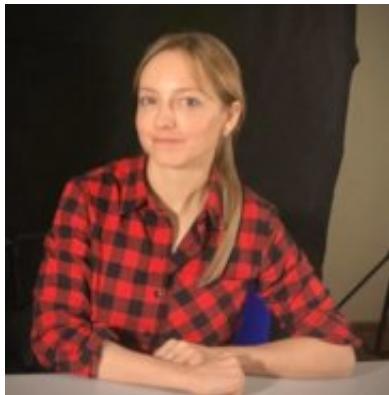


Russia's Anti-Imperialist Marathon: 'We have much to learn from each other'

written by Greg Butterfield
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Dec. 13 protest against domestic violence in Moscow. Photo: United Communist Party



Jane Letova Photo:
Alexander Kubalov



Organizers of the Anti-Imperialist Marathon Broadcast in Moscow.

On Dec. 8, 2019, activists in Moscow organized an event called the Anti-Imperialist Marathon, which broadcast live for over four hours on YouTube and other social media and was viewed by thousands of people in Russia and worldwide. While taking up many issues, there was a special focus on the struggle in Latin America, following the recent coup in Bolivia, massive protests against austerity in Chile, and U.S. aggression toward Venezuela and Cuba.

Struggle-La Lucha spoke with Jane Letova, a supporter of the New Communist Movement and member of the United Communist Party of Russia, who helped to



organize the Anti-Imperialist Marathon. Readers can entire broadcast here.

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Struggle-La Lucha: What was the inspiration for the Anti-Imperialist Marathon broadcast? What organizations were involved in making it possible? Were you happy with the outcome?

Jane Letova: The inspiration for the marathon was the call, made by trade unions, left parties, women groups, social movements and Indigenous organizations, to declare December 9 as the International Day of Struggle Against Imperialism. It was announced earlier this year in Caracas, Venezuela, and we decided to take part. So it was not a local initiative, but part of a broad international struggle.

My comrades and I are always in search of new ways to reach out and convey our message, so when Alexander Kubalov of the Moscow Rock Commune suggested we hold a marathon broadcast, we decided to try. We've never done anything like that before, so it was really a challenge, but this gave us a possibility to cover a wide range of issues from many countries, to create a space where the voice of anti-imperialist resistance from Chile to Donbass could be heard.

I can't say we were absolutely satisfied with the outcome — there is still much to work on. But I can say that this broadcast has brought many great activists together on both sides of the screen, and that's what really matters. I believe the solidarity movement is really about establishing connections between activists, organizations and countries. We have much to learn from each other, we can inspire each other,

and inspiration is something that we really need in this reactionary and depressive period.

The organizations that were involved were the United Communist Party, Workers' University, Cuba Solidarity Movement, Moscow Rock Commune and our comrades from Station Marx Channel.

SLL: For non-Russian speakers, can you tell us what some of the highlights of the broadcast were?

JL: Difficult question! There were many. Venezuelan Ambassador Carlos Faria, our honorable and special guest, gave an overview of the economic war that is being waged on Venezuela by the government of the United States. That was very informative and much needed, since there isn't much coverage on the real situation in Venezuela in mainstream news, as you know.

A great surprise was a musical greeting sent by women from the Venezuelan band Sueños Repetidos. [I recommend listening to it.](#) It will really lift your spirits with revolutionary beats!

And it's always a special moment to hear and to see our comrades in the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. It was good to see that our comrades of many years were joined by young people, who are just joining the struggle. This is good news. It means, despite difficult living conditions and continuing war [by the U.S.-backed regime in Ukraine], the great work is kept up and the movement for justice, for a better world, in the republics is growing.

SLL: As you mentioned, the ambassador from Bolivarian Venezuela participated, as did the Cuban ambassador. Can you tell us about the activities of the Latin America solidarity movement in Moscow?

JL: The Latin America solidarity movement is very hardworking. There are cultural

events organized regularly, such as concerts, poetry readings, lectures and joint events with the embassies of Venezuela and Cuba. I think one of the goals of the solidarity movement is to show people that there is an alternative to capitalism, that victory is possible, and there are examples of such victories in our world. Of course, it's important to provide informational support for our comrades in Nuestra América, but it is also very important to be able to tell people here at home what we are fighting for.

SLL: There's been an increase in popular protests in Russia, especially around austerity measures and other "reforms" that seem to bring the economy more in line with Western capitalism. The same weekend as the Anti-Imperialist Marathon, there were actions in Moscow and other cities against the "optimization" of health care, and in St. Petersburg against rate hikes for public transportation. How do the revolutionary communists relate to these actions?

JL: Yes, there were rallies against cuts in health care, organized by unions of medical workers and supported by activists of various communist and progressive organizations. At the same time that we were doing the broadcast, some of our comrades from the United Communist Party were at the rally. Of course, it is a very important issue which affects us all, and I am glad there is no question in our organizations about whether we should support this initiative.

SLL: Anti-Russia, pro-war propaganda has dominated U.S. politics for the last several years, especially since the ultraright coup in Ukraine. Recently it was reported that the U.S. military will deploy more troops to Europe in 2020 than it has in at least 25 years. How does the situation appear to you as a communist organizing in Russia? How do you balance the struggle against the capitalist regime in Russia with the threats of U.S. and European imperialism?

JL: We must always keep in mind that our main goal is to build a strong and conscious working-class movement at home, which at a certain point will become a

real force in the coming class struggle. Unfortunately, our enemy is strong and has many faces. The capitalist regime in Russia and U.S. imperialism are both parts of that same enemy — world capitalism. And that is something that we as Marxists and educators of the working class should understand well.

Meanwhile, we must look critically at the current situation in the world, and if we do that, we see that U.S. imperialism is truly the worst enemy of the working people today. It continues its bloody wars all over the world, and really, it's hardly surprising when it finds another country in desperate need to be "saved." So, of course, it is our responsibility to denounce the U.S. government's actions, and we are especially eager to do so after we've seen what's been done to Ukraine.

At the same time, the struggle at home continues. The Russian capitalist regime keeps attacking working people, making our lives quite unbearable sometimes, and here there is much work to be done. The confrontation helps the ruling classes on both sides of the border to subjugate the workers, to pursue a policy of "rallying around the flag." Activist work is needed on both fronts, and it's possible, just a question of distributing our resources.



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