their magnificent general strike against the attack of the capitalists and the Greek imperialist regime, junior partner of Goldman Sach/JP Morgan Chase, shows the way to all the world working class on how to fight against their exploiters. A congress of workers, poor peasants and soldiers of all Southern Africa could put on the agenda, starting from the revolutionary fight of the Greek workers, conquering the general strike that surpasses the borders, paralyzes the African continent and puts into question who owns the wealth that is daily plundered (by imperialism): either the exploiters or the working class (the real producers in Africa). The imperialist, the exploiters -since they take the bread, land, work away from us, they enslave us, they starve us, our children and our families to death- they deserve what our class brothers and sisters did in Kyrgyzstan. Facing the 200% increase of the basic products and the services, they paralyzed the country with strikes, barricades, picket lines and fighting in the streets. They disarmed the murderous police when they repressed, kicking out the government of the starvation and slavery, demolishing the institutions of the exploiters.

-Labour aristocracy and bureaucracy out of our organizations! For workers' democracy! Bourgeois state and its regulations on the unions out of the workers organizations! The only aim of the state of the exploiters and their laws is to corrupt the workers' leaders with crumbs, in exchange for misery and the worst attacks against the large majority of the workers.

Bureaucrats out of the workers organizations! They, as the Stalinist bureaucracy, have sold out the gains of the former workers states to the world economy, becoming a new exploiting class!

Castroite restorationist bureaucracy out of Cuba! It has strangled the workers and peasants revolution in Latin America, made an agreement with Obama for subordinating the US working class, and now it is preparing to take new steps in the capitalist restoration in the island!

-Close to our shores, less than a year ago, the workers and peasants in Madagascar have staged an uprising. They, organized together with the soldiers' committees that refused to repress the people, knocked the hatred government of Ravalomanana down. They caused the whole bourgeoisie and the exploiters of our continent to tremble. All the forces of the bourgeois parties, of the imperialist powers, as well as that cynical "African Union" which is a ministry of colonies, came out to fence that heroic revolution that had started, in which Rajoelina and the rest of the bosses, servants of the French imperialism, put themselves on top of it to try expropriating and blocking it from developing.

Subordinating us country by country to our own bourgeoisies, so far they have prevented us to fight and take decisive steps as our class brothers in Madagascar did.

Rajoelina out! French and US imperialism out of Madagascar, South Africa and the entire Southern Africa! We must break the fence that the Stalinists, reformists and all kinds of agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement have imposed to the masses in Madagascar, the same that they have imposed in Zimbabwe and in every decisive fight by subordinating the proletariat to the bourgeoisie! Enough is enough! We must break with the bourgeoisie! One single class, one single fight in the whole Southern Africa!

As we say in this manifesto, it is about uniting the whole working class in the entire Southern Africa in a big workers' congress supported by the poor peasants and soldiers, which will have the honour of set a chair to their class brothers and sisters of Madagascar, so that they can spark the flames of revolution over the whole Africa for the victory of the proletarian revolution and the defeat of imperialism. Workers, unemployed, revolutionary students, poor peasants, rank and file soldiers, from across the region need to send delegates to such Workers Congress.

Long live the revolution in Kyrgyzstan! Long live the revolution in Madagascar! Long live the general strike in Greece! That's the way to achieve victory in the entire Southern Africa that the International Leninist Trotskyist Fraction (FLT) is proposing, while fighting for re-founding the world party of the whole working class, the Fourth

International! The Stalinists and reformists want us to believe that our strength is in the unity with the bourgeois parties, with the lackey bourgeoisie, with the NGO's which, from the UN and the imperialist powers, corrupt the working class and a small sector of their ranks to sell out our struggles. No more! Our strength is in the unity of the African working class with the working class of USA and Europe!

