

Petition: Support Bessemer Amazon warehouse union drive

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021



On Feb. 19, Los Angeles union activists and community groups will [hold a rally](#) in front of the office of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. This giant union-busting law firm was hired by Amazon to defy fair labor practices, intimidate and lie to 5,800 Amazon

workers during their historic union drive. [Please consider signing the petition](#) whether you are a union member or other member of the workforce, employed or unemployed, retired or a student.

We are proud union members and supporters, and we stand in solidarity with the thousands of Amazon workers in Bessemer, Ala., during their historic union election.

Amazon has historically neglected the safety of its workers and has not only seen an increase in worsened working conditions, but an increase in the corporate giant's profit margins during a global pandemic. Jeff Bezos has hired Morgan, Lewis & Bockius to turn back the will of the workers at Bessemer — a workforce that is 85% African Americans struggling for respect in a so-called “right to work” state.

We demand Amazon pay its workers a living wage, hire enough staff to ease the impossible work quotas, pay hazard pay during the pandemic, abide by measures recommended by health experts, and live up to all other long-established standards of safety. Most important, Amazon must negotiate with the collective voice of its workforce.

We call on Morgan, Lewis & Bockius to stand down! Stop targeting Black workers! End the deceitful and unfair union-busting tactics against these hard-working warehouse workers and allow a free and fair vote for union representation!

[Sign the petition here](#)

Want to get in touch? Connect with us on [our Facebook page](#) or email [LAWorkersAssembly \[at\] gmail \[dot\] com](mailto:LAWorkersAssembly@gmail.com).



Black workers matter

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For over 50 years, the wealthy and powerful have tried to claw back what was won by the Black liberation movement in the 1960s. Richard Nixon and the presidents that followed dramatically escalated the war against Black people in the United States.

Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton and fellow Panther Mark Clark were assassinated in their sleep in Chicago on Dec. 4, 1969. Billionaire New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller massacred the prisoners at Attica, killing 29 of them on Sept. 13, 1971.

An important part of this capitalist offensive has been the war on Black workers. The ruling class wanted to break free of its increasing dependence on Black labor in basic industry.

Fifty years ago, Amazon, Facebook, Google and Microsoft didn't exist. The U.S. was the biggest producer of steel, although the socialist Soviet Union was right behind.

More cars and trucks rolled off U.S. assembly lines than anywhere else. Bethlehem Steel, Chrysler, General Motors and U.S. Steel were “blue chip” stocks and members of the Dow Jones Industrial Average. None of them are now.

By 1968, a quarter of the 3 million workers in U.S. steel mills and auto plants were African American. (“Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1981” by Philip Foner)

Racist discrimination means that Black unemployment rates are double those of white workers. Yet in auto and steel, Black workers were twice as likely to be employed as compared to their percentage of the population.

This extraordinary development was the result of the Great Migration of Black people from the then-rural South to Northern cities. The growing number of Black workers concentrated in large workplaces became the basis for increasing struggle.

A thousand Black steelworkers had more power than a million sharecroppers. During World War II, Black workers shut down Pittsburgh-area steel mills over unequal pay. (“Out of the Crucible: Black Steel Workers in Western Pennsylvania, 1875-1980” by Dennis C. Dickerson)

Detroit became a fortress for Black workers. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a preliminary version of his “I Have a Dream” speech to 125,000 people attending Motown’s “Walk to Freedom” on June 23, 1963.

On July 24, 1973, two Black workers — Larry Carter and Isaac Shorter — turned off the power at Chrysler’s Jefferson Avenue plant in Detroit. This struggle against racist management began the first big sit-down strike in 35 years.

Deliberate deindustrialization

Capitalists didn’t like the growing power and influence of Black workers. The sit-

down strike at the Jefferson Avenue plant sparked a revolt of Black and white, largely Polish-American, workers against unsafe working conditions at Chrysler's Lynch Road Forge plant. ("Detroit: I Do Mind Dying" by Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin)

The United Auto Workers contracts that Black workers helped win by strikes became a model wage package for all workers. It forced many employers in nonunion workplaces to offer dental insurance and other benefits.

Black workers were the rock of the labor movement. Organizing drives among hospital and textile workers often depended on how many African Americans were employed in the workplace. Black women were leaders in these struggles. ("Upheaval in the Quiet Zone: 1199/SEIU and the Politics of Healthcare Unionism" by Leon Fink and "Hiring the Black Worker" by Timothy J. Minchin)

Capitalists counterattacked. The destruction of millions of factory jobs wasn't just the result of automation and super-exploiting workers in other countries. Nor was it simply the declining rate of profit in heavy industry as discovered by Karl Marx.

Deliberate deindustrialization was a political decision targeting Black workers. Wall Street never forgot how African Americans shook auto plants in the 1960s and 1970s.

