

# Condemn terrorist attack and murder of Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakriadeh!

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
December 2, 2020



Funeral of slain Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh in Tehran, Nov. 30.

*Statement by Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and the Socialist Unity Party*

The Socialist Unity Party and the publication Struggle-La Lucha send our deepest

condolences to the Iranian people, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to the family and loved ones of scientist Mohsen Fakrizadeh Mahabadi, murdered in a terrorist attack by agents of the Israeli government. The regime in Tel Aviv is a tool of U.S. imperialism, which provides billions of dollars in financial and military aid to keep the Israeli occupation of Palestine afloat.

Fakhrizadeh served as the head of the Research and Innovation Organization of the Defense Ministry. This made him a major target for Israeli's intelligence services, who have a track record of killing Iranian scientists. His murder comes on the heels of the illegal assassination of beloved Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Commander Qassem Soleimani in January, ordered by U.S. President Donald Trump.

What hasn't been publicized widely by the U.S. media is that Dr. Fakhrizadeh helped to develop a homegrown COVID-19 test kit, a fact that the United Nations recognized and applauded.

This is of incredible importance. Iran has suffered under harsh U.S. sanctions that have prevented it from getting crucial medical aid and other necessities during the global pandemic. As a result, children are dying and people are unable to get the medical care that was once taken for granted. Sanctions are another form of war meant to subjugate and destroy sovereign countries.

What is taking place is not about Iran's peaceful nuclear energy program. The continuing war on Iran is part of a broader strategy to protect U.S. oil and energy profits at the expense of the people, both at home and abroad. At this moment, the oil, gas and fracking industry is desperate to stave off collapse.

What is needed now is not to continue this war on the people of Iran, but rather to build global solidarity to fight a health crisis that has left nearly 1.5 million people dead so far. In the United States alone, which leads the world in COVID cases, at least 267,000 people have perished.

The shameful and cowardly attack on Iran's scientist Fakhrizadeh and other war provocations come at a time when the fight to end the scourge of racism and police violence in the U.S. is far from finished and when workers throughout the capitalist world are facing mass evictions, hunger and joblessness.

We call on the anti-imperialist and anti-war movement, on workers and community organizations in the U.S., to join us in demanding:

- Stop the U.S./Israeli war on Iran
- End all sanctions — Reparations for damages
- End all aid to the racist state of Israel — Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions now
- All U.S. troops, ships, planes and spies out of the 'Middle East'
- Bring home the Fifth and Sixth Fleets. Shut down the U.S. Central Command
- End all arms sales to Saudi Arabia
- Fight COVID and racism, not wars for oil profits
- Money for stimulus and people's needs, not war!

Dec. 1, 2020



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# **Indian workers and farmers unite for historic strike, besiege far-right gov't**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
December 2, 2020

Nov. 30 — A political and class struggle of historic proportions is taking place in India, the world's second most populous country. U.S. corporate media have treated it as invisible.

For the second time in less than a year, more than 250 million Indian workers joined a general strike on Nov. 26, shutting down much of this huge, multinational Asian country. According to the alliance of 10 trade union centers that called the strike, it was even larger than the one on Jan. 8, 2020 — the largest strike in human history.

Of tremendous significance for an oppressed country that combines giant industrial cities and huge swaths of agricultural land, this new workers' action linked arms with India's poor farmers — who today are besieging the capital of Delhi from all

sides to demand that the far-right, U.S.-backed government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi withdraw three new laws aimed at speeding up the privatization of agriculture and eroding the rights of peasants and agricultural workers.

The fear instilled in the Modi government by the emergence of this worker-peasant alliance was reflected in the brutal repression deployed against strikers across the country — especially the farmers and allies who marched on the capital. Riot police dug trenches, fired tear gas and other chemical agents, sprayed water cannons and beat protesters with truncheons.

But to no avail. The marchers broke through each police blockade until they reached the borders of the Delhi Union Territory. (Like Washington, D.C., the Indian capital has a separate status from the surrounding states.) And there the farmers have remained, for five days and counting.

In other states, workers and farmers blockaded highways and railways. They shut down scab operations that tried to defy the strike call. Though peaceful, in many areas they fought back when attacked by the cops.

