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Internationalism

# Chavez calls for Fifth International

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**During an international meeting of left parties held in Caracas from 19-21 November, 2009, Hugo Chavez launched a call for a Fifth Socialist International which, according to him, should bring together left parties and social movements. According to the president of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela, the Fifth International must be “an instrument for the unification and the articulation of the struggle of the peoples to save this planet”. In a world political situation marked by a total crisis of the capitalist system, this is a fact important enough to be underlined.**

Indeed, leaders or parties who pose the question of an International do not grow on trees. That is the first merit of Chavez's call.

All the more so as this call is accompanied by a declaration which denounces the systemic character of the capitalist crisis, beyond its financial and banking dimensions, and reaffirms the perspective of a socialism of the 21st century. It calls for an urgent mobilization against the new imperialist offensive in Latin America, by the US administration and the Latin American Right.

On the basis of this call, a broad world anti-imperialist front can be established, to mark its solidarity with the struggle of the peoples for their social and political rights, to oppose the new US bases in Colombia, to support, in particular, the mobilization of the people of Honduras against the new dictatorial regime.

In the trial of strength in which the imperialists are confronted with the struggles of the peoples, such a world front would constitute an important instrument to fight the power of the ruling classes, not only in Latin America but in the whole world.

We are ready, as we have been since the beginning, in solidarity with the Cuban revolution, the Bolivarian revolution, with the experiences in Bolivia and Ecuador, to fully commit ourselves to the common fight against the imperialist attacks imperialists and to take our full place in this world anti-imperialist front.

It is also within this framework that the process of construction of a new International would be posed. Chavez calls for the establishment of a Socialist Fifth International. That puts back on the agenda the discussion about a new International. Chavez situates the building of the Fifth International in continuity with the Fourth. We have already declared on many occasions: what do labels matter, if there is convergence over the content. But the constitution of a new International implies a whole process around a programme, policies, and an organization, which must be carried out on the basis of a broad discussion with all the protagonists.

There is, indeed, a new historical period, where divergences between various revolutionary currents can be surmounted on the basis of “a common understanding of events and tasks”. From this point of view, it is not a question of discussing the historical balance sheets of different currents, but it is decisive to learn together the lessons from Stalinism and social democracy, so that the tragedies and the errors of the past are not repeated.

Each party, each organization, each current and each militant must contribute to this debate. As for the Fourth International, it has already formulated, on many occasions, its proposals:

\* An anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist programme of emergency demands, which starts from the demands and the

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social needs of the popular classes, proposes a new distribution of wealth, public and social appropriation of the key sectors of the economy and leads on to the revolutionary transformation of society.

- \* Unity of action of all the organizations, currents and militants against the attacks of the governments and the capitalist classes.
- \* Independence of the social movements, associations and trade-union organizations with respect to parties and states.
- \* Solidarity with all struggles of peoples against all the imperialist powers.
- \* The fight against oppressions and the defence of the rights of women, homosexuals, young people and immigrants.
- \* The fight for governments of the workers and popular classes which satisfy the principal social and ecological demands and base themselves on the mobilization of the population and its control over the principal sectors of the economy. This perspective implies not participating in governments which manage the state and the capitalist economy along with the parties of the centre-left or social democracy.
- \* The central character of the self-emancipation and self-organization of peoples, in the perspective of overthrowing capitalism.
- \* An ecosocialist project which combines both the satisfaction of social needs and the respect and balance of our ecosystem. In this sense, we have much to learn much from the indigenous peoples of South America and their relationship to the land.
- \* Socialist democracy as a project of society: self-management of the economy, democracy and pluralism of parties and social movements.

These are some themes for discussion in order to advance along the road of bringing together all anti-capitalists on an international level. They are the first ideas that we will defend in the process of constitution of a new International.

Lastly, Chavez's call for a Fifth International also constitutes a point of support when it poses the question of a new International, independently of the Second (Socialist) International of which organizations like the social democratic parties, the Mexican PRI and the Brazilian PT are members. But it is also necessary to clarify a question in the construction of a new International, that of the difference between state policies and the development of a political project. One thing is to conclude economic and commercial agreements with states which have anti-imperialist governments, to conclude such agreements with other states, including some which have reactionary regimes, or to oppose attacks of imperialism against certain countries. It is quite another thing to give political support to regimes like those of the Chinese Communist Party or the Islamic Republic of Iran... The project of the Fifth International cannot in any way at all be associated with these regimes.

Once again, this call creates the conditions for a new international discussion, indissociable from solidarity with the Bolivarian revolution. It is in this spirit that the Fourth international, its organizations and its militants, will answer "Present"!