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Belgium

Oppose global militarization, defend a just peace

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This is a long version of the leaflet that Gauche anticapitaliste/SAP Antikapitalisten, Belgian section of the Fourth International, will distribute during the demonstration against militarization on 22 November in Brussels. They will form a bloc: “despite our disagreements with the text of the appeal, to put forward our positions for a just peace and the defense of a true internationalism of solidarity with peoples in struggle.”

Across the globe, wars are multiplying and the major powers claim to regulate the international order by the law of the strongest: Russia’s imperialist invasion of Ukraine; genocide in Gaza and acceleration of colonization in the West Bank; Middle East ablaze under Israeli and American bombs; war against Iran; Trump's military aggression in Venezuela and the kidnapping of Maduro; tightening of the blockade of Cuba; open contempt for the United Nations and the International Court of Justice… While the priority should be to resolve the social and ecological crises, the desire of imperialist leaders to divide the world into zones of influence is leading us straight towards a general conflagration, unless they are stopped.

In this context, an internationalist policy must build solidarity with peoples under attack. It is based, in each situation, on concrete analysis and does not conflate imperialist invasion with liberation struggles. We refuse to leave security issues in the hands of the far right and neoliberal right-wing parties, nor to flee behind an abstract and isolationist "pacifism" that abandons people under attack.

With the Ukrainian resistance, against Russian imperialism

A large-scale war is underway on the European continent, and it was Putin's neo-fascist regime that unleashed it, first by annexing Crimea in 2014 and then by launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. This war is being waged primarily against the civilian population: in October of 2026, more than 4,000 attack drones, approximately 150 ballistic missiles, and 80 cruise missiles targeted the country; on November 2, nine successive bombings of a Ukrainian humanitarian hub killed dozens of people. Kyiv can no longer defend itself as effectively, lacking interceptor missiles. Protecting cities, hospitals, and the power grid is not "militarization": it is a matter of survival.
The task of anti-imperialist activists is to support the Ukrainian resistance, through both civilian and military means, because it is on this front that the survival of a people whose existence the Kremlin denies is at stake. We call on the internationalist left to defend the right to self-determination of the Ukrainian people, on the same level as that of the Palestinian people: by supporting solidarity initiatives, such as the convoy to Ukraine; by supporting the production and supply of the civilian and military equipment necessary to protect Ukraine and its inhabitants; and by building active support from Belgian civil society (unions, associations, collectives) for Ukrainian civil society and the Russian opposition to the war.

The threat from Putin's regime is real

This threat does not stop at Ukraine's borders. Russia's objective is to undermine support for Ukraine in Europe and to divide Europeans in order to regain its dominance over its immediate neighbors, through a new European security architecture under Russian control. It is pursuing this through military pressure and hybrid warfare: Russian drones over Poland, MiG-31s in Estonian airspace, sabotage of a railway line carrying aid to Ukraine, cut undersea cables in

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the Baltic Sea, a drone carrying explosives near a Ukrainian cargo plane in Leipzig, cyberattacks by pro-Russian hackers against Belgian government agencies, and drone overflights during the Euroclear debate. (Euroclear is the bank where most frozen Russian assets are held) One thing remains certain: the vulnerability of our infrastructure.

There's no need to announce an unlikely imminent invasion to grasp the gravity of the situation. If Ukraine collapses, it's likely the Russian army will move on to a new target.

To achieve Putin's objectives, his de facto allies are the neoliberal hard right that governs many countries, including Belgium. Their dismantling of social support fuels the anger that the Kremlin and its far-right proxies exploit; their subservience to Trump weakens Europe; and the Belgian government, which refuses to release Russian assets held at Euroclear for Ukraine, a protector of the aggressor's capital, with the support of most parliamentary parties, including the PTB (Workers' Party of Belgium).

No blank cheque: three clear refusals

Supporting Ukraine and protecting Europe in no way implies supporting the rearmament plans of the European Union, NATO, and the Arizona government of Belgium which hand over the keys to our defense policy to the arms industry and the market and fail to meet the needs of the Ukrainian resistance. However, rejecting these plans does not mean denying reality: legitimate investments in defense (anti-aircraft, anti-drone, cyber defense, protection of critical infrastructure, support for Ukraine, the Baltic states, and the Nordic countries) are possible.

These investments cannot be decided in secret among a few ministers, military leaders, and industrialists. They require democratic debate and oversight from the entire society, and particularly from the workforce, regarding the actual needs and the relationship between military security, internationalism, social security, and environmental security. This is the complete opposite of Francken's Atlanticist cronyism or the SAFE fund, established by bypassing the European Parliament. [1] Our security policy is therefore based first and foremost on three rejections:

• No to the ReArm Europe / Readiness 2030 plan and the Arizona rearmament plan, which hand over defense to the profits of the arms industry;

• No to austerity, privatizations and attacks on social security to pay for this rearmament;

• No to national unity: for a continuous class struggle against governments that claim to defend us by impoverishing us.

