

A Commentary on the 23rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties

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ABSTRACT

The 23rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties was held on 19-22 October 2023 in Izmir, Turkey. It was held against the background of the deepening crisis of capitalism, the continuous outbreak of regional wars, the rise of social and workers' movements, the relentless increase in anti-communist activities, the convening of congresses by new parties, and the success of some political parties in the elections. The meeting explored issues arising from the current regional wars, expressed solidarity with the world socialist and anti-imperialist movements, discussed the new requirements of ideological struggle in a field changed by capitalist information technology, and finally formulated a joint action plan. The international meeting embodied the spirit of internationalism among the various communist and workers' parties, but at the same time it also revealed certain conflicts and differences.

KEYWORDS

international meetings
of communist and
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socialism; capitalism;
wars

The 23rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (IMCWP) took place on 19-22 October 2023. The meeting was hosted by the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) in Izmir, Turkey and attended by 121 representatives of 68 parties from 54 countries. The theme of the meeting was as follows: "The political and ideological battles to confront capitalists and imperialism. The tasks of communists to inform and mobilize the working class, youth, women, and intellectuals in the struggle against exploitation, oppression, imperialist lies and historical revisionism; for the social and democratic

rights of workers and peoples; against militarism and war, for peace and socialism.”¹ The meeting resulted in a Plan of Action, a Declaration and six Solidarity Statements voluntarily signed by some of the participating political parties.

1. Background to the meeting

Since the 22nd International Meeting of Communists and Workers’ Parties in 2022, the world socialist movement and the international situation have been changed by the deepening crisis of capitalism, the outbreak of new regional wars, the continuing rise of social and workers’ movements and of anti-communist activities in retaliation, the convening of new party congresses by many parties, and the success of some political parties in the elections.

1) The deepening crisis of capitalism and the outbreak of new regional wars

As a result of the intensification of the fundamental contradictions within capitalist society, the capitalist countries are showing a profound crisis on many fronts. At this international meeting, the communist and the workers’ parties of all the parties in the meeting elaborated on the present state of development of the current crisis of capitalism. Firstly, capitalism is in serious ecological crisis. The Iraqi Communist Party pointed out that “The general crisis of capitalism has returned with ferocity after the failure of neoliberalism to provide any solutions to it. Among its important new features are environmental degradation, global warming and climate change, which increasingly express a profound contradiction between capitalism and life itself.”² Secondly, capitalism is still experiencing a profound economic crisis. The Party of Labour of Austria stated that “The Austrian working class is confronted with an extraordinarily high inflation rate continuing in 2023. In August alone, prices in Austria rose by 7.4%, the prices for everyday needs even rose by 9.5%. The sharpest increases were registered in the prices for the cheapest products.”³ Furthermore, under the multiple crises of capitalism is the crisis of the lives of the population. In the capitalist society, the number of poor people is increasing and the real quality of life of the people is decreasing. The Communist Party of Sri Lanka stated that “Half a million Sri Lankan jobs were lost between 2021 and 2022, while those who continued to work have undergone a 15% decline in their real incomes. Sri Lanka’s poverty rate doubled from 13.1% in 2021 to 25.6% in 2022, corresponding to an additional 2.7 million falling into poverty within the span of one year. The urban poverty rate has tripled to 15% and more than 50% of the estate population (the rural area population) is now below the poverty line.”⁴ The Communist Party of Greece stated that “the real income of the people is decreasing; social security and labour rights are being taken away; inflation, high prices and unemployment continue to rise; flexible

1 23rd International Meeting of Communist & Workers Parties, <http://solidnet.org/meetings-and-statements/imcwp/23rd-international-meeting-of-communist-workers-parties/>

2 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Iraqi CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Iraqi-CP/>

3 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Party of Labour of Austria, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Party-of-Labour-of-Austria/>

4 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Sri Lanka, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Sri-Lanka/>

forms of employment are expanding and working hours are increasing; education, welfare and health care are being further commercialized; the problem of people's housing is becoming more acute."⁵

In the crisis of capitalism, war has become an option for the capitalist countries to get out of the crisis. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has been going on for two years now and has not yet ended, while other territorial conflicts are still raging. On April 15, 2023, clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces broke out in various parts of the Sudan, which led to a civil war. On October 7, 2023, armed clashes broke out between the Palestinian armed groups led by Hamas and the Israeli army. The conflict began with a Hamas incursion into southern Israel, which was immediately followed by retaliatory air strikes on the Palestinian Gaza Strip and preparations for a ground invasion of Gaza a few days later. Since the outbreak of the current round of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, 31,884 Palestinians have been killed and more than 72,889 injured⁶. The continued outbreak of regional wars has exacerbated the instability of the world's political situation.