In 1886 the militant workers of the First International, led by the US working class rose up for a 40 hour week; some were executed for their actions, but the uprising sparked the resistance that is continuing on a world scale today. Many workers have conquered even a 35 hour week. We call on the workers in the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, to rise against your own imperialist who are today plundering China, Africa, Latin America. To free Zimbabwe the working class needs to take power into its hands in Southern Africa. Forward to a federation of Soviet Socialist republics in Central (Sub-Saharan) and Southern Africa.

This goes hand in hand with the struggle for a Soviet USA, Soviet UK, Soviet France, Soviet Germany and Soviet Japan, otherwise we shall forever be in chains.

The working class have already taken steps to establish that unity by taking the lead in the fight of the strike across borders in Europe, called by the migrant workers committees, led by African workers. There our strength is! For the international unity of the working class! No more subordination of the exploited to their executioners! The water and fire don't mix! One class, One struggle, One revolution! Together at once!

The solution - ONE revolution!

Political Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist League-FI (Zimbabwe)

Political Committee of Workers International Vanguard League (South Africa)

Comprising together the African Secretariat of the FLTI

Supported by the International Co-ordination Secretariat of the FLTI

28.4. 2010

The Internationale [variant words in square brackets]

Arise ye workers [starvelings] from your slumbers
Arise ye prisoners of want
For reason in revolt now thunders
And at last ends the age of cant.
Away with all your superstitions
Servile masses arise, arise
We'll change henceforth [forthwith] the old tradition [conditions]
And spurn the dust to win the prize.

So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.
So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.

No more deluded by reaction
On tyrants only we'll make war
The soldiers too will take strike action
They'll break ranks and fight no more
And if those cannibals keep trying
To sacrifice us to their pride
They soon shall hear the bullets flying
We'll shoot the generals on our own side.

No saviour from on high delivers
No faith have we in prince or peer
Our own right hand the chains must shiver
Chains of hatred, greed and fear
E'er the thieves will out with their booty [give up their booty]
And give to all a happier lot.
Each [those] at the forge must do their duty
And we'll strike while the iron is hot.

Working conditions in the Zimbabwean food sector

2010-05-10

The United Food and Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe is a registered trade union representing employees in the food manufacturing industries. The industry employees approximately over 30 000 workers, covering Milling, Brewing, Sweets and Confectionary, Meat and Fish, Baking, Detergents, Sugar Refining and Food Processing subsectors. The food industry was the most hard hit due to the socio-economic and political crisis prevailing in Zimbabwe that saw multinationals moving their businesses to neighbouring countries mainly South Africa, where today our brothers and sisters are subjected to slave-like working conditions.

After the signing of the GPA (Global Political Agreement) last year by three political parties, everyone had hoped 2010 would be a better year. Dollarisation (use of multi-currency) also brought some stability in the prices of goods and services. It was also the end of speculation in the economy. With all these “positives” the food sector workers including the civil servants expected salary increments / adjustments of near or above Poverty Datum Line(PDL) which is above USD500-00 per month. But that was not to be, as both the government and the private sector cited lack of financial liquidity in the economy, with the Ministry of Finance even saying “do workers expect me squeeze money out of stone”. It was also gloomy in the Food sector as everyone expected the government to lead the way – by increasing civil servants salaries. As negotiations between civil servants and government stalled, Food sector workers had no option but to ignore this and concentrate with their negotiations. The employers wanted negotiations to be done yearly instead of quarterly, which was the norm because of inflation. They argued that since there was some stability within the economy negotiations should revert to yearly, a proposal which the unionists successfully opposed, arguing that the political environment is still uncertain; the principals of the political parties in government are still engaged in a seemingly needless discussion over the so-called outstanding issues. It was therefore agreed that negotiations would be every six months.

