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Militarism

For an intransigent opposition to the rearmament of capitalist Europe

- Features - Rearming Europe -

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The drums of war are already generating a deafening din. Governments, companies and the media are united in repeating in unison warmongering slogans reminiscent of the turbulent beginnings of the 20th century. Defend Europe, defend its values, boost the military industry and even bring back compulsory military service. Europe is in danger, it stands alone in a hostile world and must rearm. Dark and toxic winds are blowing, which will sweep away any prospect of emancipation.

We must not let propaganda cloud our vision. They scream in our ears that it is all Trump and Putin's fault, that the US has abandoned Europe and Russia has expansionist ambitions. Yet the corridors of Brussels were filled with military industry lobbyists long before the latest events took place. The European Defence Industrial Strategy was approved in 2024, giving increasing financial support to the military industry.

The Spanish state has increased its official military spending by more than 60% over the last five years, i.e. under progressive governments: first PSOE-Unidas Podemos and now PSOE-Sumar. In 2023, the main arms industries of the Spanish state declared significant increases in their profits. Trump's arrival in government has only accelerated trends and plans that were already in the pipeline. The ReArm Europe plan does not emerge like a mushroom in the forest; it has been shaped by many interests.

We must understand this 'age of rearmament' within a geopolitical and geo-economic struggle in global disorder. Decades of economic stagnation make global competition increasingly violent, and zero-sum struggles are on the rise. Each regional bloc tries to maintain its position in the world market at the expense of other countries. This translates into new trade wars and new territorial divisions. And then there is a long list of free trade agreements to secure the supply of raw materials, massive investments in fossil energy infrastructure and migration agreements that reinforce necropolitics. The cannons should not stop us seeing the wood for the trees.

Imperialism has never gone away, but today it is coming back even stronger. The economic decline of the United States increases its aggressiveness. As it prepares for war against China, it is negotiating with Russia to divide up its spheres of influence. In this sense, EU policy is in the interests of the ruling class. In order to improve its relative position in international competition, it has stopped even talking of ecological transition or human rights.

The European bourgeois oligarchy and its multinationals make their profits on the basis of exploiting the labour force which, in recent years, has seen its gains rolled back and is being made more precarious while its trade union and social rights are called into question and subjected to austerity policies, especially migrant workers from non-EU countries, which means that the rate of exploitation increases. At the same time, in order to impose their objectives, the policies of the EU countries are resorting to the significant curtailment of human, democratic and social rights.

Rearmament and the boosting of the arms industry and trade in the EU is aimed at boosting the GDP of member states and restoring the rate of profit for companies and investors. This rearmament goes hand in hand, and it cannot be otherwise, with the strengthening of new policies of indebtedness that are the prelude in the medium term to a new cycle of austerity, generating a collective imaginary of a threatened Europe that must respond under the old parameters of 'patriotic unity'. The EU - and with it our 'progressive' government that aligns itself with the right wing represented by Von der Leyen, Macron, Merz or Mark Rutte, - responds to problems with the same imperialist logic as the US, China or Russia. Geopolitical conflicts are motivated by the grabbing or sharing of natural resources and the appropriation of the value created by labour power on a global scale.

Whatever colour it is painted, the basis is always the same: the Europe of capital, fortress Europe, colonial and racist Europe. Presenting warmongering rhetoric in the name of peace and democracy is not only repugnant, it is also deeply functional to a political project that reinforces this free market, colonial, racist Europe and fuels the momentum of the extreme right.

However they are financed, the EU's rearmament plans will only benefit the big capitalists, the merchants of death who are already rubbing their hands together as the value of their shares rises. However they are financed, rearmament plans will be accompanied by a curtailment of political rights within countries. What credibility does a European Union have as a bastion of democracy after it has been unable to stop trading arms with Israel while carrying out genocide against the Palestinian people?

The PSOE-Sumar government has already signed up to these plans. Pedro Sánchez has already confirmed to Brussels that he will do his part, that military spending will continue to increase, and that he will do so without going through Congress. Beside him, there are still those who are trying to point out the details, trying to negotiate the twelfth paragraph, trying to make us forget what the headline is.

All of them are not only complicit in what is happening, they are guilty. They are using fear of the right to impose the plans of the Europe of capital, to pave the way for a regime of war that is a prelude to barbarism. It doesn't matter whether it competes with social spending or not, it doesn't matter how it is financed, what matters is the direction in which obeying the drums of war puts us. Any hint of European chauvinism and any justification for rearmament is a defence of imperialism. And it will be the working class who will pay with their lives if war comes.

In the face of this, uncompromising opposition is necessary. We have to organise from below, on the streets and in the workplaces to stop this dynamic. We have to reject and confront all the destructive dynamics in which capitalism imprisons us. Symbolic votes in parliament are not enough: we cannot be 'partially' against the dynamics of militarisation. The necropolitics of borders, climate chaos and militarisation go hand in hand, preparing societies for war and the destruction of life on the planet. Capitalist profit is behind all of them and their propagandists are the ones who strive to hide it.

We must react. It is urgent to push for a united mobilisation against militarisation and to make it clear that we will not accept this policy. We must do this from an internationalist point of view and on an international scale, never forgetting anti-colonial solidarity with struggles such as that of the Palestinian people in the face of Zionist genocide. It is obvious that the ruling class has no other plan than to accelerate the open crises: a project based on investing in 'means of destruction' of life and the planet, to defend the interests of the elites. It is necessary to organise a confrontation under an ecosocialist programme, which will confront their plans for rearmament and fight at all levels against the Europe of capital.

20 March 2025

Translated from [Anticapitalistas](#).

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