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers led wildcat strikes in Detroit. There was a Black Panther Party caucus in GM's Fremont, Calif., plant, which is now a non-union Tesla plant.

Forty years ago the [communist leader Sam Marcy](#) described the hatred by billionaires for Black workers:

"The ruling class now looks at the Black population differently than it did in the days of the Underground Railroad. ... It now dares look upon the Black workers in

particular as a surplus population along with the unemployed white workers.

“It looks upon them with disdain as a drain on their government budget, as a drag on their system and as a dangerous source of social convulsions. The ruling class dreams of replacing all blue-collar workers with a minimum of white-collar technicians in white coats.”

The wholesale destruction of heavy industry in the Midwest caused the median income of African Americans to drop by 36 percent between 1978 and 1982. (Census Bureau, Historical Tables)

The capitalist class economically destroyed Detroit, just as it let Black people drown and starve in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Black workers are essential

Instead of concentrating African Americans in large plants, the capitalist state sent Black youth to big prisons. The 2.2 million poor people who are incarcerated in the U.S. are also members of the multinational working class.

Yet the super-rich can't get away from their dependence on Black labor. This is shown by millions of African American essential workers during the coronavirus pandemic.

It was Black workers in chains that paid the bills for the United States. Wall Street became the bankers for the slave masters.

It was enslaved Africans who paid the bills for the United States. Until the Civil War, two-thirds of U.S. exports were produced by slave labor.

Cotton alone accounted for half of U.S. exports in 1860. Thousands of miles of railroads were built by unpaid Black labor, like the prisoner John Henry.

Reparations are overdue. As the December 12th Movement says, “They stole us, they sold us, they owe us.”

Black workers today are joined by millions of Asian, Indigenous and Latinx workers. Like a helper locomotive pushing a freight train over a mountain grade, the other oppressed workers will help overcome white racism. Millions of poor white people need a socialist revolution, too.

All eyes are on the Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., where an 85-percent Black workforce is conducting a union drive. Whatever happens there, the freedom drive of Black workers is unstoppable.



Corporate virus ‘news’ and capitalist irrationality

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021

On any random day in February, you can visit the New York Times, Washington Post, CNN, and local media from Los Angeles to Chicago, and see several stories side by

side:

1. Schools should be reopened immediately, even [before teachers and other school workers are vaccinated](#). So say the cherry-picked “experts” and President [Joe Biden’s new CDC director](#), echoing Democratic mayors and governors, as well as the Republicans.
2. Governors are relaxing restrictions around the country on indoor dining, gyms, etc., as there is some decline in new COVID-19 cases, though the rate of infections and deaths is still far above what it was last summer and fall.
3. There are [several new, more infectious variants](#) of the virus spreading abroad that have started to reach the U.S., as well as [possible U.S. variants](#). Experts say a “perfect storm” of new infections is brewing — some of which may be more dangerous to children. People should start to double mask and be extra cautious about maintaining social distancing.

There is no effort by the champions of corporate journalism to reconcile these glaring contradictions, which replicate almost exactly the situation under Donald Trump with a shiny new Biden sheen. (What it really means is [more pressure on unions and communities](#) to conform with Wall Street’s wishes now that the country’s top office holders are Democrats, even though they are just continuing Trump-era policies.)

