

International Committee of the FI

Resolution on Climate Change

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The IC approves the general points of orientation developed by the seminar on climate change organized by the IIRE from 22 to 27 February, 2008:

1. The various capitalist proposals that are under discussion working toward a climate agreement going beyond 2012 (in particular the “climate package” of the European Commission for 2013-2020, the Stern Report, the proposed Warner Lieberman law in the USA) are completely insufficient to avoid a rise in the temperature of the surface of the globe higher than the probable threshold of danger (+2°C compared to the pre-industrial period).
2. There is a criminal cynicism and irresponsibility of the capitalist system and its political representatives of all tendencies who, in spite of scientific evidence that cannot be ignored concerning the acceleration of global warming and its consequences, are endangering the life, the health, the food, the water resources and the jobs of hundreds of millions of human beings, causing irreversible damage to the biosphere. They prefer technologies that are dangerous (nuclear energy), destructive (massive production of biofuels), or derisory - but sometimes fraught with social consequences - (carbon sinks) rather than calling into question the growth of capital and the race for profits.
3. A positive world movement of struggle for the climate has emerged, concretized in particular by the demonstrations of December 2006 and 2007 in London, June 2007 in the Spanish State (“day of the sun”) and November 2007 in Australia, and in a general way, by the action of the Global Climate Campaign - an example to be followed, in particular within the framework of the two years of negotiations that are supposed to lead in December 2009 to a new climate treaty.
4. The broadest unity of action is needed, on a worldwide scale, in order to mobilize mass pressure to force governments to act at least in accordance with the three recommendations of the IPCC (1° - the greenhouse gas emissions of the industrialized countries must decrease by between 25 and 40 per cent between now and 2020; 2° - global emissions must culminate in the coming 10 to 15 years; 3° - global emissions must decrease by between 50 and 85 per cent between now and 2050), while simultaneously respecting social and democratic rights as well as the right of everyone to a human existence worthy of the name.
5. Basing ourselves on the need for caution, and taking into account the margins of uncertainty in the projections that have been made using scientific models of the climate, it is essential to fix the objectives of reduction at the higher levels on the scale of recommendations of the IGCC, in order to limit the damage as much as possible—though some damage is unfortunately inevitable due to the fact that global warming is already a reality.
6. There are numerous social movements, contributing to the development of an alternative to capitalist productivism (fighting in particular against oil and gas exploitation, for the maintenance of tropical forests, for the rights of traditional communities, for an ecological peasant agriculture, for an alternative policy of waste disposal that prioritises recycling, against the uncontrolled expansion

of road, maritime and air transport, for free quality public transport, for a sober approach to energy use, against the nuclear and armaments industries, against flexibility and the growth of temporary and part-time work, for a rational use of water – and the free access to it as a public good, which not can be privatised –, against advertising and overconsumption, for a non-commodity-oriented sharing of technology and knowledge). These movements should be encouraged to enter directly into the world struggle to save the climate.

7. The fight to defend the climate cannot be won without active participation by the exploited and oppressed who constitute an immense majority of the population. It must, therefore, incorporate their legitimate demands and social aspirations, in particular concerning employment and social protection. Particular attention should be paid to the participation of workers' and peasants' organizations, of the women's movement, of indigenous communities, of popular organizations for defence of the environment, as well as young people and marginalised social layers, so that their demands influence the objectives and the forms of action.

8. We reject capitalist recipes (markets in pollution rights, carbon taxes, "clean" investments that generate carbon credits, subsidies to companies, subordination of research to capitalist interests, dismantling of social protection and of regulations of all kinds...). Both in the fight against climate change and in efforts to adapt to its effects, such measures inevitably reinforce imperialist domination along with capitalist competition and violence, and therefore also exploitation, oppression, competition between workers, violation of rights and the stranglehold of the ruling class on all conditions of life.

9. Nuclear energy, for many reasons (in particular the absence of solutions for disposal of waste, the link with military industries and the risk of proliferation, weak energy efficiency, a mediocre carbon balance sheet on the level of the entire process, an extreme centralization which is the opposite of decentralization and recovery of heat) does not constitute a defence against climate change. The movement must combat the pressure of the lobbies in favour of the development of this industry.

10. Climate change raises an alarming new and increased threat of wars arising from inter-imperialist and inter-capitalist competition for the control of resources, in particular of the fossil energy resources, as well as in defence of oil rent and other privileges related to it.

11. We reject the rise in certain bourgeois circles of a neo-Malthusian ideology based on a barbarian and sabre-rattling capitalist management of the climate crisis—to the detriment of the poorest peoples, of the poor generally, of the working class, of the victims of catastrophes, of those driven to emigrate, and of women in particular.

12. We likewise reject any attempt to impute climate change to demographic growth, particularly in the developing countries. There is an undeniable link between development and demographic transition. We forcefully reaffirm a woman's right to decide to have or not to have children, a right which implies that women have free access to techniques of birth control and to abortion.

13. The developed countries must respond positively to the generous and responsible offer of Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa who, in order to protect biodiversity and contribute to stabilizing the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, proposes not to exploit an important deposit of oil located in the tropical forest in exchange for partial compensation for the loss of revenue for his country. In this context we have also to stress the point, that the industrialized countries of the North have to assume their historic responsibility for the catastrophes, which occur in the countries of the South, caused by Climate Change.

14. Faced with the logic of capitalism, aggravated by neo-liberal policies, it is urgent to develop a

world plan combining an energy revolution (sparing use of resources, increased energy efficiency, abandonment of fossil energy sources in favour of renewable energies—geothermal and solar in its various forms—decentralization, a radical reorganisation of the system of transport of goods and people...) with indispensable measures of adaptation and reconversion, independently of costs and of profit, respecting the equal right of all human beings to consume and emit carbon within the biological and physical limits of the biosphere.

15. The implementation of such a plan requires a break with the logic of growth, with capitalist globalization and consumption (suppression of sectors of activity that are useless or harmful such as armaments and advertising, dismantling the industrial complex based on the use of fossil fuels, retraining of workers and a radical reduction of working time, partial relocation of agricultural production and consumption), the renewal of the public sector, collective ownership of energy resources, a very broad redistribution of wealth between countries and classes (cancellation of the debt of the South, heavy taxation of the profits of the energy sector and of inheritances...) as well as the involvement of the masses through democratic practices of control.

16. The Left, including the Fourth International, is seriously late on the question of the climate. We must, consequently, undertake to follow what is happening concerning the climate and climate policy consistently, through Inprecor and IVP. Sections of the FI need to incorporate this question into their propaganda and activity. We will organize a new climate change seminar in February 2010.

17. The energy/climate crisis makes even more necessary a major redefinition of the socialist project as a global ecosocialist project (incorporating both the satisfaction of real human needs, democratically decided, and the precautionary management of the biosphere). The formation of the international ecosocialist network represents an important step.

18. The next world congress of the International will consider a draft resolution on the fight against climate change, programmatic alternatives, and their implications for the socialist project.