The employers cited low capacity utilisation coupled with high bills from service providers notably ZESA (electricity), City Council and TelOne [one of the private cellphone companies used, as the national telephone company has long ago been collapsed by the capitalists and their manager Mugabe–Ed] as a reason to refuse workers a living wage / salary or even one that is equivalent to the poverty datum line. The employers accused the government of not supporting them (financially) to raise production levels. They said they are operating below 25% of capacity. Thus they argued that unless the government intervenes (financially) and as long as they are operating below 60% they would not be able to pay anything nearer to the poverty datum line as they will be operating at a loss.

After a series of meetings the employers (Milling, Sugar, Baking, Brewing, Food Processing and Meat, Fish and Poultry industries) awarded a minimum basic wage of USD157, transport USD 13 and housing allowance of USD43-00. The agreement is for January 2010 – June 2010. The basic pay is far from the poverty datum line and far from even meeting the most basic needs of the worker like shelter and food. Besides, the workers have no fixed pay date – workers at times get their meagre wage / salary way after the due date, commonly referred as the 40th. This attitude has created bitter tension between lodgers with their landlords who are demanding rentals on the due date (month-end). Shockingly there are some greedy employers who want to super-exploit the worker, who are refusing to comply even with the minimal agreements – which, in the absence of collective action, workers accept. Some of these employers seem to abuse their political position to attack the workers. An

example is the David Govere-owned Downings (Super Bake) Bakeries , which is leading the companies that are refusing to comply; it appears this parasite is immune to prosecution as during the ZimDollar era he could willy-nilly deny workers their dues. Meanwhile majority of the subsectors have concluded their negotiations with some resolved by arbitration. Below we give the minimums of each sector. The amounts are in USDollars.

Milling (industry)	162-00 (basic wage)	33-00 (accomodation)	15-00
(transport)	Negotiation council		
Brewing			
Food Processing	213-00	arbitration	
Meat, Fish and Poultry	152-95	40-00	22-00 Resolved by 3rd arbitrator
Baking	157-00	43-00	13-00 Negotiation council
Sugar Refining			
Sweet and Confectionery	155-00	38-00	20-00 Negotiation council

Two major subsectors still negotiating are Brewing and Sugar Refinery. These subsectors have three big companies namely Delta Beverage, African Distillers(Brewing) and Gold Star (Sugar Refinery). It is surprising that these companies are backtracking, paying their employees relatively attractive salaries commensurate with the brisk business they are making. After dollarization of the economy which has legalized companies to trade in any currency but mainly USD, ZAR and Botswana Pula these companies have hugely increased their business. Delta has improve its technology setting up state of the art high speed machines which is said to produce many more litres per day. The same with sugar, it is in high demand yet they are refusing to pay the creators of their super profits a meaningful wage / salary. While these sectors are at loggerheads other sectors have resumed preparations for the June / July / August increments. The average minimum wage / salary of USD200-00 is far less the minimum amount a family of five can survive with. The insane government instead continues to tax the pittance leaving the worker with anything but an empty envelope. Nowadays some employers won't put the money in the envelope as the paper in some instance is more expensive than what the employer puts inside. This is happening when we have an 'inclusive' government. A government we have some high expectations in. The leaders of both political parties promised us heaven the sooner they create a government of national unity. Yet one year down the line the living and working conditions of the worker are worse than before.

The United Food and Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe (UFAWUZ) believe the strength of the workers is in their Unity. Therefore in pursuant and in realisation of that goal (unity of the world working class) we resolved to reactivate our discussions with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions for readmission. A discussion we believe would be guided by the desire, to see a united Zimbabwe, Africa and world working class.