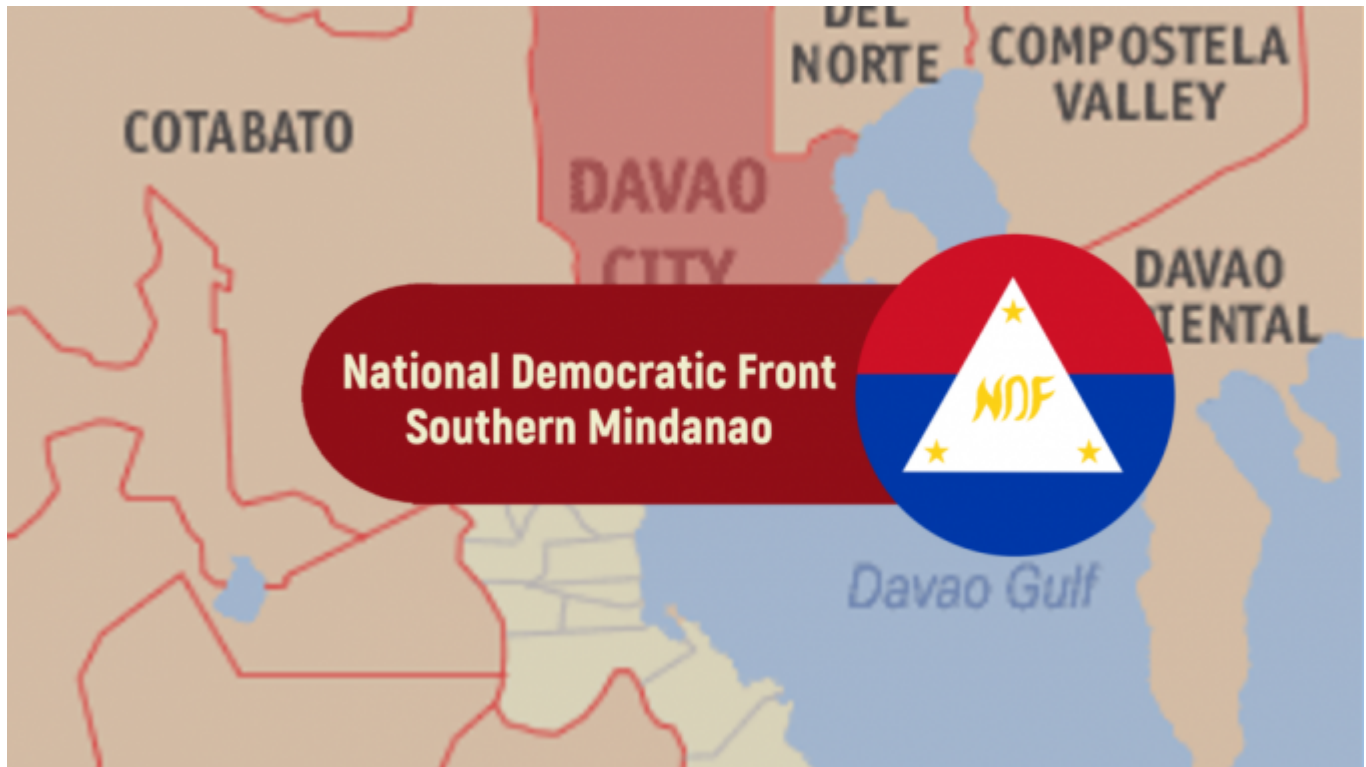
Instead of doubling down on safety and providing for the needs of the population until the original virus and new variants are safely contained — as has been successfully done in socialist countries like China and Vietnam — the first dip in infections brings a mad dash to reopen businesses and force more workers into unsafe (and potentially deadly) conditions.

This is the irrationality of capitalism writ large. 488,000+ deaths in the U.S. and climbing.



Condemn the U.S.-Duterte regime's fascist attack in Cebu Bakwit School! Free the detained Lumad students, teachers and elders now!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021



Revolutionary forces, especially from Lumad and peasant organizations, in Southern Mindanao strongly denounce the brazen and violent assault in the Lumad bakwit school inside the University of San Carlos Talamban campus in Cebu City by a retinue led by armed police on February 15. Police forces arrested and continue to detain 22 students, two teachers and two elders. We join the resounding call for their immediate and unconditional release and for the perpetrators of the attack to be held responsible.

Photos and video footages of the raid against unarmed civilians inside an academic compound, which the reactionary police ironically called a “rescue operation,” show in bitter detail the sheer use of gratuitous force, made more harrowing by the tormenting screams of children being dragged out of the classrooms that for almost a year became a safe refuge for them.

The assault on the sanctuary of Lumad students, their teachers and elders, under

deceptive and outrightly malicious pretext is a brazen display of the Duterte regime's impunity. Not merely a show of contempt for its own reactionary rule of law, the assault is evidently the Duterte regime in full flexing of fascist force, meant to send a chilling caution to those who dare defy it: we can do this with no fear of repercussion or accountability.

To be sure, the peasants and Lumad of Southern Mindanao are no longer surprised by this bold-faced act of terrorism perpetrated by armed state forces against children and the people who protect them. In UCCP Haran in Davao City where hundreds of Lumad were forced to seek refuge since 2016 when Duterte came to power, AFP and PNP forces, aided by bellicose reactionary officials like Nancy Catamco and Paolo Duterte, have tried multiple times to mount attacks against the Lumad's sanctuary and force them to return to their ancestral domains despite relentless militarization and forced paramilitary conscription.

This vile attack only proves that under Duterte's tyranny, neither children nor the academic institutions that seek to educate and protect them are safe from the fascism that beleaguer the entire country. Safety nets such as the UP-DND accord, however tenuous it may prove to be, must therefore be defended and advocated for the protection of schools and universities from the fascist abuses of the AFP and the PNP.

The Lumad of Southern Mindanao and the entire revolutionary movement express their gratitude to the religious and academic sectors that continue to support the struggle of the Lumad. We urge them to remain steadfast and stand for truth and justice, as it is only to be expected that the Duterte regime will heighten pressure against them to break their solidarity with the Lumad and their struggle.

