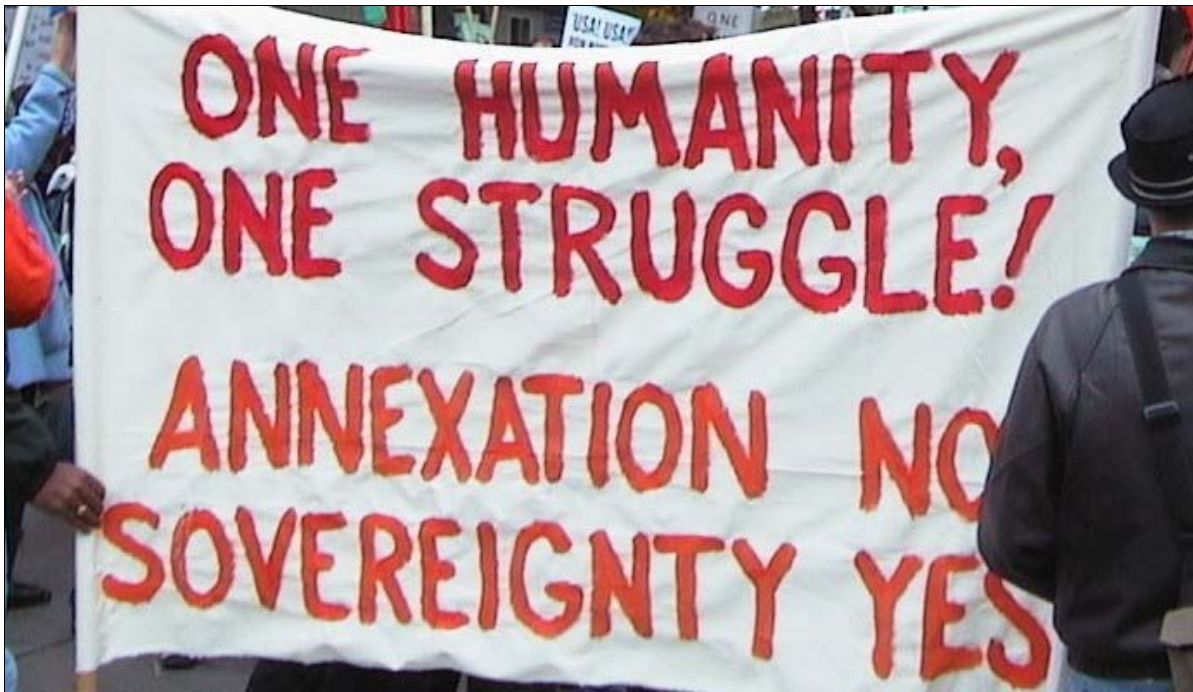




September 23, 2017 - No. 29

Important Matters of War and Peace

**U.S. President Threatens Fire and
Brimstone at UN and Trudeau
Postures as World's Great White Hope**



• Fitting Replies to U.S. President's Threats

For an Anti-War Government!

- Canada's Iraq War Mission Extended
- Meddling in the Name of "Empowering Women"

Get Canada Out of NAFTA!

- Build the Independent Politics of the Working Class!
Manufacturing Yes! Nation-Wrecking No!
 - Dispute Resolution
- Conflict Over Authority to Terminate

- For Your Information**
- **Dispute Resolution in NAFTA**

Workers' Rights

- **Actions Against Anti-Pension Bill C-27**

Support the Peace Process in Colombia!

- **New Political Party Formed to Uphold the Peace**
 - **Message of Greetings**
 - **Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) -**
- **Ten Thousand Attend Concert for Peace and Reconciliation**

Cuba Hurricane Relief

- **The Hurricane Did Not Break Cubans' Spirit of Resistance**
- **Cuban Foreign Affairs Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla -**

Important Matters of War and Peace

U.S. President Threatens Fire and Brimstone at UN and Trudeau Postures as World's Great White Hope

This week on September 19 General Debate began at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York and will continue until September 25. At the General Assembly, Heads of State or government, or their representatives, address the United Nations stating their priorities for themselves, the world and the UN itself.

A low point, exhibiting for all to see the deep crisis in which the U.S. is mired, was the performance of its President Donald Trump. His vehement rhetoric promising fire and brimstone to all non-believers in the U.S. democracy shows how desperate the United States has become because it cannot command that the world fix its economic and all-sided crisis. The more it declares that it is the indispensable nation, the more all others become aware of the need to make sure they are not dispensed with.

Despite the fact that the U.S. and the failure of its democracy are culpable for the anarchy and violence which prevail worldwide, Trump blamed the "[a]uthority and authoritarian powers [who] seek to collapse the values, the systems, and alliances, that prevented conflict and tilted the world toward freedom since World War II."

Notwithstanding the failure of U.S. institutions to resolve the contradictions within the ruling circles or any problem in which the U.S. is mired, Trump cited the U.S. Constitution as a timeless and universal document which extends to the entire world. "We are celebrating the 230th anniversary of our beloved Constitution, the oldest constitution still in use in the world today. This timeless document has been the foundation of peace, prosperity, and freedom for the Americans and for



countless millions around the globe whose own countries have found inspiration in its respect for human nature, human dignity, and the rule of law," he said.

"In America, the people govern, the people rule, and the people are sovereign. I was elected not to take power, but to give power to the American people where it belongs," Trump asserted.

He put forward an irrational notion of sovereignty in which the U.S. has the sovereign right to decide what is best for it and everyone else:

"We must fulfill our sovereign duties to the people we faithfully represent. We must protect our nations, their interests and their futures. We must reject threats to sovereignty from the Ukraine to the South China Sea. We must uphold respect for law, respect for borders, and respect for culture, and the peaceful engagement these allow."



He issued a direct threat against the Korean people: "The United States has great strength and patience, but if it is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea ... the United States is ready, willing, and able, but hopefully this will not be necessary. That's what the United Nations is all about. That's what the United Nations is for. Let's see how they do."

He attacked Iran threatening to scrap the deal negotiated in 2015 between Iran, all Security Council members plus Germany, as well as the

European Union, to limit its peaceful nuclear energy program in return for the dropping of sanctions. "We cannot let a murderous regime continue these destabilizing activities while building dangerous missiles, and we cannot abide by an agreement if it provides cover for the eventual construction of a nuclear program. The Iran deal was one of the worst and most one-sided transactions the United States has ever entered into. Frankly, that deal is an embarrassment to the United States, and I don't think you've heard the last of it. Believe me," Trump said.

Trump then threatened the entire world with the U.S. war of terror. "From now on, our security interests will dictate the length and scope of military operation, not arbitrary benchmarks and timetables set up by politicians. I have also totally changed the rules of engagement in our fight against the Taliban and other terrorist groups," Trump declared.

"America stands with every person living under a brutal regime. Our respect for sovereignty is also a call for action. All people deserve a government that cares for their safety, their interests, and their well-being, including their prosperity."

