

GENERAL COUNCIL

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Declaration on the crises, reactionary upsurge and risks and potentials of the current situation.



World Federation of Democratic Youth
Federación Mundial de la Juventud Democrática
Fédération Mondiale de la Jeunesse Démocratique



WORLD FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC YOUTH FEDERACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA JUVENTUD DEMOCRÁTICA FÉDÉRATION MONDIALE DE LA JEUNESSE DÉMOCRATIQUE

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Declaration on the crises, reactionary upsurge and risks and potentials of the current situation

General Council of the World Federation of Democratic Youth

May 2023

Introduction

1. The World Federation of Democratic Youth, gathered in May 2023 in Cuba, has held a new meeting of its General Council expressing once again our long-standing internationalist solidarity with the Cuban people, youth and its Revolution and denouncing all the imperialist aggressions they suffer, particularly the unacceptable blockade by US imperialism. We would like to thank the militant work and hospitality of the host organisation, the Communist Youth Union (UJC) of Cuba. After having deepened on the issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the incurable contradictions of capitalism and crises, the reconfiguration of the world, the imperialist aggressions and the struggle of the anti-imperialist youth in the last General Council held in Lebanon in December 2022, and reaffirming the validity of those analyses, we now face the need to continue deepening the analyses on the situation of the youth throughout the world and to struggle for our rights to education, employment, health, culture, housing, freedom and peace, this is, for a new world free of exploitation and any kind of oppression.

2. As we analysed in the Political Resolution of the last General Council, capitalism in its imperialist stage is immersed in incurable contradictions and crises. It is in this framework –and, therefore, where they are looking to maintain and even increase the rate of profit– that we must frame the imperialist forces such as the USA, the EU and NATO seeking to maintain their dominance in the current escalation of imperialist tensions, aggressions, occupation and wars over the redistribution of the world and natural resources, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, the increase in the exploitation and oppression of the working class and its youth through the attack on –direct and indirect– wages and on the political, social and labour rights.

3. As we said in the previous General Council, in which we focused on the analysis of this escalation of tensions at the global level, "in recent years, we have witnessed the consolidation of the reconfiguration of the world with major changes and the emergence of new regional and international forces, some of them not aligned with the imperialist interests of the USA, the European Union and NATO. Today, the conflicts we can observe around the world are an aggressive manifestation of the incurable contradictions of capitalism, in which the ruling classes and monopolies seek at all costs to increase



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their profits and power while others are emerging to question their supremacy. The conflicts for spheres of influence, market shares, raw materials, energy plans and transport routes, and the ecological, resource and waste crisis exacerbate this scenario". "It is clear that this concern with strengthening the USA, the EU and NATO is due to the emergence of new regional and international forces and the establishment of new commercial, political, economic and military alliances non-aligned with their interests that objectively question their supremacy at the global level". This reconfiguration has continued to deepen in recent months, with a major impact on the different regions of the world and ushering in what has come to be known as a "multipolar world". We denounce any imperialist war while the possibility of a wider war is growing as one consequence of the loss of the imperialist dominance of the USA, the EU and NATO. Nowadays, the struggle for lasting peace and disarmament assumes redoubled importance, against the ongoing warmongering and militaristic escalation promoted by imperialism. It is urgent to reinforce the struggle for the dissolution and the right for disengagement of imperialist alliances such as the EU and NATO, as well as to continue the solidarity with people who are victims of imperialist aggression, interference or blockades.

Risks and potentials of the incurable contradictions of capitalism and crises

4. The capitalist offensive –that is being deployed globally against the peoples, the working class and its youth– has a double function: on the one hand, to maintain and even increase the rate of profit in the current context in which capital is finding it increasingly difficult to valorise itself; and on the other hand, to take political advantage of the gaps they create among the working class and its youth to disarticulate it and prevent its unity and solidarity both nationally and globally.

5. Today, the capitalist offensive is affecting every aspect of our daily life by the sharpening of antagonisms. The young workers are facing the intensification of exploitation, the increase of poverty, inequality and unemployment, job insecurity, intensive and unregulated working hours, low wages and being forced to migrate in search of better living conditions. The inflation and the rising costs of food, energy, lodgement, etc., even if it is affecting differently in each country and popular strata, are sharpening the contradictions between classes. Young students are facing the privatization and commodification of national educational systems. On the one hand, this implies a rise in the costs and even the financial expulsion of the students of workers' strata. On the other hand, especially –but not only– in universities and research centres, is strengthening education as a tool for their ideological and economic objectives. Finally, the capitalist offensive also expresses itself through the attack and repression by the capitalist states against workers', peoples' and youth movements. They seek to limit



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the struggle of youth, either by illegalizing or restricting the organisations that oppose it, or by launching powerful campaigns by the mass media or the educational systems, through the re-writing of history, whitewashing the consequences of imperialism and promoting its "values", such as competition and individualism. This upsurge, along with the limitation of access to culture, sports or leisure, has profound impacts on young people's mental health and aims to break the unity of the youth.