2) The continuing rise of social and workers' movements and of anti-communist activities in retaliation

Within the context of the deepening crisis of capitalism and the outbreak of regional wars, a number of social and workers' movements have erupted in various parts of the world. First of all, large-scale demonstrations against war and imperialism broke out all over the world. Resistance movements in solidarity with the Palestinian people have been organized around the world, the largest of which took place in Ramallah–Amman–Baghdad–Hebron–Madrid–Glasgow–Paris–Amsterdam–Rabat–London–Tokyo–Brussels."⁷ Second, the workers' movement is expanding. On November 24, 2022, more than 70,000 faculty and staff at 150 universities in the United Kingdom embarked on a three-day strike action over wages, pensions, and working conditions. The strike was billed as "the largest in the history of higher education"⁸. On January 19, 2023, retirement and pension cuts in France triggered more than 200 mass demonstrations and strikes involving more than two million people across the country. On September 15, 2023, for the first time in its history, the United Automobile Workers of America (UAW) took action against Ford, General Motors, and Stellantis, three major automobile companies, in simultaneous strikes.

In response to the development of the social and workers' movement, capitalist governments intensified their usual anti-communist activities. First of all, there were arrests and house arrests of Communist leaders by authorities. Mikhail Kononovich, First Sec-

5 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Greece, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Greece/>

6 Israel's war on Gaza live: Qatar says truce deal 'not near', <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/3/12/israels-war-on-gaza-live-2000-medical-staff-starving-in-north-ministry?update=2767558>.

7 Large Demonstrations in All the World with Palestinian People Against Israel and Imperialism, <https://maoistroad.blogspot.com/2023/10/large-demonstrations-in-all-world-with.html>.

8 Strikes to Hit 150 Universities and Colleges as Lecturers and Support Staff Prepare for First Day of National Action, <https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/b/strikes-hit-150-universities-and-colleges-as-lecturers-and-support-staff-launch-first-day-of-national-action>.

retary of the Leninist Communist Youth of Ukraine, and his brother Alexander Kononovich, a fellow Komsomol member and antifascist activist, were released from pre-trial detention under a court ruling but remain under house arrest. On August 16, 2023, the Ukrainian secret police force, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), announced that it had arrested senior Communist Party members, leader of the Ukrainian Anti-Fascist Committee, George Buiko. Secondly, communist landmarks were demolished by the authorities in many countries. In Bulgaria, on the proposal of the pro-European Union “Democratic Bulgaria” party, the city council of the Bulgarian capital decided to remove the monument to the Soviet Red Army in Sofia. Furthermore, the seat of the Communist Party was vandalized by the authorities, and on March 8, 2023, the Israeli police raided the headquarters of the Israeli Communist Party in Nazareth, arresting the municipal secretary and illegally confiscating the party’s flag.

3) The convening of new party congresses by many parties and the success of some political parties in the elections

The National Congress of communist or workers’ parties is the highest authoritative body within them and the convening of the new Party Congresses shows the way and provides guidelines for the future work of each party. The International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties is an important platform for communist and workers’ parties to communicate the latest analysis and spirit of their congresses. Since the 22nd International Meeting of the Communist and Workers’ Parties, some of the participating parties of the International Meeting of the Communist and Workers’ Parties have held a new session of their national congresses. For example, the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of Venezuela, the 7th Congress of the Communist Party of Mexico, the 25th Congress of the German Communist Party, the 4th Congress of the Communist Party (Italy), the 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Swaziland, the 39th Congress of the Communist Party of France, the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of Jordan, the 37th Congress of the Communist Party of Belgium and the 10th Congress of the Communist Party of Pakistan.

Socialist and communist parties also won considerable popular support in elections. The Communist Party of Greece and the Communist Party of Austria were the highlights of non-governing communist parties’ electoral successes. The Communist Party of Austria achieved its best result in Salzburg since 1949, with 11.7% of the vote and four seats in the Salzburg state parliamentary elections on April 23, 2023. The Communist Party of Greece achieved a 2% increase, receiving 7.23%, i.e. more than 425,000 votes (125,000 more votes in comparison with the previous elections) and electing 26 MPs (11 more MPs in comparison with the previous elections).⁹ The party also elected six party members as mayors in the local elections held in October.