For its part, the Government of Canada used its intervention during the UN General Assembly to contribute to the image that its Prime Minister is the Great White Hope who will achieve success where those who threaten fire and brimstone do not.

The fear and even terror inspired by the fire and brimstone performance of the U.S. President should not divert attention from the fact that the allegedly kinder and gentler Great White Hope serves the same private interests both governments represent.

In response to Trump's threats to "totally destroy" the DPRK, Prime Minister Trudeau was silent and instead joined Trump in blaming the DPRK for the dangerous situation. He told a news

conference, "I share everyone's concern over the reckless behaviour by the North Korean regime, and continue to believe that working with partners and allies in the region and around the world ... is the best way to de-escalate this situation." His answer to de-escalating this situation: allies and partners should also threaten the DPRK rather than the U.S. going it alone.

To show what this means, he opened the door to officially joining the U.S. missile defence program, which is part of U.S. pre-emptive strike capabilities against other nations. "We're continuing to look at the situation," he said. "We have not changed our position at this point, but we continue to engage in thoughtful ways to ensure we're doing everything we can and we must do to keep Canadians safe," he added.

At a gala reception, September 19, held by NATO's Atlantic Council on a decommissioned U.S. aircraft carrier, Trudeau received the Council's Global Citizen Award and delivered a speech -- described by the Council as a "Rallying Cry to Save the Global Order" -- that was almost identical to Trump's remarks earlier that day.

"Alliances that have underpinned global security and prosperity since 1945 are being put to the test, and the urgency of the challenges we share in common -- climate change and drought, income inequality, violent extremism, civil war and the mass migrations that result -- continues to grow," Trudeau said.

"Worldwide, the long-established international order is being tested. With Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and encroachment in Ukraine, we have seen the first major territorial seizure in Europe since the Second World War" he said.

"This is not the time for retrenchment. It is a time for the Atlantic democracies to renew our commitment to universal standards of rights and liberty, enforced through a multilateral, rules-based order that has promoted peace and stability, and stood the test of time."



This multilateral, rules-based order enforced by the UN, NATO, NORAD, and the World Trade Organization, spans both "soft and hard power," which is why, he said, Canada is also significantly boosting its defence spending.

While echoing Trump's threats against the Korean people, Trudeau hypocritically called for "opposing the scourges of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ethnic and religious bigotry, neo-fascism, neo-Nazism, and the violent extremism of Daesh that confront us in 2017."

"We cannot waver. It would be unconscionable to take even one step back in upholding the standards of decency of the sisterhood and

brotherhood of the human family that won the day in the most painful struggles of the last century," Trudeau said.

The UN has become an antiquated body which is no longer capable of upholding the international rule of law adopted in the post-WWII period. The takeover of the world by police powers in the hands of oligopolies and private interests, which will stop at nothing to make money, means that a new balance of power is required which can hold the destructive forces in check. There can be no expectation that such a power can be created within the imperialist system of states. It has to be created by humanity uniting in action in defence of its own interests.

***The Time to Act Is Now!
Make Canada a Zone for Peace!
Uphold Rights by Virtue of Being Human!
One Humanity, One Struggle!***



Fitting Replies to U.S. President's Threats



Jorge Arreaza, Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, replied to Trump's speech at a September 19 press conference: "The United States Government is in complete violation of all the principles of the UN Charter." Venezuela is a country of peace and no country can or has the right to violate Venezuela's sovereignty, he said. "We do not accept threats from President Trump, we are a people of peace and what we want are relations of mutual respect, not only with the United States, but with all the countries of the world," he added.

He accused the U.S. government and its allies in Latin America, Europe and elsewhere of trying to stifle and drown the Venezuelan people with the economic measures imposed by the White House to force a change of regime. "They want the people to suffer, they want to create and impose a humanitarian crisis in our country."

Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez responded to Trump's speech: "It was an unprecedented speech, aggressive, dominating, openly imperialist. I was surprised by Trump's manipulation of the issue of sovereignty for the United States, vassalage for the rest; totally ignoring the concept of sovereign equality that inspires the United Nations."

Rodríguez called Trump's attack on Venezuela "brutal, unjustified, arbitrary," and wondered what Trump was referring to when he called for additional actions against Venezuela -- "the armed option [or] something worse?"

He said Trump's threat to destroy Korea was extremely serious: "He threatens to set the Korean Peninsula on fire with a necessarily nuclear conflagration, which could endanger all of humanity -- conflict which cannot, in any way, be solved militarily."

Pointing out that Trump was the head of an empire responsible for the majority of wars taking place on the planet, and that this was a factor in the severe instability and very serious threats to peace and security internationally, Rodríguez said Trump did not have the slightest moral authority to criticize Cuba, "a small country, an island of solidarity that has broad international cooperation, a government of recognized honesty and transparency, a dignified, hard-working people, the site of Colombia's peace process, a country known for its stability."



In delivering Cuba's address to the General Assembly, Rodríguez said the "patriotism" invoked in the statement delivered by Trump embodied "an exceptionalist and supremacist vision of ignorant intolerance in the face of diverse political, economic, social and cultural models."

The leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Kim Jong Un, responded to Trump's speech in a September 21 statement released by the Korean Central News Agency. The statement noted the unhelpful nature of Trump's remarks only increases the tension on the Korean Peninsula and rejected Trump's insults against the DPRK and his threats to "totally destroy" a sovereign state, which go far beyond threats of regime change or to overturn a social system. Kim stated that Trump's remarks had only galvanized the DPRK in its present course of action, which is to bolster its self-defence capabilities until such time as the U.S. shows a willingness to enter into direct and genuine negotiations for peace.

Referring to "the dangerous situation on the Korean Peninsula," President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of the Republic of Uganda asked, "Who would lose if North Korea and South Korea, those kith and kin, were left alone to discuss their re-unification?" He said the Korean nation has been in existence since 1234 AD and was temporarily divided towards the end of the Second World War. He asked why this division should be allowed to be permanent and a source of dangerous tensions: "A unified Korea would be a very strong nation. Why do some actors fear strong nations in the world? Why should the Koreans themselves (North and South) allow external forces to continue to divide them?"

Bolivian President Evo Morales condemned unilateral sanctions and threats of invasion made by the United States government against Venezuela. "Our region is nobody's backyard," he said and called on the U.S. to end its blockade of Cuba and provide economic reparations, and return the territory occupied by its naval base in Guantánamo to Cuba. He added that any military solution on the Korean Peninsula must be avoided and negotiations resumed. "We must fight capitalism,

colonialism and imperialism," he said, adding that success in that regard would lead to equality, social justice, peace and development.



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said Trump's remarks were: "ignorant, absurd and hateful rhetoric."

"The exiting of the United States from [the nuclear agreement with Iran] would carry a high cost, meaning that subsequent to such an action by the United States of America, no one will trust America again," President Rouhani said in an interview with NBC before Trump's address to the United Nations General Assembly.

