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Contribution to the debate on the Role and Tasks of the FI in the form of amendments

- Documents of the FI - World Congresses - 16th World Congress - 2010 - 16th World Congress Discussion - 2010 -

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These amendments aim to clarify certain points about the role of the Fourth International around the complicated issue of the relationship between our work which necessarily aims at strengthening our influence and our goal to help build new anti-capitalist and revolutionary parties and new regroupings both at European and international levels.

This question cannot be stated in the same terms as in 1992 for two reasons. First, the overall economic, social and political situation is not the same, we must take the measure of the "tipping of the world" to rediscuss our perspectives and our tasks. Then experiences have been made, the results of which oblige us to stress the need for independence from the politics of the old reformist parties and the importance of formulating, advocating and implementing programmatic and strategic orientations in keeping with revolutionary Marxism.

From this perspective, it seems to me that the text does not include the contribution of the battle for the foundation and construction of the NPA enough.

These amendments have no other ambition than to point those questions whose answers can only be written as a collective work, that of the FI through its collaborations, discussions and confrontations as well as with other anti-capitalist and revolutionary currents.

In bold, what is added, italic what is deleted

Part 1. Last paragraph.

In conclusion, the crisis makes obvious the failure of the **bourgeois classes, of their** neoliberal ideology, incapable of offering a solution. All the contradictions inherent to this social system are going to explode without social democracy and the centre left being able to offer an adequate response. Even neo-Keynesian measures, which have not been adopted anyway, would not be enough to resolve the crisis. **Thus, the gap between the rhetoric and pretensions of the ruling classes and the reality of the suffering and tragedies that they impose upon the peoples and workers, the intensification of their pressure on them, create the conditions of exacerbated social tensions and political crisis. Our primary concern is to work for unity to defend the workers' and peoples' rights, to build parties acting in that perspective independently from the institutions.**

Part 3. Last paragraph.

In the context of the chronic crisis of capitalism, the combination of social resistances and this evolution of the apparatuses of the *traditional neoliberal or reformist left open a new space for the radical left* **make necessary and possible for the revolutionaries to carry out a policy combining the research of unity of the anti-neoliberal and anticapitalist forces and our own perspective of a revolutionary transformation of society.** This puts on the agenda the reorganisation and rebuilding of the workers' movement on a new basis that *of anti-capitalism and eco-socialism* **of class independence around the social, democratic, environmental demands of the workers and the lower classes confronted with the global crisis of capitalism.**

Part 5.

This is the aspiration perspective in which the *problems of building the question of the place* of the Fourth International *and in building* new anti-capitalist parties and new international currents *are is posed*. We expressed it in our own way, from 1992 onwards, so in the last two world congresses, with the triptych "New period, new programme, new party", developed in documents of the International. *We confirm the essential of our choices at the last World Congress in 2003 concerning the building of broad anticapitalist parties. The content given to this formula must be enriched by a critical assessment of the different experiences (especially Brazil and Italy) of building broad anti-capitalist parties since our last World Congress in 2003.*

The Fourth International is confronted, in an overall way, with a new phase. **This implies clarifying and redefining its tasks.** Revolutionary Marxist militants, nuclei, currents and organizations must pose the problem of the construction of anti-capitalist, revolutionary political formations, with the perspective of establishing a new independent political representation of the working class **in a context where the global crisis of capitalism gives all its relevance to the project of revolutionary transformation of society.** That is true on the level of each country scale and at an international level. On the basis of the experience of the class struggle, the development of the global justice movement, defensive struggles and anti-war mobilizations over the last ten years, and in particular the lessons drawn from the evolution of the Brazilian PT and of Communist Refoundation in Italy and from the debates of the French anti-liberal left, revolutionary Marxists have engaged in recent years in the building of the PSOL in Brazil, of Sinistra Critica in Italy, of the new anti-capitalist party in France, Respect in England. In this perspective we have continued to build the experiences of the Bloco de Esquerda in Portugal and the Red Green Alliance in Denmark. *The common goal, via different paths, is that of broad anti-capitalist parties. These various attempts to address the crisis of the labor movement can only be successful if we learn the lessons of past failures. Certainly* it is not a question of taking up the old formulas of regroupment or revolutionary currents alone. *The ambition is to bring together forces beyond simply revolutionary ones. These can be a support in the process of brining forces together as long as they are clearly for building anti-capitalist parties. Although* **The objective is to give ourselves the means to contribute to the building of mass parties, tools for the workers' struggles in the perspective of socialism.** There is no model, since each process of coming together takes account of national specificities and relationships of forces, *our goal must thus be to seek to build broad anti-capitalist political forces, independent of social democracy and the centre left, formations which reject any policy of participation or support to class-collaborationist governments, today government with social-democracy and the centre left. It is on the basis of such a perspective that we must be oriented. What we know of the experiences of differentiation and reorganization in Africa and Asia point in the same direction. It is through this process that we can make new advances. It is this question which must form the framework of the next congress of the FI. but the political and programmatic content of our work and involvement in the various processes must be clearly defined: independence from the Social Democrats and the center-left, rejection of any political involvement or support to governments of class collaboration, independence from bourgeois institutions, defence of a policy to respond to the crisis of capitalism challenging capitalist private property and putting forward the nationalization of the financial system under the control of the workers and the population. The reconstruction of the labor movement can only be done by breaking with the policy of class collaboration and compromise of the old reformist parties, the Social Democrats and Stalinists. By participating fully in the various current processes, the sections and activists of the FI give themselves the objective of formulating, both in their daily militant practice and in their political work, the political basis of regrouping in the perspective of building broad parties for the revolutionary transformation of society. It is this question that should be at the heart of the next congress of the Fourth International.*