2. Main content of the meeting

This international meeting explored a number of issues in the context of the current war, expressed solidarity with the world socialist and anti-imperialist movements, discussed the program of ideological struggle under the capitalist information technology, and formulated a joint plan of action.

⁹ Significant Rise of the KKE, a Hopeful Message for the People, <https://inter.kke.gr/en/articles/Significant-rise-of-the-KKE-a-hopeful-message-for-the-people/>.

1) Exploration of a number of issues in the context of the current war

Given that the meeting was held against the backdrop of several regional wars, the issue of capitalist war became a hot topic of discussion.

First, the delegates analysed the nature of the current war to gain a deeper understanding of its root causes and motives and appreciate its complexity and far-reaching effects and to understand how to better prevent war and solve the problems brought about by it. First of all, delegates considered the internal contradictions of capitalist countries to be the root cause of the war. The Union of Communists of Ukraine pointed out that “the financial and economic crisis of 2007-2009 has not been completely overcome and has acquired a protracted character, which makes it difficult to take control of the imbalances and contradictions between competing economies by peaceful means and forces capitalists to resort to force methods to preserve their leading place in the global balance of power.”¹⁰ Next, the capitalist search for markets and plundering of resources and energy are the direct cause of imperialist wars. The Communist Party of Greece stated that “we are facing the intensification of imperialist competition for the control of markets, raw materials and economic-trade routes of strategic importance, which is the cause of imperialist wars.”¹¹ Moreover, war is an important means by which United States imperialism maintains its global hegemony. The Iraqi Communist Party stated that “instead of the era of unipolar hegemony continuing and the United States remaining an undisputed superpower, it is facing the decline of its economic dominance. It is actively seeking to obstruct the formation of a new world order whose features are beginning to emerge, with the changing balance of power and the decline in the productive capacity of capitalist countries. In this context, war hysteria is being fuelled.”¹² The Communist Party of Belgium also pointed out that “In its desperation to save its economic system and international dominance, the United States has engaged in relentless wars against any country that tries to get out or remain free from its control. All over the world, poor and oppressed peoples and workers face the same enemy: the imperialist bloc led by the United States.”¹³

Secondly, the assembled delegates jointly condemned the military actions of capitalist governments and NATO. NATO’s policies of expanding and exporting wars and the performances of capitalist governments during the Russia-Ukraine conflict were unanimously condemned by the participating political parties. First of all, NATO, as the military organization of the West to wage war, was condemned by the Communist and Workers’ Parties at the meeting. The Communist Party of India pointed out at the meeting that “Russia-Ukraine conflict and recent Israel-Palestine conflict show clearly the designs of imperialist forces and working of military industrial complex in spreading wars for profit. Expansion of NATO and its aggressive designs are responsible for the Russia-Ukraine conflict and inability of international community to implement two state solution and agreement to resolve Israel-Palestine conflict is responsible for present escalations and

10 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Union of Communists of Ukraine, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Union-of-Communists-of-Ukraine/>

11 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Greece, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Greece/>

12 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Iraqi CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Iraqi-CP/>

13 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Belgium, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Belgium-00001/>

loss of human life.”¹⁴ The Communist Party of South Africa stated that “Russia’s military intervention in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 is the culmination of a long process of the deterioration of the global order. The tense geopolitical atmosphere can be attributed to the provocative eastern expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation to the borders of Russia. The NATO’s military expansion to the eastern borders of Russia was accompanied by the deployment of offensive intermediate-range missile systems in the European Baltic states close to the Russian borders provoking an aggressive offensive.”¹⁵

Next, the participating political parties condemned capitalist governments’ approach to the war. The Communist Party of Belgium pointed out that the Belgian government has provided 316 million euros in military aid to Ukraine, “an increase in the Belgian military budget of 100%. Spending more money on the so-called ‘defence’, the arms industry, is done directly at the expense of the social needs of the population, public services, hospitals, social housing and schools.”¹⁶ The Party of Labour of Austria stated that it “rejects the continuing integration of Austria into imperialist alliances. Such imperialist alliances and rearmament initiatives increase the danger of war also for the Austrian people. They are the basis of increasingly aggressive intra-imperialist conflicts, under which the working class suffers and for which the people pays.”¹⁷ The Communist Party of Finland also stated that “unfortunately in addition to NATO membership, the Finnish government also acts in other ways, which increase military tensions in our neighbourhood. In addition to the fast-swelling defence budget, which has inflated to record levels, it is currently negotiating on a bilateral defence cooperation with the United States.”¹⁸