Rouhani said that should the United States pull out of the nuclear agreement, Iran would

consider going "back to previous activities," developing peaceful nuclear technology for energy production.

"So we will never go towards production of nuclear weapons, just as in the past we never intended to go towards that path, nor did we ever. It has always been peaceful," Rouhani affirmed.

(AVN, Cubadebate, UN News, Granma, Telesur)



For an Anti-War Government!

Canada's Iraq War Mission Extended

Since September 11, 2001, Canada has consistently been expanding its foreign military and police presence in Central and West Asia under U.S. and NATO command. While openly participating in the invasion of Afghanistan, the Chrétien Liberal government would not provide troops for the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, despite having done so during the previous U.S. invasions of Iraq. The Trudeau government has now taken up the challenge to provide an air of legitimacy for Canada's ongoing military actions in Iraq and their expansion. On June 29, the Trudeau government announced that its mission in Iraq would be extended for two more years and that the mission would be "adjusted." This is a far cry from its election claim that it would end Canada's combat mission in Iraq, giving the impression that it was against foreign military escalation. Shortly after being elected, the Trudeau government launched a new mission in the Middle East, focusing on Iraq and neighbouring countries such as Jordan and Lebanon.



The Canadian Press reports that Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff Jonathan Vance is being given

greater "flexibility" to decide what types of forces to deploy into the region, to a maximum of 850 military personnel. The presence of 200 special forces in Iraq has been publicly announced, as well as Canadian planes that provide refueling and reconnaissance for U.S. bombing raids. Vance's "flexibility" is actually aimed at meeting U.S. demands rather than being decided by the Canadian government. Flexibility may also mean giving Vance more powers to decide what these forces will do and under whose command. In March he told a House of Commons Committee that Canadian soldiers can shoot to kill if they determine "hostile intent" and then used weasel words to try to make this synonymous with self-defence. Aggressive actions by Canadian soldiers indicate they have already been given approval to shoot whomever they decide and then claim "hostile intent." Canada is also said to be adding a military transport aircraft to the mission, and estimates the overall cost of the new two-year mission at about \$378 million. It is not specified who will use this transport aircraft or what will be transported, however this is no doubt being put at the disposal of the U.S.



The CBC reports that Canada's Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland has also authorized the expansion of the Canadian policing mission in Iraq. The RCMP-led police force is currently made up of four officers in Iraq and will be ramped up to 20 within the year according to reports. It will be made up of provincial and municipal police officers under RCMP command. To put a progressive veneer over Canada's escalating involvement in U.S.-led aggression in Iraq, the government claims the emphasis will be on recruiting female officers. Left unsaid once again is that the ultimate authority and control over Canada's mission is with the U.S.

"We know that Canada can, has and will continue to do important work in our efforts in northern Iraq," Trudeau said. "Canada has a strong role to play as part of the international coalition against terrorism." What Trudeau fails to mention is Canadians' longstanding opposition to participating in a military mission in Iraq at the behest of the U.S. which destroyed the country in the first place.

Despite the changes, Minister of Defence Harjit Sajjan said the military would continue to operate within the confines of its previous "advise-and-assist" mandate. This mandate has been a fraud as Canadian troops have from the beginning been involved in direct combat as evidenced by the gloating of Canada's Prime Minister over the accuracy of Canadian snipers, one of whom is said to have killed someone deemed an ISIS fighter from 3.5 km away.



Meddling in the Name of "Empowering Women"

Since the forces led by the Syrian government have gained the upper hand in Syria, Canada has been unable to justify openly going into Syria which it had sought to do in the past. Recently, Canada announced \$45 million to fund programs in Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon, countries that

neighbour Syria.

The funding is allegedly to "assist grass roots women's organizations and assist Jordanian and Lebanese communities in hosting over 1,660,000 registered Syrian refugees." Canada has a history of financing various projects to recruit and use women as a means to meddle in countries' internal affairs in the name of "empowerment." For example, Canada has been playing this card for some time by "training" women to participate in UN-facilitated peace negotiations as part of the anti-Syrian government opposition forces.[1]

This posturing and ulterior motive are further exposed when one considers the Trudeau government's refusal to provide proper infrastructure and facilities to First Nations youth in their communities or ensure that the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women fulfills the demands of Indigenous peoples and the relatives of those murdered or disappeared.



The four programs Canada is funding are outlined below:

Improving municipal services and social resilience: To "improve municipal services and infrastructure in Jordanian municipalities that are hosting high numbers of Syrian refugees. Delivered in partnership with the World Bank Group and Jordan's Ministry of Municipal Affairs, this funding will also help to increase women's involvement in community level decision-making, improve their access to employment and services, and help municipal governments deliver gender-inclusive programs."

Improving solid waste management and income generation in host communities: "Delivered in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and Jordan's Ministry of Municipal Affairs, this initiative will help improve the capacity and working conditions at Al-Akeidar, Jordan's second-largest landfill. This contribution will also be used to establish a community-based recycling centre which will be operated by women of the northern region of Jordan."

Support for the Global Concessional Financing Facility: To "ensure that Jordan and Lebanon continue to have access to concessional-rate financing through the World Bank Group's Global Concessional Financing Facility. These low-cost loans will be used to finance public infrastructure that responds to the needs of Syrian refugees and the communities which host them."

The Middle East Women's Voice and Leadership Program: "This contribution will advance gender equality and women's empowerment in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. The funding will strengthen the capacity of a variety of grassroots women's organizations to empower and defend the rights of women and girls."[2]

Note

1. See ["Training the Syrian Opposition in the Name of Empowering Women" TML Weekly, May 28, 2016.](#)

2. "Canada provides support for initiatives in Jordan and the Middle East," PMO, August 29, 2017.



Get Canada Out of NAFTA!

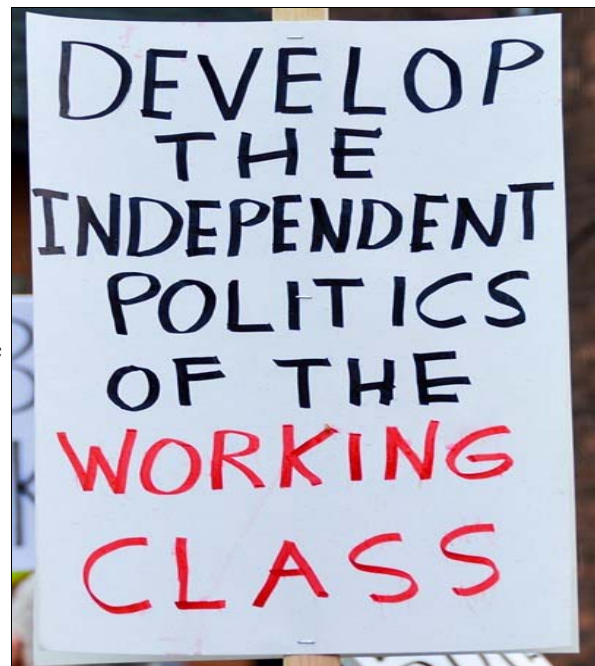
Build the Independent Politics of the Working Class! Manufacturing Yes! Nation Wrecking No!