6. As we have seen throughout history, capitalist crises are scenarios that either hold the potential for the working class and its youth to become conscious, raise social awareness and organise mass struggles, demonstrations, and fight for independence from the capitalists for the emancipation through revolutionary processes; or, on the contrary, for reactionary projects to emerge as the last lifeline of the ruling classes to reproduce this exploitative and oppressive system. However, the sharpening of the miseries we experience in our daily lives, our exploitation and all kinds of oppression themselves will not mechanically bring about this consciousness-raising. It is at this point that the imperialist aggressions and escalation of reactionary projects that we are experiencing make sense, in which the rights of the youth are compromised and discrimination and oppression –based on gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, of the most impoverished and excluded sectors, and so on– are becoming more acute.

7. In this framework, Nazi-Fascism, which is the long arm of the capitalist system, is used. Fascism is an expression of capitalism. It appears widely in periods of economic crises when the contradictions of the system become more evident and the class struggle intensifies. Moreover, it means that the ruling class cannot control through the existing parliamentary ways and thus relies on these powers –which are criminal or even military and paramilitary organisations– in fighting the popular, workers' and youth movements struggles.

8. For us, the anti-imperialist youth, the analysis of the increasing fascism, the reactionary upsurge and discrimination and oppression must be understood as a part of capitalism. Therefore, only a total struggle against capitalism in its imperialist stage will be able to put an end to it. To oppose the rise of reactionary projects and the sharpening of discrimination and oppression shall not be a mere slogan. Today, they are playing –or may come to play– a crucial role, especially in the context of the incurable contradictions of capitalism and the crises that we mentioned.

9. So, on the one hand, fascist and reactionary projects and their defence of discrimination and oppression fulfil a key economic function that allows the capitalists to justify the increase of exploitation. The reality is that capitalism functions by limiting job opportunities because there is constant competition between different strata of capitalists. This competition increases levels of exploitation,



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extending to areas such as housing, medicine, education, and other fundamental necessities that are not provided to all members of society equally by capitalism. Exploitation can also be seen by decreasing the direct wages, decreasing or even denying them indirect wages (for example, denying them access to public services), imposing longer working hours, promoting job insecurity, etc. This payment of labour force sometimes even at levels below those necessary for its reproduction allows, on the one hand, to increase capitalist profits, and on the other hand, to act as a tool of the capitalists to put downward pressure on the living conditions of the whole working class and its youth. Thus, the rise of the reactionary project and discriminations and oppressions serve as a tool of capitalism in its imperialist stage in the face of the crises to try to maintain and even increase the rate of profit at the expense of the working class and its youth.

10. The discriminations and oppressions of specific sectors of the working class do not happen by chance, nor by tradition, culture, or the concurrence of an abstract "hate". Wage differentials, the double burden in salaried and domestic labour, as well as sexist violence and prostitution are some specific and recognisable examples of the discrimination and oppression to which women and LGBT people are subjected. In the same way, work without a contract, limitation to manual or care work, non-recognition of their studies, racial profiling used by the repressive forces of states or deportations and persecution at borders as expressions of xenophobia and racism are some specific and recognisable examples of the discrimination and oppression to which migrants are subjected. All these expressions of oppression find their functionality in capitalism either as a way of counteracting the decreasing tendency of the rate of profit and thus securing the profits of the capitalists, or by playing a fundamental role in the reproduction of the labour force.

11. On the other hand, the discriminations and oppressions of specific sectors of the working class and its youth also have a political-ideological function in the current capitalist offensive. Today, discrimination and oppression are being used as a weapon to prevent the unity of the joint struggle for emancipation and the construction of a fair society. Thereby, reactionary projects serve to confront the working class and its youth through the criminalisation of precariousness and of this excluded, discriminated and oppressed workers based on gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, and so on, and even presenting them as the culprits of the crises and, in that way, redirecting popular frustration towards them rather than the system itself. Likewise, segregation of the migrant working class plays a key role in pitting it against the native working class and preventing its unity. The reactionary projects are a divisive force, as they propose a false alliance of the ruling classes with the better-off sectors of the working class against the most discriminated and oppressed as a supposed



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way to overcome the capitalist crises, thus pitting the working class against each other and dismantling any revolutionary project that questions the real root of the problem.

12. In conclusion, the reactionary upsurge, far from representing an anomaly of capitalism, is its consequence and a necessity when crises become more acute. The frustration of the working class and its youth can serve as a breeding ground for dragging various sectors into reactionary positions, seeking blame for their dashed dream in other sectors of the working class that are more discriminated or oppressed, or, if anything, in a supposed "elite" or "conspiracy" from which reactionaries and chauvinists promise to save them. In other words, the reactionary upsurge is nothing more than one of the logical consequences of the failure of the proposals for the "humanisation" of capitalism in its imperialist phase.

