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Climate

Climate: disaster is on its way!

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The earth's climate is changing quickly, much faster than experts thought.

There is no doubt what is causing this: the warming of the atmosphere as a result of emissions by greenhouse gases, mainly CO₂ from the burning of oil, coal and natural gas.

The Earth has warmed by 0.8°C degrees over the last two centuries. This is sufficient to cause a rise in sea levels by almost two metres in the centuries to come. Nobody can stop it. Hundreds of millions of people will be forced to move, millions of hectares of land for growing food will be lost, urban areas will need to be evacuated. The peoples of the South, who are the least responsible, will be the most affected.

Governments have ignored the warnings. Twenty-three years after the Rio Summit, annual emissions of global greenhouse gases are rising twice as fast as in the 1990s. Despite the economic crisis!

At this rate, the warming at the end of the century would not be 2°C but 6°C. This will lead to terrible disasters, which are totally unimaginable.

COP 21: Dust in the eyes of the people, gifts to the bosses

The urgency is intense because the measures we need to take have been put off for decades.

The “developed” countries must begin immediately to reduce emissions by at least 10% per year and completely eliminate them by 2050. The major emerging countries must quickly follow. Other countries still have a margin, but it is quickly being reduced.

If nothing changes, the quantity of oil, coal and natural gas that can still be burned without exceeding 2°C of global warming will be exhausted by 2030.

The 21st United Nations conference on the climate (COP21) will be held in Paris in December 2015. The political leaders are trying to hoodwink us by saying that, this time, they will conclude an “ambitious” agreement.

It is true that they might conclude an agreement to save face. But what is certain is that this agreement will be totally inadequate environmentally and very socially unfair.

Its content is determined in advance by the commitments of the major polluters: United States, European Union, China, Japan, Australia, and Canada. On this basis, the warming of the Earth will be at least 3.6 to 4°C by the end of the century.

These commitments were negotiated with the industrial and financial lobbies and are tailored to their interests. The multinationals are rubbing their hands at the prospect of new markets opening up: carbon markets, “green” technologies, forest compensation, capture-sequestration, adaptation to the effects of global warming and so on.

But a warming of 4°C means an increase in sea level of 10 metres in the long term as well as the more immediate

impact: accelerated decline of biodiversity; more storms, cyclones, droughts, floods, heat waves; reduction of agricultural productivity and so on.

Saving capitalism or the climate?

The truth has been established for decades. The IPCC is an inter-governmental body; national governments are supposed to be committed to the main lines of its reports. Technical solutions exist, the financial means also. So why do governments not take the necessary steps? Why do they recommend false or dangerous “solutions” such as shale gas, agro-fuels, nuclear energy, geo-engineering and so on?

The answer is simple: because the governments are at the service of the multinationals and banks who are waging a war of competition for maximum profit, a war which prompts firms to produce still more (and therefore consume more resources), and more than 80% of the energy they use comes from coal, oil and natural gas.

To save the climate: 1) 4/5ths of known reserves of fossil fuels must remain underground; 2) the energy system based on these fossil sources (and on nuclear power) must be destroyed as quickly as possible, without compensation; 3) production which is harmful, unnecessary or based on planned obsolescence must be abandoned, in order to reduce the consumption of energy and other resources; 4) the despotic and unequal productivist/consumerist system must be replaced by a renewable system, one that is efficient, decentralized, social and democratic.

It is possible to stop the climate catastrophe while guaranteeing a dignified life for all. On one condition: taking anti-capitalist measures. Governments prefer to destroy the planet, endangering the lives of hundreds of millions of poor people, workers, peasants, women and young people who are already victims of climate change, and threaten humanity with barbaric chaos while the arms dealers profit.

Capital considers nature and work as its property. There is no choice between climate emergency and social justice; it is one and the same struggle. Let us mobilize. Beyond the COP21, affirm our rights, develop our struggles, let us build our common actions, and build a planetary mass movement.

All to action, together on all fronts

The fossil multinationals need to extend their grip. Let's stop them. Mobilize against the infrastructure projects which are at their service: the new airports, new pipelines, new motorways, and the new madness of shale gas. Denounce the tax and other benefits offered to maritime, air and road transport companies.

The “developed” powers which are mainly responsible for global warming then turn their backs on the refugees created by the crises that their policy of domination and aggravated arming cause. Reject the walls and camps of fortress Europe, demand that climate migrants be given the right of asylum.

Agribusiness and the timber industry are responsible for 40% of greenhouse gas emissions. Mobilize against GMOS, support local organic smallholder agriculture and food sovereignty. Build networks and associations of producers-consumers. Support the rights of indigenous peoples to their resources and the struggles of women who produce 80% of the food in the countries of the South.

We are witnessing a biodiversity catastrophe. The sixth extinction as it is known: the biggest extinction of species since the demise of the dinosaurs. Between 40 and 50 percent of all species on the planet could be extinct by the mid-century. A quarter of all mammal species are currently at risk of extinction against a background (natural) extinction rate of just one every 700 years. Organise to protect biodiversity.

The right of everyone to a decent standard of housing, to clean water, to transport, to heating and light, is good for the climate and for employment. Organise to ensure that water, transport and the insulation and renovation of housing are provided in the public sector, under the control of producers and workers, and that all are free at the point of use.

The productivist and consumerist madness in furniture, textiles, electronics, packaging etc. have contributed much to global warming. Reject products which are disposable, have planned obsolescence, are non-repairable or non-recyclable. Organize to support the workers of these sectors, particularly in countries where wages are low.

Workers should not bear the costs of the transition. Workers occupied in wasteful, harmful, polluting, industries should mobilize for collective conversion without loss of salary, to socially useful and environmentally responsible functions.

The right to free time is good for the climate, for health and for employment. Let's mobilize for everyone to work less and less flexibly by the reduction of working time, without loss of salary, with compensatory recruitment and reduction of rhythms of work.

The fossil multinationals and the banks are blocking the transition. Demand the disinvestment of these sectors. Expel the private sector from energy and finance, without indemnities or buyouts. This is the indispensable condition to enable the community has to organize the transition quickly and rationally. Energy is a gift of nature, it must belong to nobody. Let us mobilize for a public energy service, decentralized, under the control of workers and users.

Ecosocialism or barbarism

The climate crisis gives a great topicality to the alternative "socialism or barbarism". A true revolution is necessary. We must change everything! Not only to distribute in an egalitarian manner the fruit of our work, but also to decide what we produce and how we produce – free from hype and waste- and call into question the roles that patriarchal capitalism gives men and women.

In short, it is a shift of civilization, of transition to a new society, eco-socialist, eco-feminist, based on solidarity and respect for the environment. A society where the major management decisions, the priorities of production and consumption will no longer be taken by a handful of exploiters, bureaucrats or pseudo-experts, guided by profit but by all. This change will come not through elections, but through our struggles. All together, we can impose it, if we want to!

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