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Spanish State

Espacio Alternativo: a congress of redefinition

- News from around the world -

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The Fourth Congress of Espacio Alternativo (Alternative Space) took place in Madrid on 4-5 December, 2004, with the participation of delegates and members from the various territories and nations of the Spanish state.

The essential aim was to work out a political orientation for Espacio for the next period and to reinforce its organisational structures, in a political cycle marked by the new government of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the defeat of the Popular Party (PP) - as well as by the crisis of political and electoral orientation of the United Left (IU).

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The political debate took place in a climate of general agreement within the whole organisation, which was reflected by the fact that the political document was adopted quasi-unanimously. It started from the fact that Espacio Alternativo has experienced over the last few years important changes and transformations, parallel to the evolution of and the differentiations within the whole of the anti-capitalist Left on the Spanish state.

The very composition of Espacio has been considerably modified since its last congress. In the beginning Espacio Alternativo was a regroupment project initiated by the Alternative Left (one of the organisations linked to the Fourth International) and other collectives of militants of various origins. Some of the founding nuclei of Espacio, essentially in Madrid and in the Basque country, left the organisation as a result of disagreements over the orientation to follow within IU and chose to adapt to the project of the leadership and the current majority of IU.

At the same time new processes of convergence occurred, such as the unification in Catalonia of the organisations linked to Espacio and to Cuadernos Internacionales (another organisation linked to the Fourth International, whose main forces are in Catalonia), within the new organisation Revolta Global, which had repercussions wherever the two organisations coexisted. For this reason the militants of Cuadernos were invited to the congress and its members in Catalonia will now be able to take part in leadership meetings of Espacio as representatives of Revolta Global, which has a special status within the organisation. On another level Espacio has established regular relations with the Basque organisation Zutik, which will participate as an observer in its confederal leadership.

The congress decided to build Espacio Alternativo, which came into being as a current within the United Left, as an autonomous organisation with a project that is revolutionary, anti-capitalist, internationalist, alternative, ecologist and feminist. That implies reinforcing its structures, the functioning of its leading bodies and the coordination of the work of its members in the social movement, developing a greater capacity of general political elaboration and reinforcing our public face, in particular through improving our paper Corriente Alterna (Alternative Current) and our relations with the media.

The continuation and reinforcement of our intervention as a current in the social movements and in the struggles that are emerging were also stressed. We intervene in these movements while defending their unity and their radicalism and we also want to contribute to the programmatic and strategic debate of the global justice movement and of social movements in general.

Parallel to its development as an organisation, Espacio will continue to work towards the emergence of a broad anti-capitalist pole in the Spanish state, by encouraging convergences between the different sectors of the anti-capitalist Left. The forms, the rhythms and the processes of building a broad anti-capitalist pole cannot be anticipated or forced, but that is the horizon towards which we are aiming. In this perspective, Espacio continues to

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work as a current within IU, through those of its members who belong to it, with the aim of promoting a broad left current in IU.

At the same time we have to evaluate what relations can be established with anti-capitalist sectors who are not part of IU, whether they be revolutionary Marxist organisations, local collectives, forces from the nationalist Left or 'movementist' currents where they exist.