The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and Unifor are supporting the NAFTA renegotiations. They justify this position by claiming they are pushing to ensure workers' rights are incorporated into the main text of the new agreement, if there is to be one. Who defines those workers' rights and what they entail are not discussed nor the fact that nowadays the ruling imperialist elite trample workers' rights into the mud with impunity, and NAFTA is one of their weapons.

The interests of the ruling elite who control the monopolies, global trade, NAFTA and the new CETA agreement with the European Union are diametrically opposed to the interests of the working class. How workers define their rights in practice, in the daily struggle with their employers and the state, as in the case of terms of employment, "mobility rights," the right to health and safety, security of employment, retirement, housing, etc is different from those in power at the workplace and in the state. How could it be otherwise within countries such as Canada, Mexico and the U.S. where class privilege rules.

The role the CLC and some national unions have given themselves to lobby for workers' rights within NAFTA serves to divert attention from the fact that what is being negotiated in the NAFTA talks is the further integration of Canada and Mexico into Fortress North America, as a bulwark against workers' rights and to line up the peoples



of all three countries behind U.S. imperialism's striving for world hegemony. Trade, energy, communications and security corridors are being put in place under the control of a new United States of North American Monopolies and Oligopolies, which act with impunity in North America and all over the world trampling on the rights of working people and nation-states.

The mass media also participate in diverting Canadians from the essence of the NAFTA negotiations by hyping so-called roadblocks to reaching an agreement. In this way, the people are led to feel anxious that an agreement will not be reached for otherwise U.S. President Trump will make good on threats to terminate it.[1]

A media report on September 14, quotes Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland characterizing the negotiations in the following manner: "The tone has been extremely cordial.... It's a very friendly environment."

Freeland is even quoted as saying that the lead negotiators may form a "book club." This is a deliberate attempt to trivialize the fact that the ruling imperialist elite are negotiating the fate of over 450 million people without their say and against their interests. To hide this trampling of people's rights, Freeland constantly refers to having common interests with the workers, which the participation of the CLC and Unifor in the talks is meant to confirm. Following the conclusion of negotiations in Mexico, Freeland told reporters, "All of us want to come out of this negotiation being able to say to workers in our countries, '**We** have achieved a deal that will improve **your** standard of living'" (Emphasis added).

The problem for Freeland is that the "**we**" she is referring to are the champions of attacking workers' rights in their own countries and abroad. To serve their narrow private interests, the monopolies and governments throughout Fortress North America have unleashed unprecedented violations of the rights of the working class and no amount of cheap talk about "**we**" can cover up this reality. Just this past Thursday, September 21, thousands of public sector workers in Nova Scotia marched in Halifax to denounce the provincial Liberal government for trampling on their rights. They declared through their actions and words that they are not part of the Freeland "**we**"!



The trade union centrals are doing nothing to position the Canadian working class to be an independent political force to make sure trade and all aspects of life favour the working people and not the monopolies and oligopolies who are driving the train. A powerful political movement is required at this time to end the situation that makes the working class easy prey for state-organized imposition of humiliating conditions throughout Fortress North America.

Get Canada Out of NAFTA!

***Manufacturing Yes! Nation-Wrecking No!
Stop Paying the Rich! Increase Funding for Social Programs!
No to the Integration of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico into
U.S. Homeland Security and Fortress North America!***

Note:

1. The media present the following matters as "roadblocks" to a deal, or what Mexican Economy Minister Idefonso Guajardo calls "the elephants in the room":

- "U.S.'s insistence on increasing the rules of origin, particularly in the automotive sector."
- "Canada and the U.S. demanding that Mexico raise wages and implement stricter enforcement of labour laws." The *Globe and Mail* reports that Canada and the United States "want a renegotiated NAFTA pact to include penalties if Mexico tries to keep worker wages low by not living up to labour standards set by the three countries."
- "U.S. trade deficit with Mexico."
- "Canada and Mexico's continued rejection of the American idea of eliminating dispute resolution mechanisms." This is a reference to the U.S. calls to eliminate Chapter 19, one of the measures that deals with disputes between governments rather than between investors and states, which is contained in Chapter 11.

Besides the matters above, the Mexican Economy Minister indicates that as many as 13 other chapters of the agreement would also be "tough to negotiate."

Guajardo says the specific areas being focused on in this round cover matters relating to "smaller businesses, transparency and food safety."



Dispute Resolution

Reports indicate that the Canadian government is pushing to use the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) version of the investor-state dispute resolution chapter in a new NAFTA agreement. CETA's measures are being presented by Canada as more fair, while the current Chapter 11 in NAFTA is presented as favouring the U.S.

On September 14, the *Globe and Mail* reported: "The goal of Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and her negotiating team is to revamp Chapter 11 so it more closely mirrors the investor-state dispute-resolution mechanism that forms part of the 2016 Canada-European Union trade deal [CETA], including set rosters of judges to hear these cases rather than ad hoc appointments of independent arbitrators. Ottawa is seeking a system where Canada, the United States and Mexico would establish set lists of judges who would be available to hear investor claims under Chapter 11."

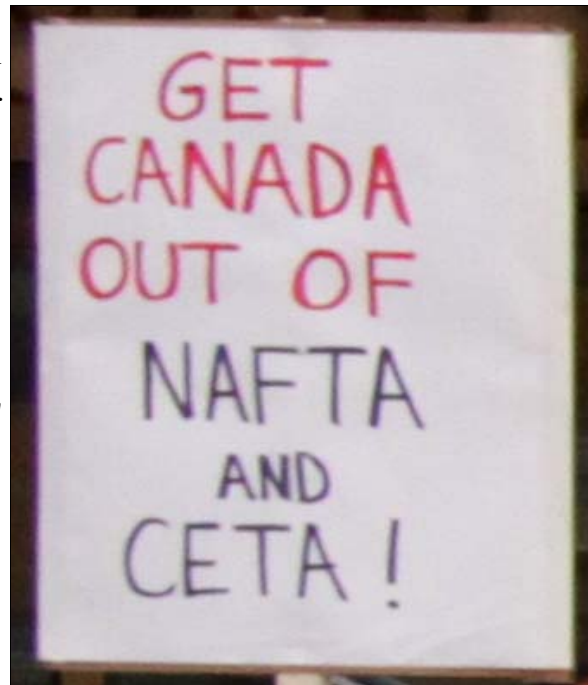
The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives calculates that the Canadian government has been required to pay out more than \$220 million under Chapter 11 damage claims by U.S. and Mexican investors. Mexico has paid out more than U.S.\$200 million but has faced fewer claims. The United States, by comparison, has not paid out any money to settle claims.

However, Belgium is currently challenging the CETA investor-state dispute resolution mechanism at the level of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Belgium contends the CETA mechanism violates the freedom of EU member states to legislate, in particular in the fields of public health and the environment, areas of great concern for the working people of Canada as well.