Thirdly, the assembled parties discussed disputes about the nature of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Since its outbreak in 2022, there have been major disagreements between the Communist and Workers’ Parties over how to characterize it. At the 22nd International Meeting of the Communist and Workers’ Parties in 2022, two different resolutions¹⁹ were adopted on the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. At the 23rd International Meeting of the Communist Party and the Workers’ Party, the dispute over the Russia-Ukraine conflict continues. One side considered the Russia-Ukraine conflict as an inter-imperialist war and took a negative attitude towards it. The Communist Party of Greece pointed out in the meeting that “the war is being waged on the responsibility and for the interests of the bourgeois classes and is imperialist on both sides.”²⁰ The Communist Party of the

14 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of India, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-India/>

15 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by South African CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-South-African-CP/>

16 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Belgium, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Belgium-00001/>

17 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Party of Labour of Austria, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Party-of-Labour-of-Austria/>

18 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Finland, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Finland/>

19 Resolution on the imperialist war on the territory of Ukraine, <http://solidnet.org/article/22nd-IMCWP-RESOLUTION-on-the-imperialist-war-on-the-territory-of-Ukraine/>. The Struggle Against USA and NATO Imperialism which Seek World Hegemony is the Key Task of the Progressive Forces, <http://solidnet.org/article/22nd-IMCWP-The-Struggle-Against-USA-and-NATO-Imperialism-which-Seek-World-Hegemony-is-the-Key-Task-of-the-Progressive-Forces/>.

20 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Greece, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Greece/>

Workers of Spain pointed out that “the war in Ukraine as an inter-imperialist war, for the control of markets, resources, and transport routes in the area.”²¹ Twenty-nine political party organizations, including the Communist Party of Greece and the Communist Party of Turkey, eventually signed the resolution that proclaimed “Solidarity with the struggling peoples and against the imperialist war on the territory of Ukraine”. The resolution stated that “It is a war waged by bourgeois classes. It is a war utilized by the bourgeois classes to distort history and to attack the communist and labour movement and repress it.”²² The other side saw the Russia-Ukraine conflict as an anti-Nazi and anti-fascist war and took a positive view of the war. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation once again made a public statement at the meeting expressing its support for Russia’s special military operation against Ukraine, arguing that “it has a national liberation and anti-Fascist character and meets the interests of the Russian-speaking population of the Lugansk and Donetsk People’s Republics and South Eastern Ukraine.”²³ Thirty-two political parties and organizations, including the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the Communist Workers’ Party of Russia, signed the resolution stating that “The Struggle Against the Aggression of the USA and NATO which Seek World Hegemony and Foster Fascism Is the Task of All the Progressive Forces!”. The resolution considered that “the Russia-Ukraine conflict being conducted by the hands of Ukrainian Nazis. categorical protest against the policy of Fascism, anti-Sovietism and Russophobia in all the countries of the EU and NATO.”²⁴

Fourthly, delegates discussed how to end proliferating wars through negotiation. Participating communist and the workers’ parties offered a variety of views. First of all, solidarity among political parties and the working class in general was the basis for solving the problem of war. The Communist Party of Pakistan stated that “the situation globally and in Pakistan demands our united, coordinated front against every form of imperialist exploitation and corporate imperialism on the principle of international communist solidarity.”²⁵ The Communist Party of South Africa also stated that “workers must unite across borders, industries, and professions to challenge the capitalist system. Trade unions, strikes, and collective action are essential tools for the working class to force the creation of a more just, equitable and peaceful world.”²⁶ Next, the role of international organizations such as the United Nations should be fully utilized. The Communist Party of Finland stated that “the least we can do as an international community of communists is to demand the initiation of a ceasefire and peace negotiations in Ukraine and other

21 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of the Workers of Spain, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-the-Workers-of-Spain/>

22 23rd IMCWP, Solidarity with the struggling peoples and against the imperialist war on the territory of Ukraine, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Solidarity-with-the-struggling-peoples-and-against-the-imperialist-war-on-the-territory-of-Ukraine/>

23 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of the Russian Federation, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-the-Russian-Federation/>

24 23rd IMCWP, The Struggle Against the Aggression of the USA and NATO which Seek World Hegemony and Foster Fascism Is the Task of All the Progressive Forces! <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-The-Struggle-Against-the-Aggression-of-the-USA-and-NATO-which-Seek-World-Hegemony-and-Foster-Fascism-Is-the-Task-of-All-the-Progressive-Forces/>