Editorial Comment

Dear comrades

Thank you for your letter, we have read with interest the contents and the concerns you raised. Comrade our advice is very simple; firstly we wish to remind you of the power you (the workers) possess, the power capable to smash and break the chains of bondage you are subjected to by your respective employers, champions of capitalism. We are concerned with the illusions you have that your employer(s) can give you a "fair" wage / salary without a fight. You also believe arbitrators can award in favour of you (the worker). As you can see from the above table, the arbitrator simply sit down, look at other subsector's minimas and play with figures – only and only that – nothing else and you pay him whatever you paid. Easy money (for the

arbitrator) isn't it? if this is what you have been expecting (the % awarded) too then you could have just argued on your own, based on the agreements of other industries – simple. By referring the deadlock to the arbitrator you relinquish your power and your means of fighting. The employers though they pretend not interested in arbitration it is just a rhetoric as they are always for the legal route which ultimately rules in their favour. Their argument, the argument you seem to agree with; lack of financial liquidity, high bills etc, is nonsensical. Why do they want to show the expenditure side of the balance sheet only? Demand a complete balance sheet, a balance sheet with the income and expenditure side, and an independent audit. How much are they paying themselves etc. You will be shocked to see that what you are asking, which they are refusing to give you, is just one tenth of what they spend as top management allowances. They want assistance from the government, yet they refuse price controls, developmental projects or developing the communities they expropriate the wealth from. Comrades, the companies are making super profits because they super-exploit us. The point is they create conditions which allows them free labour like what they are doing to our class brothers and sisters after Zanu(PF) and MDC the servants of capitalism-imperialism closed the companies, they had to go to South Africa in search of jobs.

To end hunger and misery, like what we said in our May Day statement, we need to do what our class brothers and sisters did in Greece, Madagascar, Kyrgyzstan. As long as we put our faith in the elites or the bourgeois political parties whose anti-working class, anti-poor students policies have caused untold sufferings to the majority poor workers our demand for real democratic demands; a living wage / salary, free quality education to our childrens, food, land, jobs etc will be never be achieved. We need to break yesterday with these policies and fight for a working class agenda. We request you to read / study our May Day statement.

We therefore pose the following proposal;

- Formation of defence committees in every factories and in every worker neighbourhood involving the unemployed, retrenchees, pensioners – to defend against retrenchments, dismissals, short-time work scheme, victimisation of workers' leaders, staggering of wages / salaries, wage / salary freeze, slave like wage / salaries, evictions and against power and water disconnections.
- Formation of strike / factory committee whose task is to gather demands of the workers and discuss them on labour forums.
- Occupy factories and chase away bosses who do not want to comply with CBA. Our class brothers and sisters in China killed the Chief Executive Officer when he came to announce that the company was going to retrench 25 000 of 30 000 workers. Workers took turns to smash his head, they occupied the factory and the nearest highways and the retrenchment was stopped. Long live the Tongva struggle – this is the way to deal with irrational bosses. Or what our class brothers did in Greece, facing massive attacks by bosses the called for a general strike and paralyzed the country. Workers and soldiers did the same in Madagascar and recently in Kyrgyzstan. In South Africa the racist leader was killed over a labour dispute. Here at home our class brothers and sisters did it at Air Zimbabwe, they invaded the office of senior puppets (management) of the airways demanding what is over due to them. Long lives the Air Zimbabwe workers struggle – we must support their fight as their victory has a positive precedent to our class fights. This is the way to achieve our transitional demands; (decent wage / salary, job security, sharing of available work without loss of wage / salary, avoid staggering of our wage / salary, have a definite pay date, shelter, electricity, water, free quality education. We do not reconcile with imperialism, we have to fight for our survival. As opposed to negotiate every 6 months, we need to fight for wages to increase whenever prices increase, otherwise we are tying workers to reduce their wages;
- Join the ZCTU, we agree, but take in the fight to break with the bourgeoisie and their parties such as the MDC; the above demands could only achieved when the

workers (the unemployed and employed) are united and organised in an independent movement controlled by the rank and files – the operating word is collectivism. There is no room for wealth seekers nor counterrevolutionaries. Let's go back to 1996, 7, 8 and 1999 years' spirit of struggle, the struggle in defence against unemployment, retrenchment, casualisation, labour broking(sub-contracting, now referred to as a necessary evil by employers), short-time work scheme etc; otherwise we would capitulate to the pro-imperialist ZCTU bureaucracy.