The strike even reached the majority Muslim region of Jammu and Kashmir, which has spent more than a year under veritable martial law imposed by the chauvinist regime in Delhi.

### **Strikers' demands**

India's impoverished workers and farmers have been hard hit by the global capitalist economic crisis and COVID-19 pandemic. [Unemployment has soared to 27 percent](#), while the gross domestic product has collapsed by nearly 24 percent.

As reported by [Proletarian Era](#) on Nov. 1, "India has ranked 94 among 107 nations in the Global Hunger Index 2020 and is in the 'serious' hunger category. Experts have blamed poor implementation processes, lack of effective monitoring, a siloed

approach in tackling malnutrition and poor performance by large states.” The conclusion: “Malnutrition is endemic in India.”

Since Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party took control of India’s national government in 2014, it has imposed a growing list of austerity and privatization measures while slamming civil rights, especially targeting women, Muslims, migrants and Indigenous communities. Modi is part of the global far-right trend that includes figures like Brazil’s President Jair Bolsonaro and, of course, U.S. President Donald Trump.

“It was the tens of millions of migrant workers who had to suffer as the Modi government announced the [COVID] lockdown abruptly. In the name of the pandemic and lockdown almost all the employers have cut the number of workers drastically. In spite of court orders against it, a 12-hour working day is imposed by most managements,” according to a statement by the [Communist Party of India \(Marxist-Leninist\) Red Star](#).

For the Nov. 26 all-India strike, the alliance of union centers — many affiliated with the country’s diverse leftist parties — [issued seven main demands](#):

1. Cash aid of Rs7,500 per month (roughly \$100) for all unemployed households;
2. 10 kg of free food monthly to all needy people;
3. Expansion of the National Rural Employment Act to provide 200 days’ work per year in rural areas at enhanced wages; extension of employment guarantee to urban areas;
4. Withdraw all anti-farmer laws and anti-worker labor codes;
5. Stop privatization of the public sector, including the financial sector, and stop corporatization of government-run manufacturing and service entities like railways, ordnance factories and ports;
6. Withdraw the circular on forced early retirement of government and public

sector employees;

7. Scrap the current privatized National Pension Service and provide adequate pensions for all.

“Hundreds of our party workers have been arrested in different states along with workers of other organizations,” [said Provash Ghosh](#), general secretary of the Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist). “We demand their immediate release.”

### **96,000 tractors, 12 million farmers**

Some 12 million [farmers began marching](#) early in the week from northern Indian states near the capital. They were joined by delegations of farmers throughout the country, as well as workers, students, and women’s and other people’s organizations. An estimated 96,000 tractors provided symbolic strength to the massive march.

The All India Kisan Sangharsh (Farmers’ Struggle) Coordination Committee (AIKSCC), a coalition of over 200 farmers’ groups, declared it “the longest march in the history of Planet Earth.”

It included a convoy of 10,000 women farmers from the state of Punjab. Its leader, Harinder Bindu from Bhatinda, has been a farmer for 30 years. She was interviewed by the Indian web publication [The Wire](#):

“The large number of women protesters has been a noteworthy aspect of the farmers’ march to Delhi. Bindu feels that the time is ripe for women to come out in large numbers now. She, like others, has brought along cooking essentials and rations to last them for the length of the protest.

“‘The three laws brought by the Modi government will impact women in a very different way,’ said Bindu. She says that even though all Indians will be affected adversely by these three laws, women need to raise their voices more because the

kitchen, which is considered their department, will come to a 'halt with this law.'

"‘If the farmers are affected, they will not be able to earn enough money to sustain their households. This will impact women as they will have to control the portions of meals that they cook,’ she says, adding that children will also be affected ultimately.

"This is not all. She says that when farms stop generating enough income, women will have to go out to work in areas where there are no guarantees for their safety."

During a Nov. 30 press conference, farmers' union leaders vowed that protesters will keep sitting at the borders of Delhi until the government revokes the farm laws.

Two representatives of the transport workers' unions joined the news conference. [They announced](#): "All taxis, buses, trucks will be put on halt. We will go on strike and let nothing run in Delhi."

