

Immediate withdrawal of all Russian troops from Ukraine. Stand up against all imperialisms

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On 24 February Russian troops crossed the border and invaded Ukraine. In the West as well as in the East, it was anticipated that the war would last only a few hours and would end with the total crushing of Ukraine and the enslavement of the Ukrainian people. However, in the one hundred days that have passed since then, it has been shown that the military supremacy and the incomparable superiority of the military machine of Russian imperialism were not sufficient to curb the most crucial factor in this conflict, which had been so badly underestimated from the outset, not only by the enemies, but also by the supposed friends (the Western governments): That is, the determination of the Ukrainian popular masses to defy all military and geopolitical “predictions” and “analyses” and to fight to protect their homes, their families, their cities and the independence of their country.

From the first hours of the Russian invasion, the entire Ukrainian society with its civil organizations began to mobilize. Trade unions, civil rights organisations, organisations defending the rights of ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ and feminist organisations, as well as left-wing and anti-authoritarian collectives, mobilised from the very first moment to help in all ways to organise the resistance and to staff the territorial defence forces.

On the other hand, it was clear from the outset that within Russian society, too, this war could not be accepted. Anti-war demonstrations in Russian cities and the disobedience of Russian soldiers at the front are frequent phenomena which, despite the brutal repression by a regime that has become a brutal dictatorship, continue to manifest themselves and could become widespread, fuelled by the victories of the Ukrainian resistance.

The governments of the NATO countries from the very first moment of the war condemned the Russian invasion, declared that they would help Ukraine and imposed sanctions against Russia. In reality, however, it is easy to see their real intentions and the imperialist interests of the Western countries that are currently at stake in the war in Ukraine. What the Western governments have really sought from the very first moment and with much greater intensity and cynicism today - as long as the Ukrainian resistance prolongs the war - is a diplomatic “settlement”, without Ukraine and at the expense of Ukraine, with the cession of Ukrainian territories to Russia, in order to end a war which is causing global instability, which is also destructive to the interests of Western imperialism. And thus to reopen the door to the cooperation between Western imperialism and Russian imperialism, a cooperation which, only a few days before being disrupted by the war in Ukraine, could easily have led both sides to an agreement on the bloody repression of the workers’ uprising in Kazakhstan.

This is why, from the very beginning of the war, NATO countries systematically refused (and

continue to refuse) to provide Ukraine with the kind of military armaments that could allow the Ukrainian resistance to win. The scale of the Ukrainian resistance, but also the extent of the crimes and destruction committed by Russian imperialism, would be enough to convince even the most naive on the Western left who have accepted Putin's argument, that the real aims of Russian imperialism are neither the "denazification" of Ukraine, nor the "protection" of Russian-speaking Ukrainians, nor "defence" against the NATO "surrounding". Putin's real aims are the seizure of Ukrainian territory, the transformation of the country into a Russian protectorate ruled by a dictatorial regime established by the Kremlin, and the complete enslavement of the Ukrainian people, who would be deprived of basic democratic rights and their right to national self-determination.

However, the reality is that the majority of the Western left still today refuses to stand in solidarity with the just struggle of the Ukrainian people, refuses to condemn the crimes of Russian imperialism, or, worse still, justifies or even supports the Russian imperialist invasion of Ukraine. Often using the appeal for peace as a fig leaf, it calls on the Ukrainian people to stop fighting, or denies them the right to arm themselves to face an enemy far more powerful in military terms. What fails to be understood by this left that insists on being outraged only by the crimes of NATO imperialism is that the struggle against imperialism is global and transcends the lines that delimit the rival imperialist formations. The task of the left should be to coordinate these struggles in the perspective of the global emancipation of all the oppressed, not to divide their struggles along the lines of imperialist interests and antagonisms. In fact, this undermines any possibilities that might exist for organising resistance against the enemy that the Western left seeks to fight, namely Euro-Atlantic imperialism. For only the crushing of Russian imperialism by the Ukrainian resistance would show in practice to the peoples, who rightly fear the aggression of Russian imperialism, that their real protection does not lie in joining NATO, but in their own struggles and in international solidarity. The victory of the Ukrainian resistance could inspire other peoples to fight against their own oppressors, in whichever imperialist camp they are in.

That is why we should stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people, who are fighting for their right to live in a country where they can determine the form of their political system, claim their rights and improve their material living conditions. We must stand with particular determination on the side of the organizations of the Ukrainian social and labour movement, which are currently waging a multifaceted struggle, constituting crucial aspects of the Ukrainian resistance, while at the same time fighting against the neoliberal government of Zelensky and the Ukrainian oligarchs, who are trying to put all the burdens of the war on the backs of the working people and take away their conquered rights on the grounds of the war. As well as against nationalism in their own country and against the far-right organizations, raising an internationalist and socialist perspective for the Ukrainian resistance and for the transformation of Ukrainian society.

We should also stand in solidarity with the Russian people who are also suffering at the moment under the iron fist of Putin's dictatorship and support all those and all those who are trying to resist the war machine and the streets of Russian cities, but also on the front.

We invite you to attend the online event organized by the websites elalibertà.gr and "Four" Magazine, entitled "Solidarity with the Ukrainian resistance. Immediate withdrawal of all Russian troops from Ukraine. Fight against all imperialisms", on Sunday, June 19, at 7:00 pm.

Speakers will be:

Daria Saburova, Ukrainian researcher in France, member of the European Network of Solidarity with Ukraine

Ilya Budraitskis, Russian historian, author of the book “Dissidents among Dissidents” (Verso 2022), member of the RCD (Russian socialist movement), creator of the new website “Posle”

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