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Mexico:

PRT statement on electoral fraud

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Despite the majority vote in favour of the presidential candidacy of Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) and his advocacy of “real change”, the neoliberal oligarchic regime intends to maintain its form of political domination in Mexico by imposing Enrique Peña Nieto as President and denying the will of the people expressed in the recent elections as well as the political rights of Mexicans. If this outrage were not enough, the reinforced partnership between the PRI and the PAN prepares to impose “structural reforms” (concerning employment, health, energy and social security) which will deepen the exploitation of workers (removing labour rights, setting new taxes), and the dispossession and plundering of our natural resources (privatizing PEMEX and electricity) as well as increasing violence and insecurity with the militarisation and para-militarisation of the country through a new policy that aims to cede control of the armed forces to a designated Colombian general, a Yankee proconsul who speaks Spanish, who has been noted as corrupt, repressive and a member of the CIA.

The long pre-electoral and electoral campaign of AMLO allowed the organization of a civic movement that has a national dimension (MORENA), which was joined by many citizens and social organizations; at the same time, AMLO built a multi-class political bloc that allowed him to win over sectors of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. The important thing is that the election campaign of López Obrador was echoed in broad popular sectors that saw the need for a change of regime that abandoned the neo-liberal policies in the “real change” proposal. A questioning of the political regime with an even greater social force came up with the “Mexican spring” because the blatant attempt to impose Peña Nieto by Televisa fired the emergence of a new student movement, #Yosoy132, which demonstrated massively and nationally against Peña Nieto. The blatant electoral fraud and the buying of votes by the PRI, rather than demoralizing and demobilizing, has reinforced the popular indignation against the regime, which manifests itself with spontaneous national marches repudiating Peña Nieto, the PRI and the regime.

It is time for real change and political struggle

With this huge social, popular, multi-class force, we have the possibility of confronting politically the neo-liberal oligarchic regime in crisis, and making “real change” effective, imposing, through the broader unity and struggle of the masses, a regime which expands democracy and abandons neo-liberalism. Protests or symbolic acts of rejection of the fraud are not enough. Nor is the “realistic” argument that accepts Peña Nieto as already imposed and states that it is now necessary to prepare for the fight against the structural reforms of this Government. This “realism” implies that this time of struggle is over and practically already recognizes him as President elect. The leftist argument that it was obvious that Peña Nieto would be imposed (although some of its adherents claimed also before the election that there was an inter-bourgeois agreement assigning the Presidency to AMLO) has the same conclusion as the position of the conciliators, especially members of the PRD and elected officials such as Graco Ramírez, who think that in order not to “waste” the large number of votes in the presidential elections it is better to accept being the second biggest electoral force and negotiate better conditions with a weak government under Peña Nieto. The conclusion is the same: recognize Peña Nieto as President. It is naive to believe you can negotiate with the oligarchic group representing Peña Nieto. Negotiation means recognition and that is what he needs at this time. The legitimacy that he does not have. In any case, if this struggle cannot prevent his installation in the government, he will take power in conditions – we agree - of greater weakness. But to start by recognising him will give him a position of strength which means he will not make any concessions on its projects of “structural reform” anyway. On the contrary this is the time to fight politically against the regime and make history.

With a correlation of forces so favourable for the democratization of the country and an escape from neoliberal policies, we have the opportunity to stop the imposition of Peñ Nieto, throw the political regime into crisis and impose a historic change. The position of AMLO, demanding the invalidation of the elections, denying the legality of the votes bought by the PRI and denouncing electoral inequity, opens a horizon of political struggle, of struggle for power.

The National Convention in Atenco and other political forms that are organized against the fraud, and especially #yosoy132, assume as a central demand, as the main political axis, the rejection of the imposition of Peñ Nieto, the rejection of the PRI (openly supported by the PAN) resuming executive power. Everything should be focused on the achievement of that objective.

Accepting the imposition of Peñ Nieto or seeing it as fate is to forget that the election campaign has become a post-election battle and tends to become a mass political struggle against the regime, against the government, against a new government of Peñ Nieto. It is no longer an election campaign.

Let us remember that in these dark years of neo-liberalism Mexican, workers and popular forces have waged exemplary battles, local and sectoral, but without being able to stop the counter-reforms, the social setbacks. It is enough to remember what happened in the six years spent with the counter-reform of the ISSSTE, the blow to the SME or the setbacks with regard to the reproductive rights of women. Which is why we say that, now, with broad unity, the conjunction of all the political forces and social movements, we have the opportunity to wage a decisive political battle against the neoliberal regime.

A strategic vision

However, we have little time to take advantage of such an opportunity. For this political struggle we require not so much a political cookbook but a strategic vision of the political change we seek, which includes stages and tactics.