EURACTIV France reports that Belgium, on September 6, referred the "dispute resolution mechanism between investors and states in CETA" to the ECJ asking it to evaluate the validity of CETA's arbitration procedure under European law:

"The mechanism envisaged by CETA, which was supposed to favour the settlement of disputes between a state and a foreign investor, had to be re-examined for the first time upon request from France, which feared a lack of balance in the system.

"At the time of the official signing of the CETA in Brussels in October 2016, Wallonia -- Belgium's French-speaking region -- had threatened not to sign the treaty and denounced the potentially adverse effects of arbitration on the freedom of states to legislate, in particular in the fields of environment and of public health. If the signature had to take place, the legality of the arbitration procedure envisaged by the CETA had to be verified by the European Court."



Canada's Foreign Minister Freeland has bragged about forcing Wallonia to agree to submit to CETA's provisional implementation, however this has not resolved the matter. The Canadian government may be seeking to have this new dispute resolution mechanism enshrined in NAFTA so as to then demand it be accepted as part of CETA and other so-called progressive imperialist trade deals.

Either way, the dispute over "dispute resolution" has nothing to do with affirming the rights of the working people of North America or Europe. The people are blocked from having any say in the establishment of these trade deals and their terms. The negotiations are controlled by the ruling elite who serve the private interests of the monopolies and oligopolies. This or that dispute resolution

mechanism cannot address the fundamental contradiction that these international trade deals are meant to serve the narrow private interests of the most powerful corporations against the interests of the working people of all countries.



Conflict Over Authority to Terminate



Demonstration against second round of NAFTA renegotiations in Mexico City, September 1, 2017.

Much has been made about U.S. President Donald Trump's threats to terminate NAFTA if a deal acceptable to him is not reached by December. U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross has also confirmed the U.S. is seeking some automatic termination or "sunset" clause be included "to ensure the agreement can be constantly re-evaluated and improved," *Canadian Manufacturing* reports. "The five-year thing is a real thing that would force a systematic re-examination," Ross told a forum in Washington. "You'd have a forum for trying to fix things," he added. Canada and Mexico both oppose the idea on the basis that it would interfere with investments.

Following Ross' talk, Canada's Ambassador to the United States David MacNaughton told reporters, "One of the reasons you do [a trade agreement] is to create an environment within which business can make investments. [In] many of those investments people will look to 20 years', 25 years' payback. ... If you have to do it every five years, the pricing of political risk is very high. ... If every marriage had a five-year sunset clause on it, I think our divorce rate would be a heck of a lot higher than it is."

Mexico's Ambassador to the U.S. Gerónimo Gutiérrez agreed with MacNaughton saying, "It would probably have very detrimental consequences for the business community of the United States, Mexico and Canada.... Certainty is the key word here."

Canadian Manufacturing quotes Russ Crawford, of KPMG Canada concerning the demand for a sunset clause. Crawford explained that it is not about being able to "re-evaluate and improve" NAFTA as Ross says, but relates to the conflict between the office of the U.S. President and Congress and trying to limit the latter's ability to decide the fate of NAFTA.

Trump has continually been threatening to "tear up" NAFTA yet he does not explicitly have the power to do so. "The U.S. Constitution conveys authority to both the President and Congress in matters of foreign affairs," said Crawford. "NAFTA was enacted into law by the *NAFTA*



Implementation Act (NIA), but the NIA is silent on the question of who has the authority to abrogate the agreement -- there is no explicit authorization within the NIA for the President to unilaterally invoke the termination clause without Congressional approval." Crawford continued, "And unless a U.S. law has a 'sunset' date of self-termination, only Congress has the authority to repeal an existing law. Should President Trump move to unilaterally withdraw without Congressional approval, the issue may be litigated before the federal courts."

In addition, the ability of the U.S. President to re-negotiate NAFTA and submit it to Congress without Congress having the ability to amend the agreement -- also known as "fast-track authority" -- granted through the "Trade Promotion Authority," expires July 1, 2018. As well, U.S. mid-term elections take place November 6, 2018.

In all this, Canadians are supposed to rally behind opposition to a sunset clause on the basis that it will create "uncertainty" for business. Meanwhile, the dispute really has to do with the serious conflicts in the U.S. amongst contending forces of the ruling elite and their private interests. This contention was supposed to have been resolved in favour of one section or another with the elections for President and the U.S. Congress but this system to sort out who holds power no longer works. The fight amongst the ruling oligarchs and their representatives in government and throughout the state machine is constant and becoming ever more intense. The working people throughout North America have to stay out of these fights within the ruling elite and build their own independent political movements that can put all three countries on a new pro-social direction to solve their problems and deprive the ruling imperialist elite of the power to deprive the people of their rights.



For Your Information

Dispute Resolution in NAFTA

NAFTA contains three dispute resolution measures: Chapter 11 addresses disputes between investors and states; Chapter 19 addresses disputes between states; and Chapter 20 addresses the enforcement of NAFTA provisions in general.

Chapter 11

According to the Government of Canada, "Chapter 11 is the investment component of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which came into force in 1994. It establishes a framework of rules and disciplines that provides investors from NAFTA countries with a predictable, rules-based investment climate, as well as dispute settlement procedures which are designed to provide timely recourse to an impartial tribunal."

This obscures the experience the Canadian working people have had with Chapter 11. The investment component of NAFTA provides a "predictable" and "rules-based" climate for the monopolies to do as they please at the expense of the workers, their health and safety and the



natural environment. The decisions of these tribunals and the threat of going to one are used to attack the right of governments to decide at all levels and the right of working people to protest and win their grievances. The tribunals protect the ability of the monopolies to do as they please while limiting to the slightest degree any intervention on the part of governments or people to defend their rights.

The NAFTA Secretariat states:

[Chapter 11] establishes a mechanism for the settlement of investment disputes that assures both equal treatment among investors of the Parties to the Agreement in accordance with the principle of international reciprocity and due process before an impartial tribunal. A NAFTA investor who alleges that a host government has breached its investment obligations under Chapter 11 may, at its option, have recourse to one of the following arbitral mechanisms:

- the World Bank's International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID);
- ICSID's Additional Facility Rules; and
- the rules of the United Nations Commission for International Trade Law (UNCITRAL Rules).

Alternatively, the investor may choose the remedies available in the host country's domestic courts. An important feature of the Chapter 11 arbitral provisions is the enforceability in domestic courts of final awards by arbitration tribunals.