25 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Pakistan, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Pakistan/>

26 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by South African CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-South-African-CP/>

crisis areas by the UN and other international actors.”²⁷ The Communist Party of Iraq stated that ending the conflict in Ukraine “requires the mobilization of a global peace movement to demand an immediate end to this war and a return to negotiations and dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations to reach a permanent peace agreement that spares the peoples of the two countries further devastating tragedies.”²⁸ Furthermore, the struggle against the NATO military organization must be intensified. The German Communist Party stated that “the fight against the NATO war policy, against the constantly growing arms expenditures, the demand ‘Germany out of NATO – peace with Russia and China,’ is one of our central fields of struggle.”²⁹ Finally, only a socialist society can fundamentally eliminate war and guarantee world peace. The Communist Party of Belgium stated that “the struggle for peace is inextricably linked to the need to demolish capitalism and its criminal institutions and to fight for socialism. This is only possible when revolutions and socialism have eliminated the source of war: capitalism and imperialism. These wars can only be stopped once and for all when the revolutionary parties of the working class around the world overthrow the capitalist states and create socialist societies, where the working class and workers own the means of production.”³⁰

2) Solidarity with the world socialist and anti-imperialist movement

Solidarity and joint statements have become an important way for the world’s communist and workers’ parties to develop their analyses of the developing international situation and understand the major theoretical and practical problems of the international communist movement. This international meeting issued solidarity and joint statements on many issues facing today’s world socialist and anti-imperialist movement.

First, solidarity with Cuban socialism and the Cuban people was a major theme of the 22nd International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties, and the importance attached to the movement of solidarity with Cuba was again demonstrated at this International Meeting. The participating political parties expressed their desire to fight in defense of the achievements of the Cuban socialist revolution, to strengthen international condemnation of the U.S. embargo against Cuba, and to demand an end to the embargo. At this International Meeting, 62 communist and workers’ parties and organizations co-signed a statement of solidarity entitled “Resolution on Condemning the Blockade and Solidarity with Cuba”. The resolution condemned the unjust, inhuman and illegal economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government against Cuba. It condemned the capitalist plot to destroy the Cuban Revolution using unconventional warfare, subversion and media propaganda. The resolution opposed the 243 measures against Cuba, including during the Trump administration. It rejected the unjust inclusion of Cuba on the list of countries suspected of supporting terrorism. The resolution called for “strongest solidarity and commitment to the Cuban people, the rev-

27 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Finland, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Finland/>

28 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Iraqi CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Iraqi-CP/>

29 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by German CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-German-CP/>

30 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Belgium, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Belgium-00001/>

olutionary government and the Communist Party of Cuba to preserve the sovereignty and independence of the country and to maintain firmly the decision of constructing socialism.”³¹

Secondly, solidarity was expressed with peoples at war, beginning with the people of the Sudan. At the meeting, the Sudanese Communist Party called on communist, socialist and workers’ organizations to show solidarity with the people of the Sudan by exerting “all possible pressures on their respective countries and urge them to demand an immediate end to this brutal war, and to open safe corridors for urgently needed vital food and medical aid for internally displaced citizens and those stranded within the war-torn zones or in refugee camps.”³² Fifty-three communist and workers’ parties and organizations signed “Solidarity with the Sudanese People, for Peace, Freedom and Democracy” at the meeting. The statement expressed solidarity with the Sudanese people, democratic forces and the Sudanese CP and expressed firm support for the struggle for freedom, democracy, social justice and the establishment of a democratic government. The statement called for the “the release of all the detainees held by both warring sides, the creation of safe corridors to deliver urgent humanitarian aid, bringing to Justice the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide against the people, disbanding all the militias, and building a professional national army, ending foreign intervention by imperialist powers and reactionary regimes in the region, respecting Sudan’s national sovereignty and unity.”³³ Last but not least, the parties participating in this meeting co-signed a statement “Declaration on Palestine”. In the first place, it demanded an immediate end to the Israeli aggression and blockade against the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. It called for a struggle and the organization of popular mobilization against Israeli aggression in all parts of the world. The statement condemned Israel’s brutal military attack, inhuman blockade and barbaric genocide in the Gaza Strip. It condemned the support of the United States, Britain, NATO and the European Union for the Israeli offensive. Next, the statement condemned Israel’s decades of occupation, killing, imprisonment and persecution in the Palestinian areas. It defended the right of the Palestinian people to a free homeland and called for an end to the Israeli occupation. Moreover, it called on “the workers, the peoples, the youth, in all countries to strengthen the struggle to stop the massacre in the Gaza Strip and end the occupation of Palestine by Israel to express decisive solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people.”³⁴

In addition, in light of the hybrid war being waged by the US and the West against Venezuela, the 45 communist and workers’ parties and organizations at the meeting co-signed the “Resolution of solidarity with the Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV)”, in solidarity with the Communist Party of Venezuela.

