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Algeria

For a sovereign constituent assembly, the struggle continues!

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Workers, young people, women and the popular masses as a whole have just snatched, after more than 40 days of strikes and unprecedented mass demonstrations, a precious and historic first victory by forcing the departure on 2 April 2019 of Bouteflika – the embodiment of an oligarchic, authoritarian, quasi-monarchical liberal regime subject to the interests of imperialist foreign powers.

Indeed, in addition to the gigantic demonstrations in all the country's cities, it was the general strike launched on 10 March by workers in several sectors, such as the oil and gas fields in the south, air and rail transport, port activities, education and health, administration and taxes, the liberal professions and small traders, etc., that deepened the regime's crisis and accelerated the cracking of power. Thus, as of 11 March Bouteflika gave up his fifth term, even if he wanted to extend the fourth.

In this context of a crisis threatening the entire system, the Chief of the General Staff, Mr. Gaid Salah, encouraged by the appeals of the Liberal opposition, has invested himself in his new role as the "referee saviour" of the system. The one he called *fakhamatouhou*, just a few days before, had become a danger to the whole regime. In order to save the system, he had to get rid of Bouteflika as soon as possible on the one hand and, on the other, attack a few oligarchs in the presidential circle, symbols of corruption and predation, in order to calm the popular revolt and stop the Hirak. Moreover, in order to ensure the continuity of the system in the context of a controlled transition, the army immediately imposed "a legalistic solution within the framework of the constitution". Thus, any other political alternative is evacuated. Finally, a "media-propagandaist" forcing is being set in motion to pre-manufacture "popular support" for the action of the Chief of the General Staff and the army, which, in its latest threatening communiqué of 2 April, declares that it no longer recognises the presidency and in fact insinuates the implementation of a "cold coup d'état".

For the PST, the army's intrusion into the current political crisis, far from being a solution, consecrates a passage in force. The repression and arrest of demonstrators on Wednesday 3 April 3 at the Algiers Post Office contradicts the "admiring flights of the People's Hirak" that punctuated the army's communiqués.

For the PST, the uprising of the popular masses against the regime that began on 22 February 2019 challenges the entire system, its institutions and its constitution. No superficial tinkering, no transitional subterfuge, no providential man can replace the will of the people, the source of all democratic legitimacy.

For the PST, only the election of a sovereign constituent assembly, representative of the democratic and social aspirations of workers, youth, women and all oppressed people in our country, can constitute a real democratic solution to the current crisis.

For the PST, the time has come for the Algerian popular masses to self-organize in factories, universities and high schools, neighbourhoods and villages, for women and the unemployed, etc., on the one hand, and, on the other, the priority is winning back our democratic freedoms, in particular the freedoms of expression, organization, demonstration, trade union freedoms and the right to strike.

For the PST, this first victory against the Bouteflika regime shows the way. Our massive mobilization, our magnificent demonstrations and our multiple strikes have paid off!

Algiers, 3 April 2019

National Secretariat of PST

PS:

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