Part 6. End of paragraph:

These few elements show the type of orientation that we want to implement: **to seize every opportunity to carry out the debate, to defend an independent perspective from that of the old left politics, a perspective built on the development of class struggle.** The different conferences this year such as those in Paris or Belem show the necessity and the possibility of joint action and discussion by a large number of organizations and currents of the anti-capitalist left in Europe. It is now necessary to continue a policy of open meetings and conferences on topics of

strategic and programmatic thinking and joint action through campaigns and initiatives of international mobilization.

Part 7. Paragraph 1.

The Fourth International and its sections have played and still play a vital road in defending, promoting and implementing an **anticapitalist** programme **combining a social, democratic and environmental plan to meet the needs of the working class confronted with the crisis, a programme that raises the question of power in a socialist perspective**, *of demands that are both immediate and transitional towards socialism*; a united-front policy that aims for mass mobilization of workers and their organizations; a policy of working-class unity and independence against any type of strategic alliance with the national bourgeoisie; opposition to any participation in governments in the advanced-capitalist countries that merely manage the State and the capitalist economy having abandoned all internationalism.

Part 7. End of paragraph 2.

Let us note, nevertheless, a major difference between the FI and all these tendencies, over and above political positions, and which is the credit of the International is that it is based on a democratic coordination of sections and militants, whereas the other international tendencies are "international-factions" or coordinations based on "party-factions" which do not respect rules of democratic functioning, in particular the right of tendency. The historical limits of these international "Trotskyist" currents", like other ex-Maoist or ex-Communist currents, are as many difficulties **we must try to overcome to advance** *prevent us today from advancing* in the crystallization of new international convergences. **Their conceptions do not meet the needs of the new revolutionary movement; they are inevitably confronted with their own limitations and experience a crisis. One of our concerns must be to help surpass the old Trotskyist movement by fighting against the sectarianism engendered by past struggles.**

Part 7. End of part.

In the present relationship of forces, the policy for advancing towards a mass International must rather take the road of open and periodic conferences on central political questions - activity, specific themes or discussions - which make possible the convergence and the emergence of anti-capitalist and revolutionary poles. **Through these joint activities, we have the desire to build links that can only be fruitful if, step by step, political, strategic and programmatic agreements emerge.** In the new anti-capitalist parties which may be formed in the years to come, and which express the current stage of combativeness, experience and consciousness of the sectors that are the most committed to the search for an anti-capitalist alternative, **the question of international links or even a new International is and will be posed today.** *We act and we will continue to act so that it is not posed in terms of ideological or historical choices, which are likely to lead to divisions and splits.* **The emergence of a new International will necessarily stand in the continuation of the attempts to regroup on an international level that are at the heart of the labor movement. This does not mean that references to the past may suffice to provide the political and programmatic foundations of a new International.** *It must be posed on a double level, on the one hand* **Conversely, the search for real political convergence on tasks of international intervention, on the other** the pluralism of the new formations, which must bring together currents of various origins: Trotskyists of different kinds, libertarians, revolutionary syndicalists, revolutionary nationalists, left reformists, **does not spare us the defence of Marxism. Quite the contrary, it stresses its necessity, its urgency because we are convinced that to be able to reappropriate the best in the history of the struggles for emancipation, we require the theoretical framework of critical and revolutionary Marxism.**

The practical and concrete forms of this work must be defined according to each situation. So in general, when there have been concrete steps towards new parties, we have proposed that the new broad anti-capitalist party

functions with the right of tendency or currents, and that the supporters of the Fourth International in these new parties organize themselves in ways to be decided, according to the specific situation of each party. Our Portuguese comrades in the Left Bloc, our Danish comrades in the Red-Green Alliance, our Brazilian comrades in the PSOL, are organized, in particular forms, as a Fourth International current or in class struggle currents with other political tendencies.

But this is not necessarily the rule. Thus, within the NPA the members of the FI did not consider it necessary to organize as a current. The fertility and the contribution of Marxism in the construction of new workers' parties can be demonstrated through achieving the tasks of the party at all levels of responsibility and activity.

Part 9.

We have, in fact, a particular role that is recognized by a series of political currents: *We may be the only ones who can to be able to* make political forces of various origins converge. This is for example, what in Latin America the Venezuelans comrades of left currents of the Bolivarian process say to us. It is also the case in Europe, in the framework of the relations of the EACL and of other currents. So, the next world congress must be an important step for the meeting of all these forces. *This Congress will be a congress of the FI and there will be no organisational growing over at this stage.* But we want the FI to play the role of a "facilitator" of convergences in the perspective of new international groupings.

Yvan (France)