For European security at the service of a different Europe

Workers' security begins with social and environmental security, and this requires breaking free from the dependencies that make us beholden to Washington and Moscow. Europe has more than tripled its arms imports in five years, nearly half coming from the US—the same US from which Ukraine is awaiting anti-aircraft missiles, which is concluding a shameful diesel deal with Putin over Kyiv's head, and whose president has threatened to annex Greenland. Energy dependence is the other Achilles' heel: the war against Iran has caused energy prices to skyrocket. Moving away from fossil fuels, which make us dependent on the US, Russia, and the Gulf monarchies, is

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a matter of security policy.

We want an independent and internationalist military policy, by and for the working class: instead of NATO's tutelage, an autonomous European defense under democratic control, based on public and coordinated European-wide arms production and procurement, rather than on 27 national policies and orders placed with US manufacturers; a democratized army; workers involved in decision-making. Financed not by austerity but by a crisis tax on the wealthy, the seizure of Russian assets, and the taxation of excess profits. This democratic, social, and ecological Europe will come neither from the European Commission nor from Washington: it will be the work of the people, in a constituent assembly of the peoples of Europe, against the far right allied with Moscow and Trump.

Our disagreement with the demonstration of November 22nd

We contest the Stop Militarization platform's call for action on November 22nd. We share some of its observations: billions are allocated to the military without debate while social security, healthcare, and education are slashed. But the call makes no mention of Ukraine or Russia and never distinguishes between aggressor and victim. The platform's manifesto advocates for a peace agreement with Moscow based on common security. This politically disarms workers in the face of a threat that exists: a hybrid threat today, a lasting threat tomorrow. Neither Ukraine's right to self-defense, nor solidarity with Ukrainian civil society and the Russian opposition, nor a democratic and social defense policy: this call merely demands “less,” in the same absurd logic as Trump's demand for “more”.

To fail to support peoples under attack is always to side with the aggressor. To repeatedly call for negotiations, which the Kremlin systematically refuses or manipulates, without supporting those who resist, is to defend imperial peace, the peace of the graveyard. Only justice can bring lasting peace: an end to the aggression, the withdrawal of occupying troops, and the right of the Ukrainian people to decide their own future.

From Ukraine to Palestine, occupation is a crime

For Ukraine, against Russian imperialism, anti-capitalists defend:

1. Support for the civil and military resistance of the Ukrainian population: production and supply of the equipment necessary to protect it (air defense, civil infrastructure, energy, health);

2. The active support of Belgian civil society for Ukrainian civil society and the Russian opposition;

3. The effective application of sanctions against the Russian economy and its oligarchs: cessation of all purchases of Russian gas, oil and diesel, including via third countries;

4. The seizure of Russian assets held at Euroclear, mainly those of the Russian Central Bank, to finance the resistance and reconstruction of Ukraine;

5. The rejection of the Trump-Putin deal on diesel, which rewards the aggressor without resolving the price crisis, and the taxation of excess profits of multinational oil companies.

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For a democratic, social and ecological European security:

6. The rejection of ReArm Europe / Readiness 2030 and the Arizona rearmament plan;

7. Public investments in defense needs to be objectively and transparently defined (anti-aircraft, anti-drone, cyber defense, critical infrastructure), decided after a broad public debate, under the control of trade unions and workers, as well as civil society, with independent citizen audit of purchases;

8. The socialization and planning of the arms sector under democratic control, with priority given to aid to the Ukrainian resistance, and the democratization of the army; basic civil protection skills for all;

9. The phase-out of fossil fuels and energy independence through 100% renewable energy;

10. A massive refinancing of social security and an investment in the ecological transition, financed by a crisis tax on capital and large fortunes.

11. The election of a constituent assembly of the peoples of Europe;

12. Belgium out of NATO, NATO out of Belgium: for an autonomous European defense, under democratic control of the people and workers, without tutelage from Washington or Moscow, with a ban on participating in neo-colonial aggressions.

Against all forms of imperialism:

13. A military embargo on the Israeli state and the effective cessation of trade in equipment for military or dual-use purposes with Israel (port of Antwerp, Liège airport);

14. The cessation of arms exports to regimes that violate human rights (including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, China, the USA…), with available weapons being redirected to Ukraine;

15. Targeted sanctions against those responsible for and profiting from US aggression (Venezuela, Iran, Cuba, Gaza).

18 November 2026

*Translated by **Anti*Capitalist Resistance*** from **>Gauche Anticapitaliste**.

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[1] Theo Francken is a Belgian politician who has been serving as the Minister of Defence and Foreign Trade in the government since February 2025. Security Action for Europe (SAFE) is a European Union program created in 2025 to facilitate joint purchases of arms and military equipment in the context of strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy and the 2020s European rearmament.

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