31 23rd IMCWP, Resolution on Condemning the Blockade and Solidarity with Cuba, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-RESOLUTION-ON-CONDEMNING-THE-BLOCKADE-AND-SOLIDARITY-WITH-CUBA/>

32 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Sudanese CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Sudanese-CP/>

33 23rd IMCWP, Solidarity with the Sudanese People, for Peace, Freedom and Democracy, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Solidarity-with-the-Sudanese-People-for-Peace-Freedom-and-Democracy/>

34 23rd IMCWP, Declaration on Palestine, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Declaration-on-Palestine/>

3) Negotiation of a program for ideological struggle under capitalist informatization

In the age of informationization and digitization, the invasion of capitalist ideology into the minds of the people by means of informationized digital media has added new layers of concealment and deception. This international meeting took the fight against the politics and ideology of the bourgeoisie and imperialism as one of the themes of the meeting, which triggered active discussions.

First, in challenging capitalist ideology under information technology, identifying and analyzing problems was the first step. The capitalist countries firmly control public opinion by controlling the media. The Communist Party of Belarus pointed out that “the global crisis has been accompanied by an improvement in the methods of control, surveillance and repression of political opposition and dissidents. Western countries control a number of major social networks and platforms, thus controlling the mood of the population. Formally, freedom of expression is preserved, but in practice, no one will hear opposing voices because the platforms scrutinize views.”³⁵ Next, capitalist countries use informational media to whitewash the reality of capitalism’s crisis in order to ensure domestic stability. The Communist Party of Ireland pointed out that “people throughout the world seek to make sense of their situation. The capitalist media by means of news, movies and popular culture say there is no alternative to capitalism.”³⁶ Furthermore, the capitalist countries subtly change people’s minds through ideological propaganda. In his opening speech, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey pointed out that “one of the important reasons why we have difficulties in building a revolutionary strategy today is the enormous superiority of capitalism in the international arena in the ability of managing people’s perceptions. Although our main weapon against this superiority is the organization of the working class, it is obvious that we are putting more and more numbers of young workers at the mercy of social media, Netflix and similar platforms, influences and the popular culture.”³⁷ According to the Union of Communists of Ukraine, “people lose the ability to analyze facts and start hearing what they want to hear, depending on their worldview. It is difficult to blame them for this; one can only sympathize with them, the victims of the bourgeois system of education and propaganda.”³⁸

Second, participants discussed measures to take in the current ideological struggle. First of all, it is necessary to fight resolutely against capitalist ideology. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) pointed out that “unless a conscious ideological struggle against these kinds of attacks and distortions is carried out, we cannot build the required class unity to challenge the current hegemony of international finance capital and ultimately overthrow the exploitative capitalist system.”³⁹ The Communist Party of Spain advocat-

35 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Belarus, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Belarus/>

36 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Ireland, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Ireland/>

37 23rd IMCWP, Opening Speech by CP of Turkiye, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Opening-Speech-by-CP-of-Turkiye/>

38 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Union of Communists of Ukraine, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Union-of-Communists-of-Ukraine/>

39 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of India [Marxist], <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-India-Marxist/>

ed that high priority be given to ideological struggle and that “the ideological initiative must be realized in the working class and popular strata in support of socialist ethics and values.”⁴⁰ Next, it is necessary to strengthen propaganda among the masses. The Communist Party of Belgium stated that we “must expose the lies of the imperialists in our own media and show the people that they have a side in this war.”⁴¹ Furthermore, the combination of ideological struggle and mass movement must be realized. The Party of Labour of Austria believed that “the task of communists to oppose the bourgeois ideology that we are facing every day in all spheres, communists can only successfully oppose to the bourgeois ideology and propaganda if they combine the struggle against it with the struggle for the social political rights of the working class, youth, women and intellectuals.”⁴² In addition, it is necessary to expand the channels of proletarian ideological propaganda. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation proposed to “discuss the creation of an information and communication center co-financed by all the interested parties. The task of this Center would not be to replace the existing Solidnet but to expand information impact on supporters and future allies.”⁴³

4) Development of an action plan for the future

The Meeting culminated in the adoption of the “Plan of Action of the 23rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties”, which charts the course for future joint action.