The role of the anti-imperialist youth at this juncture

13. The anti-imperialist youth, committed to the struggle against exploitation and all kinds of oppression as part of a total struggle for the overthrowing of capitalism in its imperialist stage, assumes the need to mobilize the youth for their rights. We condemn all kinds of discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, and so on. If we want to take advantage of the potentialities and possibilities that this juncture can generate, we must mobilize the youth, promote the mass struggle, build unity and reinforce the broad anti-imperialist front for the overthrowing of capitalism in its imperialist stage, which the World Federation of Democratic Youth is, within the youth, its most important expression.

14. Thus, although reactionary projects and oppressions and discriminations can take specific forms in each country and/or region, there are common determinations, yearnings and demands shared by all anti-imperialist youth throughout the world that must guide our struggle.

15. The first is that, taking into account the analysis of the reactionary projects and the discriminations and oppressions as part of capitalism, we can only understand the struggle against them as part of the struggle against capitalism in its imperialist stage. Because, wherever capitalism continues to reproduce itself, they will keep existing.

16. This statement, although it may seem self-evident, becomes essential to make clear in a context in which manoeuvres are also taking place to dismantle any revolutionary approach in the struggle against reactionary projects and discrimination and oppression.



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17. On the one hand, with the manoeuvres that many sectors of the monopolies and companies are deploying either to commodify the struggle against any discrimination and oppression –as they do with the struggle for protecting the environment–, turning it into new market niches, or to whitewash their exploitative and oppressive role with a false commitment to these struggles and thus try to present themselves as "respectable capitalists".

18. This exercise of whitewashing is not only carried out by the monopolies, but also by the capitalist states to establish a false categorisation between "respectable" and "non-respectable" capitalist states, and "democratic" or "non-democratic". A paradigmatic example of this is the pinkwashing that is consistently carried out by the Zionist occupation forces as a smokescreen to cover up the occupation and aggression against Palestine, its people and its youth; or the war propaganda of the EU, the USA and NATO, by which they try to justify their imperialist aggressions as a supposed defence of their "values" against alleged external aggressors who "deny" them.

19. On the other hand, it is important to highlight the relation of these struggles with the anti-imperialist struggle, against the many approaches that hope to provide a solution to the discriminations and oppressions in the current framework of capitalism in its imperialist stage, connecting with the historical longing to be able to "humanise" it. This is particularly worrying assuming that we run the risk that this awakening of consciousness can therefore be channelled by those political representatives who aspire to reform barbarism and who try to limit the struggle against discrimination to the ever narrower limits of capitalism. Neither redistribution nor recognition will solve the problem of discrimination and oppression.

20. However, the need for the anti-imperialist youth to struggle against discrimination and oppression is not only to avoid such risks. If we demand this total struggle against capitalism in its imperialist stage, it is because the anti-imperialist struggle that does not include the struggle against all discrimination and oppression can never be revolutionary as it does not include the emancipation of the working class as a whole. The struggle against the criminalisation of precariousness and excluded, discriminated and oppressed workers based on gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, and so on, as part of the total struggle against capitalism in its imperialist stage is indispensable to guarantee the universal character of our struggle and to guarantee the emancipation of the working class and its youth and the end of exploitation and oppression. This is, to guarantee the emancipation of the working class and its youth, overthrowing the exploitation and oppression by revolutionary means.

21. That is why, to articulate this struggle against discrimination and oppression as part of our anti-imperialist struggle, we must articulate it in a double sense. On the one hand, as it could not be



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otherwise, it must take place through mass work among the young workers and students in the sense mentioned above.

22. On the other hand, we cannot forget that this struggle appeals to us as anti-imperialist youth. Today, even if the discriminations and oppressions are due to capitalism in its imperialist stage, end up permeating society as a whole. We are at the forefront of cultivating respect, collectivity, and solidarity regardless of gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, religion, language or any other personal traits. We are building a real shield of protection for every human being who suffers multiple forms of violence and discrimination, against the rotten values of individualism, competition, selfish lifestyles, and individual arrogance fostered by the rotten system of exploitation, oppression and social discrimination.

23. In conclusion, the General Council of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, meeting in Cuba in May 2023, reaffirms its commitment to struggle against the barbarism of capitalism in its imperialist stage. Faced with the incurable contradictions of capitalism and crises and the offensive that looms over the working class and its youth, we take up this challenge knowing the enormous challenge that this means for the working class and its youth. Our fight is against the cause of social discrimination by struggling for a world that can allow people to create, live, and progress. We will not cease until we finally build the world we have dreamed of and fought for, that is, a world of social justice and lasting peace, free of exploitation and any kind of oppression.