"The workers and peasants will not rest till the disastrous and disruptive policies of the BJP government are reversed," [said Tapan Sen](#), general secretary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions. "The strike today is only a beginning. Much more intense struggles will be following."





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# **San Isidro, the latest episode of the imperial reality show**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
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Donald Trump is leaving. But some Cubans, who arouse only shame in others, are claiming him as their president. “Trump 2020,” they shout. As president, he’s done almost everything to choke the people of Cuba, and now he has the cynicism to say that this is to help them. When he blocked, delayed, or increased the cost of the arrival of petroleum shipments, when he blocked commerce or transfers of funds to the country, he said sarcastically that they don’t know how to manage their economy. Cuba, nevertheless, managed the pandemic and the international economic crisis in an exemplary fashion, and – in an outpouring of humanism – sent 53 medical brigades to poor countries and rich countries alike; Cuba created its medications and vaccines, absorbed the extensive damages of the intense tropical rainstorms ... and left no one behind without help.

These Trump-fanciers born in Cuba are “deserters that ask for arms in the armies of North America, who drown their Indigenous peoples (and Black people) in blood and

who go from bad to worse!" in the words of José Martí. After more than 150 years of struggles, does anyone doubt that US imperialism wants something other than the freedom or the well-being of Cuba?

There exists a controversial historical figure, La Malinche, a Nahuatl slave woman who was the lover and translator for Cortez, and with her advice contributed to the conquest of Mexico. According to the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, Malinche or malinchista today refers to any "person, institution or movement that commits treason" regardless of whether man or woman. The so-called San Isidro Movement is an episode from the reality show that Trump has made of his presidency. Those gathered there are called colleagues in a tweet by the officer in charge of the Embassy of the United States in Cuba.

I am not avoiding the facts. A uniformed police officer took a citation to Cuban citizen Denis Solis. Solis insulted him, using words I cannot repeat here, and threatened him. The police did not handcuff him nor hit him, nor place his knee on Solis's neck. There is a video, taken by the supposed victim, which proves this. Denis was detained for contempt. He had already previously received several administrative fines for disturbing the peace and two official warnings for harassing tourists. The crime of contempt is provided by law in Article 144.1 of the Penal Code. Denis accepted the charges and did not appeal. But before this, he yelled that Trump is his president and he became a "dissident." The San Isidro strikers demand his release. They then declared a hunger and thirst strike, but on the seventh day Alcantara, the leader of the provocation, who has dishonored the national flag in other episodes of this strange theatrical play, appeared in a video taken by his colleagues (to use the same term as the imperialist diplomat) impetuously blocking the functioning of the health authorities, rather than prostrate in his bed, as medical logic would indicate should be the case after a lack of food.

There will always be gullible people and those sincerely concerned for the health of

the “strikers.” And also those who suggest that it does not suit us to let them die, as if the Revolution does not fight daily and hourly for the lives of all our citizens, whether or not they are with the Revolution, in the face of the attempts of the empire to defeat them with hunger and disease. If Denis is a prisoner, and not hospitalized or dead, it is because in Cuba there are no disappeared people, and the police, who keep order as they should, do not kill or torture.

Protest is so unthreatening – for Cubans, as I have said – that there are many people who are “neither for one side nor the other. “I’m not in agreement with those of San Isidro, but I’m not for what the government is doing either,” they say. If we are serious about this analysis, we should leave Denis (the pretext) aside for a moment and look for the real reasons. Here I shall pass over any suppositions about money – although Denis confessed to receiving money from a person associated with attacks carried out in Cuba – but I prefer to discuss ideas. And I do not know the motives of the writer-journalist who had to pass through the United States in order to go from Mexico to Cuba. But our actions give clues about who we really are; this is not about a decree or a decision that they claim to be mistaken, and, in their declarations, all are mixed up together and if the government decides something else tomorrow they will just add this to their sack of complaints. This is not about freedom of speech, much less freedom of artistic expression, but rather of the creation of a political opposition clearly already sponsored by imperialism, about the restoration of a bourgeois democracy and the death of any trace of people’s democracy. Although perhaps many of those making these demands do not know it, the true purpose of all this is the restoration of a neocolonial Cuba. So that no doubt remains, high officials of the Trump government have immediately rushed to defend their supporting actors. They know they are on the way out and they have to inflict as many knife wounds as they go.

