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Mali

Crisis in Mali - the position of the radical left

- IV Online magazine - 2024 - IV592 - May 2024 -

Publication date: Saturday 11 May 2024

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The French section of the Solidarité Africaine pour la Démocratie et l'Indépendance (SADI) party invited French left-wing organizations to an information and exchange meeting on 27 April with its leader Omar Mariko on the situation in Mali. The meeting was deemed necessary by the leaders of SADI to prevent the French left from being fooled by the anti-imperialist narrative used by the junta, which is merely a veneer to justify its continued rule. Hence the need to look back at recent historical events in the country.

SADI believes that the jihadist insurgencies in Mali are above all linked to social problems. Most of the jihadist fighters come from the rural proletariat. Their motivation in this war is first and foremost determined by their social situation and the deterioration in security, largely due to the repressive actions of the state. The religious question accompanied the conflict, serving as justification and encouragement.

The crisis has been exacerbated by the grabbing of land, particularly in the centre of the country, by the Malian bourgeoisie, which has destabilised a regulatory system based on the synergy between breeders and farmers. This land grab has led to an increase in poverty among farmers, while livestock breeders have had to pay more and more for access to pasture for their animals.

Armed regulation of disagreements

The opening of a dialogue between jihadist fighters and representatives of the State was therefore the solution that would enable the war to be brought to an end and measures to consolidate the peace to be adopted. All the more so because during the exploratory meetings held in 2012, in which Omar Mariko took part, religious demands were never put forward. The dialogues could not take place because of France's absolute opposition. It forced the Malian authorities to cease all peace talks with the jihadists. At the same time, the French services were entering into negotiations with the Islamists with a view to securing the release of hostages held by Al Qaeda groups.

The leader of SADI insisted on the way in which the junta came to power. It used the major popular mobilizations against the corruption of the then President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta to usurp power by using part of the political class, part of the opposition coalition Mouvement du 5 Juin - Rassemblement des forces patriotiques (M5-RFP). This junta can therefore in no way be considered as the emanation of popular struggles. If it uses sovereignist logorrhoea, it is in an attempt to consolidate its legitimacy. The five putschist colonels are pursuing a policy aimed at creating divisions within the country by designating the Tamasheq populations as enemies of the nation in order to distract the population from the military failures. This is how the capture of Kidal, controlled by Tuareg organizations, is presented as a victory for national sovereignty, when in fact it was primarily a feat of arms by Wagner's mercenaries rather than an operation by the Malian armed forces. As a result, tens of thousands of civilians have fled Kidal for fear of reprisals, seeking refuge near the Algerian border.

Solidarity with SADI

The junta has embarked on both a headlong rush into security, responsible for numerous atrocities against civilians, and a dictatorship by suspending civil society organizations and political parties. The putschists have launched legal proceedings to ban the SADI party and its network of Kayira radio stations. Omar Mariko had to go into exile in view

of the serious threats to his physical integrity.

For the SADI party, the fight against the junta is part of a dual mobilization against imperialism and the local comprador bourgeoisie. This agenda is in line with the position of the NPA, which from the outset of the crisis in Mali has spoken out against the French intervention, Serval, and its extension with operation Barkhane, and has expressed its full solidarity with all the activists and journalists who have fallen victim to the colonels' repression.

30 April 2024

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