First, the importance of solidarity in the international communist movement was emphasized. The Plan of Action of the Meeting pointed to the realization of joint action of the Communist and Workers’ Parties and their affiliated organizations, in particular the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the Women’s International Democratic Federation, and thus to the strengthening of the international anti-imperialist organizing forces. “Strengthening interaction and cooperation between Communist and Workers’ Parties in all regions of the world to successfully pave the way towards the 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties in 2024.”⁴⁴

Secondly, activities are to be organized on the occasion of major events and festivals. The Action Plan called for the organization of events to propagate socialist principles and values, the historical relevance of socialism on the occasion of the centenary of the death of Vladimir Lenin. Organize activities to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Mandela’s death. Organizing May Day 2024 with greater strength as a day of class struggles for workers’ rights, social justice and for equality. Strengthen women’s struggle against inequality, oppression and discrimination on International Women’s Day,

40 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Spain, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Spain/>

41 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Belgium, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Belgium-00001/>

42 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Party of Labour of Austria, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Party-of-Labour-of-Austria/>

43 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of the Russian Federation, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-the-Russian-Federation/>

44 23rd IMCWP, Plan of Action of the 23rd International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties, Izmir, Turkey, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Plan-of-Action-of-the-23rd-International-Meeting-of-Communist-and-Workers-Parties-Izmir-Turkey/>

8 March, through increased mobilization, especially for working women. Organization of the celebration of World Anti-Fascist Victory Day 2024. Organization of anti-war and anti-imperialist campaigns in support of the World Peace Council on 21 September, International Day of Peace.

Thirdly, the struggle, propaganda and solidarity against war, empire and fascism had to be strengthened. The Plan of Action called for the rejection of imperialist wars, the arms race and the activities of NATO, for strengthening class-based propaganda and mobilization against NATO's expansion and aggression throughout the world, and against the involvement of NATO and its allies in the war in Ukraine and their support for Israel's brutal aggression against the Palestinian people. Indeed, it was agreed that the struggle for disengagement from NATO and its dissolution be reinvigorated. The action plan also called for support for the Syrian people against the forces of reaction and the criminal groups supported by US-NATO-EU imperialism and for considering the struggle against resurgent fascism as one of the priorities of the international communist movement.

In addition, the Plan of Action provided for participation in international meetings in solidarity with Cuba, solidarity with the people of countries that suffered great damage and losses as a result of earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, fires and traffic accidents, for the protection of the ecological environment, and for the reunification of Cyprus, among other issues.

3. Commentary on the meeting

This meeting has played an important role in promoting mutual exchanges and understanding between communist and workers' parties in various countries, strengthening the momentum of the world socialist movement, and uniting the forces of socialist solidarity, but at the same time there are certain differences.

1) The International Meeting generally manifested the spirit of internationalist solidarity

Although there were differences on the issues of the meeting, the spirit of internationalism and solidarity was manifested on the whole. First of all, in the course of the meeting, a number of communist and workers' parties emphasized the importance of unity among political parties in the present situation and called for maintaining unity. The Communist Party of Britain stated that "today, Communist unity is an absolute imperative at a time when world peace is under immediate threat from economic, military, and political tensions arising from the situation in Ukraine, notably the intervention of US led imperialist forces seeking to escalate, prolong and widen the conflict."⁴⁵ The Palestinian Communist Party stated at the meeting that "each party has its own extensive reading of the political, economic, and social reality in their countries, but efforts must be unified—the efforts of the communist parties to stand up to imperialism by forming one unified front cooperating together."⁴⁶ At the same time, several communist and workers' parties ended their contributions to the International Meeting with slogans such as

45 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Britain, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Britain/>

46 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Palestinian CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Palestinian-CP/>

“Long live proletarian internationalism” and “Long live internationalist solidarity”. Secondly, in terms of the results of the meeting, the meeting produced a Plan of Action and a Common Statement. The formation of the Plan of Action and the Joint Declaration is an important manifestation of the formation of a unified understanding of the major theoretical and practical problems of the world socialist movement.