This is why it is so outrageous to read some articles by mercenaries who compare the heroic combatants of the clandestine struggle during the Batista dictatorship

with these deserters who are asking for rifles in the invading army, to paraphrase Martí. Yes, some voices of certain trans-national media outlets are joining in this, attentive to the last Trumpish death-rattle. They say that we are living in the post-truth era, “a situation in which objective facts have less influence than emotions or beliefs when it comes to defining public opinion” according to one dictionary. But the Cuban Revolution is not accustomed to lie or to disguise the truth. To never lie is what we were taught by Fidel, who lives on in every revolutionary Cuban.

Source: [Granma](#), translation [Resumen Latinoamericano](#), North America bureau



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# **‘This blockade is the largest economic war against any country’**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
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*Ambassador Jose Ramon Cabañas, Cuba’s ambassador to the United States, opened the first session of the U.S.-Cuba Normalization International Conference: “After the U.S. Elections: For Normalization! Why We Must End the Blockade on Cuba!” More*

*coverage will follow on this important conference. Although the U.S. blockade has never been harsher, the possibility for ending this cruel injustice has never been closer. Let's make 2021 the year to end the blockade. The transcription is by Gloria Verdieu.*

We understand the many efforts you must have undertaken to organize something like this. You have people coming from Havana, you have technical issues, but the common will among ourselves is simply to continue the fight against the blockade.

This conference is especially useful to educate and share knowledge about what the blockade is all about and that it impacts not only Cuba but the United States and third countries all over the world.

This blockade is the largest, most comprehensive economic war, not only in economic terms, against any country. Its main purpose is basically to overthrow the Cuban revolution.

We can start our arguments with why this was established. It has many pieces. It is a Frankenstein monster in its legislations, norms, sanctions and executive decisions.

We always like to quote from what we call the Mallory Memorandum. Lester Mallory was a bureaucrat in the State Department back in 1960. He wrote a memo saying in essence that the Cuban revolution has large support among the Cuban population. There was basically no opposition domestically speaking in Cuba, and to overthrow the Cuban revolution the United States needed to make the Cuban people surrender by hunger and imposing economic pressure.

That memo was before the presidential proclamation by President Kennedy imposing the embargo on Cuba in 1962. And if we read from that [Proclamation 3447](#), the main argument to impose an embargo on Cuba was about the relationship between Cuba, the Peoples Republic of China and the former Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is not

there anymore, and China is the largest economic trade partner with the United States.

Since that moment on, we have been through a series of arguments to keep in place this policy. It is a state policy. Sometimes people relate the blockade against Cuba with one particular president. The fact is that we have had 12 presidents that have been living with these subjects and enforcing many of them.

It is important to understand the complexity of the whole structure of the blockade to know who we are fighting. We have to mention that several pieces of it are related to the [Trade with the Enemy Act of 1917](#), the [Foreign Assistance Act](#) that was passed in 1961, and I mentioned Proclamation 3447 in 1962 by President Kennedy, and [Cuban Assets and Control Regulations \(CACR\)](#) of the Department of the Treasury, passed in 1963.

The [Export Administration Act of 1979](#), [Export Administrations Relations of 1979](#), and the so-called [Cuban Democracy Act or Torricelli Act of 1992](#). Torricelli limits U.S. companies in third countries from dealing with Cuba, proving the blockade is more than a bilateral issue.

In 1996, the so-called [Helms-Burton Act or Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act](#), whose name is a bad joke, which is probably the most comprehensive piece of legislation, where you have integrated all elements in regards to the embargo.

Still, you have Section 211 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1999 that is something unique. It prohibits recognizing Cuban brand names in the United States. It was never discussed in Congress, but added in handwriting by a Cuban American lawyer.

And finally, [the Trade Sanctions and Export Enhancement Act of 2000](#) with new regulations about the blockade.

The blockade has been in place for 60 years. We have to say that several senators and representatives in the U.S. Congress have been trying to change the whole thing, at least some parts of it. So far, they haven't been successful.

The blockade was there during the Obama administration years, although we established bilateral ties, although we signed 22 MOU's (memoranda of understanding) covering different areas of agriculture, the environment, public health and other issues. But the blockade, which is the core subject in the United States policy against Cuba, continued to be implemented.