Without a doubt, we are in the stage of the legal battle against fraud. The questioning of the fraud not only undermines the eventual imposition of Peñ Nieto, but also feeds popular outrage and pressure against the institutions. At this stage the central slogan is the invalidity or nullity of the elections. It is not that we have illusions in a so-called democratic commitment and legality on the part of the electoral authorities and the relevant courts, a legality which is determined by the oligarchic regime, but rather we trust in the political struggle, in the eruption of the masses in the public sphere, and its effects. Today the fight for the annulment of the presidential election is not merely about legal arguments, but a political struggle, a relationship of forces, concerning the legitimacy of this struggle. At this stage it is important to expand the unity of social forces favouring democratization, maintain coordination and leadership of the struggle (through the National Convention and MORENA), inform the people and workers of the fraud and the meaning of the structural reforms that the PRI and Peñ Nieto seek to impose, maintain permanent mobilization and prepare national civic work stoppages or a nationwide political strike, taking care that the movement is not led into provocations that lead to repression. It is true that unity, the practical coordination of a united front covering all the movements and forms of struggle from MORENA to the Convention and the student movement #yosoy132, is very difficult, due to the different characteristics of each one of them. But the struggle at this time for the annulment of the presidential election is the political axis that underlies unity against the regime of the oligarchy. While AMLO and MORENA continue to strip bare and reveal the various forms of fraud that have occurred, delegitimizing the supposed triumph of Peñ Nieto, #yosoy132 becomes a sort of transitional vanguard which maintains and extends the mass mobilisation and action on the street in what is practically a national movement by the amount of cities already covered, including the major cities of the country such as Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla, Tijuana, and more than two dozen more, including all the state capitals.

The fight is and will be political, mass and peaceful, avoiding dispersion and provocations as well as desperate acts that can only damage the movement. We should not gamble on a forceful political act but the confluence of forces and relentless mass mobilization, and the growing de-legitimation of the supposed triumph of Peña Nieto. While from July 1 protests against fraud and the attempted imposition of penalty have taken place practically on a daily basis, the PRI has not been able to organize a single mass action to celebrate its "triumph".

Another political battle will take place if the Electoral Tribunal validates the fraud and the imposition of Peña Nieto. At that stage, we should consolidate the National Convention (with a view to perhaps constituting a true popular power, with representativeness and authority) and the slogan should be to demand the fall of the government of Peña Nieto. Demonstrations should be increased, with international coverage, and the realization of civic work stoppages or political strikes.

Whatever happens, the fight is now. With it we will guarantee that the imposition of Peña Nieto and the continuity of neo-liberal policies experience a political resistance, unified, with a horizon of struggle for power.

Another left is required

Obviously all this struggle occurs in the midst of a major crisis of the electoral political system (fraud and vote buying in particular show the absence of a democratic electoral system of choice and the futility of this system in freely electing a government) as well as the crisis and re-composition of all formations and political parties. It is natural. It is a moment of rupture. Change. Understanding this implies rejecting the simplistic conclusion that we have to abandon politics or parties. The oligarchic group in power would like us to stay there. Its domain, on the other hand, is called into question when the masses burst into politics, as they have been doing with the "Mexican spring" and the student movement of # yosoy132. In addition to the bourgeois parties, the crisis also takes in the institutional left. In the midst of the struggle the conclusion that another way of doing politics is necessary is also called for. As shown by the mobilization around yosoy132.

But also there is the need for another type of party, another left, which is urgent and necessary. It is this left that we of the PRT (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores) try to build. A left that has principles and definitions and is not dominated by pragmatism, electoral opportunism and short term vision. A left with principles but which is at the same time unitary, non-sectarian, which is part of building the broad movement and does not presume to give "lessons" dogmatically. A committed and militant left. A left that does not hide its profile as democratic and democratizing, socialist, feminist, environmentalist, revolutionary and internationalist, committed to the struggles of the workers and oppressed sectors, with an anti-imperialist but also a socialist and revolutionary horizon.

In this perspective and because of this the PRT does not assume that it is the only revolutionary force - we strive for broad unity of the movement but also for the construction of a party-based alternative of the broad left and masses. That's why we have supported and responded positively to the call made by the leadership of the Mexican electricians union (SME) to build a Political Organization of the People and the Workers (OPT). This presents the possibility of building a broad workers party and its organizations in the fusion between the socialist and revolutionary left and the vanguard of the working class movement.

In the midst of the crisis, of the struggle for the annulment of the presidential election and regime change, there will be forged also the alternative political party of the working people and the left.

**ALL AGAINST THE IMPOSITION OF PEÑA NIETO AND AGAINST NEOLIBERALISM!
PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO DE LOS
TRABAJADORES**