

Morocco: A football victory does not erase the Hogra

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On Sunday 4 December 2022, a national march was organized in the city of Rabat. This march, which brought together around 3,000 people, had the slogan: "All against the high cost of living, oppression and repression".

It was organized by the National Social Front, which brings together several political, trade union and human rights organizations, to denounce the wave of soaring prices and the regime's repressive escalation against all dissenting voices.

The first march since the covid pandemic

This national march was the first since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, which the authorities took advantage of to ban all forms of collective expression. Participants in the march chanted slogans denouncing the recent attacks on purchasing power and the head of government, the billionaire Aziz Akhenouch, with placards that read: "Akhenouch out".

The structural reasons for the deterioration of the living conditions of the majority of the population are linked to the neo-liberal economic choices that have been adopted by those who have governed our country for decades. The policies of liberalization and privatization, for example, benefit a local elite that revolves around the "palace" and often joins forces with Western multinationals to monopolize territories (water, forests, land, mines, etc.) or the most profitable public enterprises, or even strategic and vital sectors such as water distribution, energy, education or health.

These structural factors are primarily responsible for this situation, as they also limit the state's capacity to cope with economic conditions by constantly reducing the budget for public services and increasing our dependence on food and energy. This increases our fragility in relation to fluctuations in the prices of products that are essential for our people and our economy. Added to this are the effects of drought, which has become more intense and frequent over the last 20 years, in connection with the global ecological crisis and global warming.

The government's response to crises and inequalities: repression

Social inequalities in Morocco are also the highest in the region according to the latest Oxfam reports. Repression appears to be the only response the Moroccan state has to deal with these multiple exacerbated crises. The regime has succeeded in creating a climate of terror where people

are prosecuted and convicted for a simple Facebook post, or even for clicking on the “Like” button.

“Even if a football victory succeeds in making people forget for a few days their terrible living conditions, the feeling of discontent and contempt (Hogra) of the working classes will return.”

Regarding the victory of the national team in the World Cup, the regime has already launched its media machine to make the most of it and promote a so-called national unity and put the masses to sleep. Unfortunately, people today need even an illusory sense of victory given the multiple failures and distress they suffer in all aspects of their daily lives.

But I think that this joy will be ephemeral and that, even if a football victory succeeds in making people forget for a few days their terrible living conditions, the feeling of discontent and contempt (Hogra) of the working classes will return. What we can't predict is when this feeling of discontent will be expressed in collective mobilizations equal to the violence of the attack of the ruling classes.

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Jawad Moustakbal of CADTM Morocco was interviewed by Éric Toussaint.

P.S.

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