Global Affairs lists the following cases which are active or resolved to which Canada is a Party under Chapter 11:

Notices of Intent Received and Current Arbitrations

- Resolute Forest Products Inc. v. Government of Canada
- CEN Biotech Inc. v. Government of Canada
- Lone Pine Resources Inc. v. Government of Canada
- Clayton/Bilcon v. Government of Canada
- Mercer International Inc. v. Government of Canada
- Mesa Power Group LLC v. Government of Canada
- Murphy Oil Corporation vs Government of Canada
- Mobil Investments Canada Inc. vs Government of Canada

Previous Arbitrations to which Canada was a Party

- Eli Lilly and Company v. Government of Canada
- Windstream Energy LLC v. Government of Canada
- Mobil Investments Inc. and Murphy Oil Corporation v. Government of Canada
- St. Marys VCNA, LLC v. Government of Canada
- V. G. Gallo v. Government of Canada
- AbitibiBowater Inc. v. Government of Canada
- Centurion Health Corporation v. Government of Canada
- Chemtura Corp. v. Government of Canada
- Dow AgroSciences LLC v. Government of Canada
- Ethyl Corporation v. Government of Canada
- Merrill & Ring Forestry L.P. v. Government of Canada
- Pope & Talbot Inc. v. Government of Canada

- S.D. Myers Inc. v. Government of Canada
- United Parcel Service of America, Inc. (UPS) v. Government of Canada
- Detroit International Bridge Company v. Government of Canada

Chapter 19

The NAFTA Secretariat states:

[Chapter 19] establishes a mechanism to provide an alternative to judicial review by domestic courts of final determinations in antidumping and countervailing duty cases, with review by independent binational panels. A Panel is established when a Request for Panel Review is filed with the NAFTA Secretariat by an industry asking for a review of an investigating authority's decision involving imports from a NAFTA country.

Although Chapter 19 panel decisions are binding, there is one level of review of binational panel decisions that a NAFTA government may initiate in extraordinary circumstances. This is known as the Extraordinary Challenge Committee (ECC) procedure. The challenge is not an appeal of right but a safeguard to preserve the integrity of the panel process. If either government believes that a decision has been materially affected, by either a panel member having a serious conflict of interest, or the panel having departed from a fundamental rule of procedure or having exceeded its authority under the Agreement, either government may invoke review by a three-person, binational Extraordinary Challenge Committee, comprised of judges and former judges. ECC decisions, like Chapter 19 binational panel decisions, are binding as to the particular matter addressed.

Chapter 20

The NAFTA Secretariat states:

The dispute settlement provisions of Chapter 20 are applicable to all disputes regarding the interpretation or application of the NAFTA. The steps set out in Chapter 20 are intended to resolve disputes by agreement, if at all possible. The process begins with government-to-government (the Parties) consultations. If the dispute is not resolved, a Party may request a meeting of the NAFTA Free-Trade Commission (comprised of the Trade Ministers of the Parties). If the Commission is unable to resolve the dispute, a consulting Party may call for the establishment of a five-member arbitral panel.

Chapter 20 also provides for scientific review boards which may be selected by a panel, in consultation with the disputing Party, to provide a written report on any factual issue concerning environmental, health, safety or other scientific matters to assist panels in rendering their decisions. As well, disputes relating to the following chapters may be referred to dispute settlement procedures under Chapter 20:

- Chapter 7 (Agriculture and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures);
- Chapter 10 (Government Procurement);
- Chapter 11 (Non-compliance of a Party with a final award); and
- Chapter 14 (Financial Services).



Workers' Rights

Actions Against Anti-Pension Bill C-27

Ottawa



On September 18, close to 100 people participated in a demonstration in front of Finance Minister Bill Morneau's office in Ottawa. The action was organized by the Ottawa Committee for Pension Security to highlight Morneau's conflict of interest in pushing anti-pension Bill C-27.

Many retirees and active workers from components of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC), the Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Unifor and a large contingent of postal workers from the Ottawa Local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) took part in the protest. The demonstrators shouted slogans denouncing Bill C-27, a Liberal law that would allow employers to retroactively convert secure defined benefit pension plans into high risk target benefit schemes. In particular, the retirees and workers expressed their anger about the clear conflict of interest the bill represents for Mr. Morneau, given that his family business, Morneau Shepell specializes in transitioning defined benefit pensions to target benefit plans.



The demonstrators delivered letters to Morneau's office demanding the immediate withdrawal of Bill C-27. A letter laying conflict of interest complaints against the Finance Minister was also delivered to the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson.

The Ottawa Committee for Pension Security vowed to continue working to stop the anti-pension bill and will be announcing further actions to demand that the Liberals do not introduce it in the House of Commons for second reading.

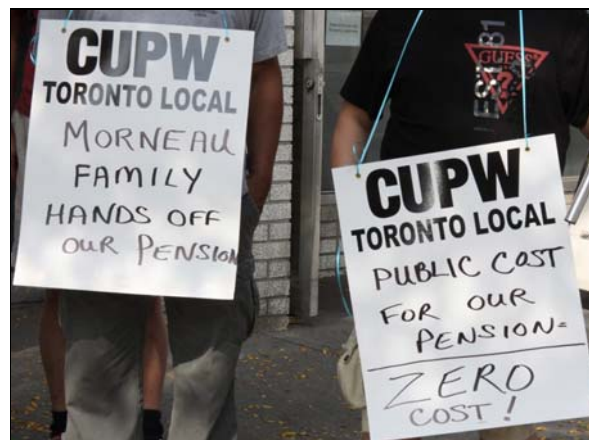


Toronto



Also on September 18, retired and active postal workers and their allies, including activists from the Workers' Centre of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), held a militant action at Morneau's Toronto constituency office to oppose Bill C-27. The action was organized by the Toronto chapter of the National Organization of Retired Postal Workers.

Various speakers at the action pointed out that the changes introduced in Bill C-27 are anti-worker and a scheme to enable companies to abrogate their responsibilities to uphold their obligations to their workers' pensions.



Megan Whitfield, President of the Toronto Local of CUPW denounced Bill C-27 as an attack on the rights of all workers to a secure and guaranteed retirement. She pointed out that pensions do not come from the largess of the companies or Crown Corporations such as Canada Post, but are earned by and belong to the workers. Companies have no right to lay claim to these monies she

noted. She stated that the postal workers will step up their organized fight against this unjust bill.

Learie Charles, Grievance Officer for the Scarborough Local of CUPW, spoke out against the anti-social attacks of governments at all levels on workers' pensions and benefits. He said that pensions are a right and they must be defended and expanded to include all workers, especially those who are not unionized, and that the social benefits that workers need for a secure retirement should be guaranteed. He also noted that the politicians who make these anti-worker policies have fat pensions and benefits that are guaranteed. He also emphasized that workers cannot rely on any of the parties currently holding seats in the government to defend their interests, but only on their own political organizing in defence of their rights.



Speaking on behalf of the rally organizers, Roger Delorme, a retired postal worker from Penetanguishene, said that the Liberals will have to be defeated in the next federal election for their attacks against workers. He called on the postal workers and other workers to join in defeating the anti-worker Trudeau Liberal government. This was also the opinion of Susan Scott-Mallett, another retired postal worker who travelled from London, Ontario to take part in the action.

The organizers thanked everyone for their support and called on participants to come out to future actions to defeat Bill C-27.