During the Obama administration, we had several sanctions and measures and fines imposed on foreign banks to limit financial transactions with Cuba. It is important to remember that, even though the Obama administration years are probably the most positive moments we have had on bilateral relations with the United States in the last thirty years, the blockade was still actively enforced and implemented. From time to time, you heard people in the United States say that the agreements between Cuba and the United States at the time were one sided, and that is true because the embargo was still there and was a burden on the possibility of expanding further bilateral cooperation in many ways.

What has happened during the last four years under Trump rule is that we have had roughly over 235 new decisions: actions implemented against Cuba in a variety of sectors, including financial transactions.

It's a policy that has been more or less used to force the Cuban people to surrender by economic pressure, limiting the supply of oil and other commodities to Cuba. We have to say that the blockade is something that impacts every single sector of Cuban life, from education, to quality health care, to agriculture, to trade, every sector, including the cultural sector. If you meet an artist and you ask them how the blockade impacts, they will say that it impacts every part of Cuban life.



It also limits possibilities for people in the United States. They don't benefit from Cuban services and products. Just to mention one example: Cuba is a natural market for the export of agriculture commodities from the United States. You have seen how travel expanded quite easily during those years. Roughly five-and-a-half million people from the United States, including many Cuban Americans, have visited Cuba since 2015. That was basically up to early 2019.

I don't need to mention the family connections. There is a large community of Cuban Americans in the United States. They have also suffered the impact of these regulations, the way they were implemented under Trump in the last two years. One hundred and twenty-one decisions were implemented to limit travel, to limit remittances, and other kinds of exchange. The impact of the blockade is all over.

The other day we were referring to the support we received from the solidarity movements during the Elián González campaign and to free the Cuban 5, when the solidarity movement made it possible to return the Cuban 5 to Havana. During those campaigns we heard many arguments. Why did we need to do that? Because it was fair that they should be sent back. They were fighting terrorism. In the end, we had an argument that everyone could understand: it is too much, it is enough. Sixteen years is too much time to incarcerate these people.

I would say 60 years of the blockade is too much. If some people don't understand the technicalities of the blockade, if some people haven't read this year's Cuban report to the United Nations to support our resolution that was presented a few days ago by our foreign minister, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, if people are not sensitive to the details (but many people are by the way), it's a good argument is that it is simply too much.

Sixty years of a failed policy, a fiasco. It is a moment to try something else. In that regard, it is important to remember that under the Obama administration we were able to engage in discussions — by the way, Ambassador Vidal was the head of our

delegation for those negotiations — on many subjects. We delivered. There were important outcomes for both countries. People in the United States understood by a large majority the advantage of having a normal relationship with Cuba the same way we have with Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, France and other countries all over the world.

Now, after the outcome of the last elections in the United States, there is new hope among people in the United States that a new kind of relationship can be built with Cuba. You have heard the statement that we feel that people in the United States have a sense that this is an opportunity for change, and we have to say that we remain open to any kind of talks or conversations if the principles of mutual respect and reciprocity are adhered to. Those are the two keys for any future relationship between Cuba and the United States with the upcoming president or any other administration into the future.

We have heard positive statements from the candidates, we have heard statements from other people that probably will be related to the new government, but Cuba doesn't tailor a policy because someone is elected. We don't tailor policies addressed to specific people. The principles of our foreign policies are consistent and we understand that we have and will have differences with the United States — we listed them by the way in 2015 and 2016 — but we do believe that we need for the benefit of our population and for the benefit of the world and region to find common ground on several subjects.

I will leave you this initial comment, with the idea that if the blockade against Cuba was always an act of war, it is a crime these days to keep and enforce that blockade on the conditions of the pandemic under COVID. Not once during the last year has the current president in the United States lifted any measures but, on the contrary, the government has implemented and enforced several limits that ordinary Cubans have to face because of the blockade.

Anyone supporting the blockade these days is as criminal as the essence of the blockade. Hopefully COVID, the common cause to fight COVID in the United States and in this hemisphere, will be an opportunity for all our countries to cooperate and to fight not only to find a cure but also a better future for our people.