* Dollarization of the economy shows us who was behind the collapse of the economy; it was US imperialism; they have turned Zimbabwe into their direct colony; the dollar is a worthless piece of paper, less value than the zimdollar at its worst point; what gives the US dollar its 'value' is the violence and threat of violence by the hundreds of US military bases around the world; when Obama bails out Goldman Sachs bank, it has to be paid from somewhere; and it is paid by our blood and sweat; Anglo American and other US monopolies take out billions of dollars in wealth while we live in absolute poverty; we must end this system that subsidizes the US capitalists and the labour aristocracy by calling on workers in the US and UK to rise up and overthrow the gangster regimes of JP Morgan and HSBC. we will only succeed in breaking free from poverty levels if this happens; we need to challenge all worker organizations to call a national workers congress, with delegates from all workplaces, with delegates from the poor peasantry, from the unemployed, from the revolutionary students and from the rank and file soldiers, to prepare the fight for an emergency workers plan. We need workers and soldiers delegates from Madagascar and from the region to be invited as well; we are all exploited by the same imperialism.

– in general a fight against poverty and misery. Organise or starve!



Anti-Israel demonstration in Italy

David Whitehead Textiles- the workers struggle intensifies

The remaining workers of DWT, not affected by the retrenchment exercise, are on the streets, joining their colleagues already retrenched but who had not yet been paid their packages. The fate of the retrenched workers is before arbitration (24.05.10 but postponed again). Workers are hoping to gain the legal right to attach the assets of the company in lieu of unpaid wages. The employer has not paid wages / salaries since March 2010 to those workers still at work and owes the retrenched workers wages since early 2009. Meanwhile the employer with the able assistance of the state is moving ahead with asset stripping exported as scrap metal to South Africa. He is also suing the workers for alleged assault, despite having had the case thrown out of court; he is assisted by his friend, a Zanu-PF cabinet minister.

The workers have vowed to continue the strike until the employer has paid them "give to Spartacus what belongs to Spartacus" is the slogan. However, the challenge is some elements of the retrenched workers, drunk with individualistic poison (yet to be paid their terminal packages) are refusing to unite with their colleagues - striking workers. They are jealously guarding the empty promise by the employer that they will get a massive payouts as retrenchment packages, hence the fear that if the number increases, so is the small amount it become. After some meetings with the workers, they are now united and face the bosses as a single united fist.

We cannot depend on the courts to rule for workers to take over the company but workers have to take steps to take over their own blood and sweat, with working class methods. This will open the path for the entire working class to follow suit.

Workers self-defence of their gains is very important as we cannot expect the bosses to give up without recourse to their friends in the Zanu-PF-MDC regime.

Wynns factory to close

After retrenching 300 workers when Woolworths unilaterally ended a 25 year contract, the rest of the workers are to be dismissed after it emerged that the Wynns company is now to close; while workers have now finally received retrenchment letters, the promise of future employment has proven to be a lie; the bloodbath of mass dismissals in the clothing and textile companies continues unabated; this is despite having an ex-clothing union leader, Ebrahim Patel, as the Minister of Economic Development. The current immediate prospect is that all uniforms for soldiers and public sector workers will now be made for direct profit by US imperialism, using Chinese slave labour. What is needed is a movement for workers to occupy and take over the companies that are closing; we need, now more than ever, an emergency workers summit, uniting workers from all workplaces, with delegates from the unemployed, from the rank and file soldiers, to call a general strike, to unite all sectors in struggle, for work for all; setting up workers fighting committees in all workplaces, with councils of workers delegates in all industrial areas and in all working class neighbourhoods. Let us expropriate all banks and other imperialist assets, without compensation, under workers control! Let us invite worker delegates from across the region, including the heroic workers and peasants from Madagascar. Forward to a federation of Soviet states of sub-Saharan and southern Africa! Let us also call for the workers in the imperialist centres and in China to rise up against their butcher regimes!