2) The international meeting reflected divisions and disputes on some issues

As the Socialist Workers Party of Croatia pointed out at the International Meeting, “the tragic armed conflict in Ukraine has led to division and polarization in our ranks and it is causing damage, it is not strengthening but weakening the much-needed unity. There has been classification along certain parties, scruples are bypassed in criticism, humiliating rhetoric and labels, which have not been used until now, are used, dissenters are declared opportunists. It is the procedure that does not direct us towards dialogue, but towards trench digging.”⁴⁷ After more than a year of developments, the differences between the two sides remain unresolved, and this international meeting, like the previous one, ended up adopting two different resolutions on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The introduction and signing of these two resolutions demonstrated that the differences and contradictions between the two sides were not only publicized, but were clearly taking sides. The Communist Party of the Workers of Spain stated at the meeting that “we have fought against those who attempt to romanticize capitalist Russia, disguising it as an anti-imperialist force.”⁴⁸ The other side was represented by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the Russian Communist Workers’ Party. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation stated that “in Havana the CPRF was on the receiving end of open accusations of supporting an imperialistic war in Ukraine. It is not the party that toed the line of power, but power met the demand of the party.”⁴⁹ The Russian Communist Workers’ Party, moreover, made no secret of the fact that at the meeting it directly named the Communist Party of Greece to criticize its views and claims. The Party of Communist Workers of Russia pointed out that the other party “mechanically applied the formulas of the Bolsheviks of the 1914-1916 model in practice... With due respect to the Greek comrades, we believe that they have committed a major theoretical error in interpreting Lenin’s theory of imperialism.”⁵⁰ The divisions in the meeting will probably have a negative impact on relations between the parties and on the internal unity of the World Socialist Movement.

3) China’s Belt and Road Initiative Receives Positive Evaluation

The year 2023 is the 10th anniversary of General Secretary Xi Jinping’s Belt and Road Initiative, which has significant achievements to its credit over the past 10 years in build-

47 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by SWP of Croatia, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-SWP-of-Croatia/>

48 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of the Workers of Spain, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-the-Workers-of-Spain/>

49 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of the Russian Federation, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-the-Russian-Federation/>

50 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by Russian CWP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-Russian-CWP-00001/>

ing a new political and economic situation in the world, promoting the new dynamics of the international communist movement, and safeguarding the well-being of people's livelihoods around the globe. Political parties attending this international meeting positively assessed the achievements of China's Belt and Road Initiative. The German Communist Party pointed out that "a multipolar world order offers many countries the possibility to develop more independently from imperialism. An example of this is the PRC's One Belt One Road initiative, or the PRC's cooperation with many countries in Africa. Such an opportunity improves the possibilities of class struggle in these countries, it provides better conditions for the struggle for national liberation, sovereignty, development of productive forces, and ultimately for socialism. It already limits the possibilities for action and the power of imperialism, and could do so to an even greater extent in the future."⁵¹ The South African Communist Party also noted that China has become "a major industrial power. In addition to the rapid development of cutting-edge technologies, the Belt-and-Road Initiative has emerged as an important tool to enhance Chinese influence and almost 150 countries are already participating in the programme."⁵²

4) Attention to united front work for special classes and groups

"Mobilize the working class, youth, women, and intellectuals" was one of the major themes of this international meeting. While the working class is the main force of the socialist revolution, from the perspective of united front, the importance of special classes and groups such as young people, women and intellectuals, as targets of unity between the Communist Party and the Workers' Party, was emphasized by the participating political parties in this international meeting. The South African Communist Party stated that "Young people's vitality, creativity, and determination is a potent force for change. Women, who often bear the brunt of gender-based oppression, have a unique perspective to offer in the fight for equality. Intellectuals, with their critical thinking and analytical skills, can be a bridge towards a deeper understanding of the injustices perpetuated by the capitalist system. It is our duty as communists to engage and educate these groups, forging alliances and empowering them to contribute to the struggle."⁵³ The Communist Party of Ireland has also stated that "the historic task before us, is, as it has been since the inception of the Communist movement, the mobilisation of the working class, youth, women, and intellectuals in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism and its replacement by socialism."⁵⁴ In the course of the world socialist movement, united front work can help to unite and coalesce the forces of all classes and groups, harmonize the interests of all parties and promote the forward development of the socialist revolution.

(Editor: Sun Yexia)

51 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by German CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-German-CP/>

52 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by South African CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-South-African-CP/>

53 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by South African CP, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-South-African-CP/>

54 23rd IMCWP, Contribution by CP of Ireland, <http://solidnet.org/article/23rd-IMCWP-Contribution-by-CP-of-Ireland/>