Support the Peace Process in Colombia!

New Political Party Formed to Uphold the Peace

In fulfilment of commitments made as part of the Final Peace Agreement it signed with the Government of Colombia, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) has now handed over all its weapons to the United Nations and ceased to exist as an armed organization. From August 27 to September 1, a historic Founding Congress was held in Bogotá in which the FARC officially transformed from a political-military organization to a political party, Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (People's Alternative Revolutionary Force) -- FARC that will be registered with the country's national electoral authorities.



**Founding Congress of new FARC political party, Bogotá, Colombia, August 27-September 1, 2017.
Banner reads: "National Congress of the FARC-EP for a Transitional Government for Reconciliation and Peace."**

The retention of the familiar acronym FARC recognizes the organization's accumulated history and revolutionary political traditions and makes clear that its members are not defensive at all about their past as they move into this new phase of political struggle.



A red rose with a red star in its centre is the symbol of the new party.

The FARC plans to contest elections at all levels and will seek to build a broad coalition of all those committed to ensuring that the Peace Accords are fully implemented. It has given the call for a transitional government of national reconciliation. As part of the Final Peace Agreement, the FARC is guaranteed ten seats in the Colombian Congress (five in the House of Representatives, five in the Senate) for the next two electoral periods (2018-2026). Showing the formidable force of the new party, the Congress was held at the Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada Convention Center in Bogotá and attended by 1,200 delegates representing members of the FARC-EP as well as 300 national and international guests and observers plus hundreds of representatives of national and international media organizations. Plenary sessions and some other proceedings of the Congress were open to the press and live-streamed on the internet.

Congress Proceedings

The Congress opened with messages of greetings sent by political parties and other organizations

from around the world. A video message from the National Liberation Army (ELN) sent from Ecuador where the ELN is currently engaged in its own peace process with the Colombian government was the first to be presented. Among the invited guests who delivered greetings at the opening session was a representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba who said his party would immediately open official relations with the new party.



FARC-EP leader Timoleón Jiménez (Rodrigo Londoño) delivered the official opening address, emphasizing that without losing sight of the many challenges and difficulties ahead, celebrating the historic founding Congress publicly and in the capital of the country represented a real victory, something he said was "unthinkable" a few short years ago.

In his speech Jiménez said that becoming an exclusively political organization and carrying out its activities by legal means did not mean the FARC was in any way renouncing its ideological foundations or project for society. "We will continue being as revolutionary as the Marquetilians [peasants who took up armed self-defence against Colombian state violence in the countryside around Marquetalia, Tolima and founded the FARC in 1964 -- *TML*], we will hold on to our Bolivarian flags and the freedom-loving traditions of our people to fight for power and lead Colombia to the full exercise of its national sovereignty, and for the creation of people's sovereignty," he said. "We will continue fighting for the establishment of a democratic political regime that guarantees peace with social justice, respect for human rights and economic development with well-being for all of us who live in Colombia."

"As we have always done," he said, "we will respond to our adversaries on one or the other extreme of the political spectrum with deeds, without the need of getting into complicated debates. Our best argument will be the masses organized and in motion in the most diverse scenarios, facing the regime and the system with real skill."

Central Political Report

The Central Political Report to the Congress was delivered by Iván Márquez, who led the FARC-EP Peace Delegation at the negotiation table in Havana. He said the war had been imposed on the FARC, but they never considered armed resistance as an end in itself, making numerous attempts over the years to seek a political solution which finally came to fruition with the Final Peace Agreement negotiated in Havana.

"The peace we have attained is not a perfect peace, inasmuch as it is a negotiated peace; it is the peace of the continuation of social conflict and of the continuity of our aspirations and aims which we have never renounced, nor will we renounce by using exclusively political means. It is a peace based on agreements, in our opinion minimum and basic, to make progress in overcoming the original causes and the persistence of the armed uprising, and above all, to offer and leave to Colombian society a legacy that opens up the possibility of initiating a process of political, economic, social and cultural democratization that, if it materializes, will forever transform the life of society as a whole and open avenues for the well-being and good living (*buen vivir*) of the large majority.

Marquez said starting to get the Peace Accords implemented, achieving the reincorporation of the guerrillas into civilian life and beginning legal political activity would all involve lengthy processes and many interrelated challenges. All must be seen and understood as contentious areas, affected as they are by the social and class conflicts inherent in the capitalist social order, he said.

The report also addressed the importance of political power for enforcing the Agreement reached in Havana which touches all aspects of Colombian life, and ensuring the peace is maintained: "Our political strategy has as its basis and reference our aspiration to contribute to forming a new political and social power, to transforming and overcoming the existing social order. In developing this aim, we see our political action as the mechanism for contending for state power, including on the one hand access to representation and government positions at different levels, and on the other, the creation of a new social power 'from below' by all the various social sectors." [...]

"Not only because it is a commitment derived from the Agreement, but because we cannot be indifferent to either the presidential election or the formation of the new Congress, under the circumstances our proposal for a transitional government assumes particular relevance."

Márquez said it was essential to ensure there are favourable conditions for the implementation of all the accords: "We will not tire of saying that the agreements are not for the FARC-EP or the political party that will emerge from it in this founding Congress; they were conceived to benefit the whole of Colombian society and in particular the poor and dispossessed in the countryside."

Márquez emphasized that a key feature of the accords still not implemented involves the release of all FARC-EP political prisoners. Over a thousand remain in jail despite the Amnesty Law being passed and approved almost nine months ago.

Decisions Taken

During the Congress, delegates discussed new statutes for the party, as well as its platform and program, and worked in different commissions, some portions of which were open to the press and live-streamed. Delegates also elected the party's National Council consisting of 111 members. In a communiqué issued following its first plenary session held September 2-3, the National People's Council announced the appointment of a 15-member National Political Council, with Timoleón Jiménez named president of the new party.



Press Conference announcing the founding of the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force, September 1, 2017.

The National People's Council said it reaffirmed "the spirit of unity of the new party ... and the need to move towards a transitional government of national reconciliation." It also reaffirmed the words of Timoleón Jiménez at the opening session of the Congress: "We have to be fully aware of the extent to which we must address the nation, without dogmas or sectarianism, unrelated to all ideological ostentation, with clear and simple proposals."

The communiqué ended by expressing appreciation for the bilateral ceasefire agreement reached by the Colombian government and the ELN on September 4, calling it "a step towards the peace in Colombia we all dream of, and a manifestation of the parties' commitment to the different sectors of civil society, which have made the triumph of peace its banner."

(Quotations from speeches and the Central Political Report translated from original Spanish by TML.)



Message of Greetings

- Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) -

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) sends revolutionary greetings to the historic Founding Congress of the new political party of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia being held this week in Bogotá along with best wishes for the success of its very important work.

CPC(M-L) is confident that after 53 years of fighting with great sacrifice as an organized contingent of the Colombian people, the FARC will be able to continue the fight successfully under the new conditions and with new forms to consolidate peace with social justice and build together with others the new Colombia in which the people are sovereign and everyone's rights are affirmed.

Congratulations for the victories achieved so far despite all the attempts by forces of the old to obstruct the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. Congratulations to all the Colombian people, especially the youth, who have put heart and soul into working for a genuine and lasting

peace, thereby contributing to making Latin America and the Caribbean a zone of peace.

We wish you every success in the work you have taken up to unite all the forces that can be united to seek political and social rather than military solutions to Colombia's political and social problems.

You can count on the Canadian working class and people to continue standing with the Colombian people in the cause of peace with social justice and against imperialist intervention in Our America.

Fraternal greetings,

Central Committee, Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)



Ten Thousand Attend Concert for Peace and Reconciliation



Revealing the broad support for the work of the FARC, 10,000 people, including many youth, packed Plaza de Bolívar, the main square in the Colombian capital Bogotá to attend the Concert for Peace and Reconciliation and launch of the new political party, People's Alternative Revolutionary Force -- FARC. The historic square is framed by the National Congress building and National Courthouse, the city's main cathedral and the office of the Mayor of Bogotá. A host of well-known national and international artists and musical groups as well as several of

FARC's own balladeers and rap singers performed for the enthusiastic crowd at the public celebration.

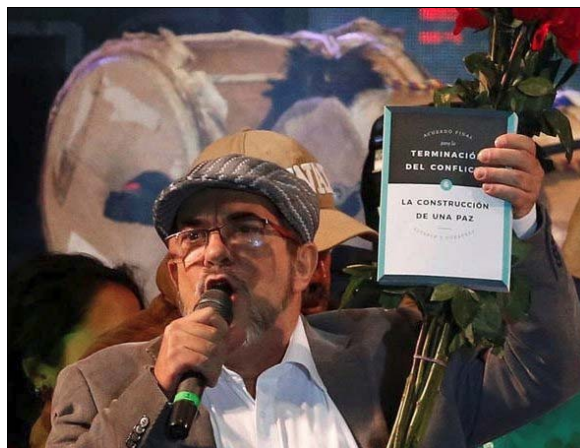
Among those who lent their talents and good will to the celebration was Totó la Momposina, a world-renowned singer and musicologist from Colombia's Caribbean region whose performances artfully combine African, Indigenous and Spanish musical traditions, rhythms and themes.

Another high point was a traditional Indigenous ceremony which took place after Timoleón Jiménez delivered the evening's only speech. Elders of the Ancestral Peoples from different regions of Colombia and the Lakota people from Dakota delivered greetings and shared their hopes for peace across the continent, after which they smoked a *chanupa* (Lakota ceremonial pipe) in recognition of the significance of the occasion.

The broad participation at this mass event smashes to smithereens the spectre created by the ruling circles in Colombia and their backers in the United States and Canada who never cease portraying the FARC as an isolated and criminal force, even as victimizers of Indigenous and Afro-Colombians, when in fact they represent the highest aspirations of the Colombian people for a New Colombia of their own making.

In his speech, Timoleón Jiménez said, "We want to build a different country with all of you, a country in which violence disappears once and for all from the political scene, where no one is persecuted, assassinated or disappeared for thinking differently. A country in which no one feels obliged to take up arms to defend their life, where the response to protest and social non-conformity is not brutality at the hands of the [riot squad]."

He said the FARC had demonstrated its sincerity in many ways -- by engaging in a total ceasefire, by moving its forces into the transitional zones, by completely abandoning its arms, providing an inventory of its war economy and beginning the process of handing over all of its assets, which are to be used as reparations for victims of the war.



The search for the truth of the conflict and reparations for its victims was at the heart of the Peace Accords negotiated in Havana, said Jiménez, adding that the instruments agreed upon would be responsible for revealing what actually happened. "We do not fear justice. On the contrary, we cry out for it, for a country where impunity disappears forever, irrespective of the social status or political condition of those responsible," he said.

(Quotations translated from original Spanish by TML.)



Cuba Hurricane Relief

The Hurricane Did Not Break Cubans' Spirit of Resistance

- Cuban Foreign Affairs Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla -

TML Weekly is reproducing below a statement by Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, to a meeting held in solidarity with the countries affected by Hurricane Irma at the United Nations in New York, September 18. The meeting brought attention to the hurricane's devastation of Caribbean Island states and aimed to secure the commitments of member states to support those countries and peoples affected.

Hurricane Irma Relief & Reconstruction for Cuba Campaign



To assist Cuba in its immense efforts of recovery and reconstruction, the Canadian Network On Cuba (CNC) is launching the Hurricane Irma Relief & Reconstruction for Cuba Campaign.

Send donations to:

CNC Hurricane Relief
56 Riverwood Terrace
Bolton, ON L7E 1S4

Please make cheques out to the Canadian Network On Cuba and write "CNC Hurricane Irma Relief Fund" on your cheque's memo line.

All donations will be forwarded 100 per cent directly to Cuba.

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Distinguished Representatives of the Caribbean Nations,

Gentlemen of the General Secretariat,

Dear Ministers and Heads of Delegations, representatives of agencies of the United Nations System, delegates and guests,

We are deeply grateful for the convening of this meeting, at such a difficult time for the countries affected by the destructive hurricane Irma.

Cuba expresses its sincere condolences to the relatives of the deceased and to the victims, to the peoples and authorities of all the affected territories.

The hurricane hit Cuba for more than 72 hours, and particularly struck almost the entire north coast of the country. Virtually no territory of the archipelago was exempt from its effects. Despite the large number of preventive measures undertaken, we suffered the loss of 10 human lives.

It has been a really hard blow. The sectors of housing, agriculture and the electro-energetic system, among others, were seriously damaged. The fruits of years of intense work of our people were erased by hurricane Irma in a few hours.

But the hurricane did not break the spirit of resistance of Cubans. As President Raúl Castro Ruz said in his message to our people in the recovery stage: "our people are reborn with every adversity."

As has been customary throughout the Cuban Revolution, all necessary resources will be used to ensure that no one is left unprotected.

Mr. President,

I would like to seize this opportunity to express our appreciation for the many expressions of solidarity and offers of help received from numerous governments, parliaments, international organizations and the civil society.

We reiterate our solidarity and willingness to cooperate, to the extent of our modest possibilities, with the brotherly peoples and governments of the countries affected by the hurricane. In Antigua and Barbuda, there were already 54 Cuban health workers, who were joined by specialists and technicians in electricity networks after the passage of the hurricane. All of them are contributing to the country's recovery. I mention this merely to argue a call to prioritize, in mobilizing international aid, those states and territories that, due to their small size, small population and limited capacity to generate their own resources, will face the greatest challenges in recovering after hurricane Irma.

As rightly said, this fact among other events reveals the priority that addressing climate change represents for humanity, under the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, and in particular the need for a special and differentiated treatment to small island states such as Cuba's sister nations now severely affected.

Thank you very much.

(Cubaminrex)



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