However monstrous it may currently appear to be, the U.S.-Duterte regime's counterinsurgency war being presently steered to hitherto unknown fascist heights by the NTF-ELCAC is in fact self-defeating. By relentlessly launching intense

militarization which breeds killings, abductions, red-tagging, and other human rights violations alongside palliative and graft-laden “development programs” but all the while refusing to address the roots of the armed struggle, this rabid fascist dictatorship only ensures the steady deluge of warm bodies who unyieldingly mount all forms of resistance and the well of NPA recruits who continue to fight tyranny until it is thoroughly defeated.

Rubi del Mundo is the spokesperson of the NDF-Southern Mindanao, National Democratic Front of the Philippines

Source: P[hilippine Revolution Web Central](#)



Feb. 19 Future Focus: A Conversation with Jalil Muntaqim

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021

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FUTURE FOCUS: A CONVERSATION WITH JALIL MUNTAQIM

*hosted by
UR Abolition Coalition,
Frederick Douglas Institute,
Susan B. Anthony Institute,
Rochester Decarceration
Research Initiative,
Center for Community
Engagement, &
Central New York
Humanities Corridor*

*Join us for an open discussion on
policing, criminal (in)justice, and our
collective imaginings for a better
future.*

*Friday, Feb 19
7 pm*

Link to register in bio

ASL interpretation provided

FRIDAY AT 7 PM EST

Future Focus: A Conversation with Jalil Muntaqim

Online Event

REGISTER HERE: https://rochester.zoom.us/j/7N_PoP70-NNTXuD36P62W4EQg

Jalil Muntaqim is an activist, author, and former member of the Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Army. During his five decades of incarceration, Muntaqim remained a pioneering leader within and without his prison walls. He initiated national campaigns for the United States to recognize the status of political prisoners who, like himself, fought for liberation in the face of state persecution, surveillance and intimidation, and later helped to found an amnesty movement dedicated to freeing political prisoners and prisoners of war. He also earned multiple college degrees, mentored hundreds of people, and taught classes on sociology, African Studies, poetry, IT, and other life skills.

Released on parole in October 2020, and now at Citizen Action NY, Muntaqim lends his experience and knowledge of history to discuss the way forward from our present moment on policing, popular resistance, criminal (in)justice, and our collective imaginings for a more just, more humane future.

The conversation, co-hosted by the UR Abolition Coalition, the Center for Community Engagement, the Frederick Douglass Institute, the Susan B. Anthony Institute, the Rochester Decarceration Research Initiative, and the Central New York Humanities Corridor, includes a moderated discussion followed by an audience Q&A. ASL Interpretation will be provided. Please be in touch with sbai@rochester.edu with other requests for accommodation or questions as far in advance of the event as possible.



Lawfare threatens to derail presidential election In Ecuador

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021

On [February 7](#), the progressive presidential candidate for the Union of Hope Alliance (UNES) party, Andrés Arauz, won first place in Ecuador's presidential election; this is uncontested. Arauz garnered 32.71% of the vote; right-wing former banker Guillermo Lasso 19.74%; and the "Indigenous" candidate, Yaku Pérez 19.38%. Since Arauz's margin of victory was less than the required 40% plus at least ten points more than the closest competitor, a runoff is scheduled for April 11th. With the UN calling for transparency and Pérez contesting the outcome, Ecuador's [National Electoral Council \(CNE\)](#) has agreed to conduct a partial recount to verify the second place contender.

This election will have enormous consequences for Ecuador as well as the entire region. After four years of President Lenin Moreno's neoliberal turn, which reversed the economic and social gains of former President Rafael Correa's Citizens' Revolution, the majority of Ecuadorians have opted for a change of course. An Arauz

victory would once again prioritize social investment over IMF imposed austerity and resume Ecuador's leadership in the movement towards regional integration. If the ultra right in Ecuador and Colombia have their way, however, Arauz will not make it to the run-off election.

Just a week prior to the first round, with Arauz ahead in most polls, Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno, who is a fierce opponent of the UNES candidate, met with the notoriously interventionist Secretary General of the OAS, Luis Almagro, in Washington. This meeting raised suspicions that efforts were underway to prevent a return of the Citizens' Revolution in Ecuador. On February 12th, the Attorney General of Colombia, Francisco Barbosa arrived in Quito to meet with his Ecuadorian counterpart, Diana Salazar, armed with a dossier that allegedly shows the campaign of Arauz had received funding from the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerillas in Colombia. Although no independent corroboration of such charges have been presented to back these allegations, the [echo chamber](#) of right wing fake news is already urging election authorities in Ecuador to disqualify UNES in a bid to prevent Arauz from participating in the second round of the presidential election.

In his [Facebook page](#), Arauz categorically denied this accusation: "I have no link with the ELN. This big lie has just one purpose, to prevent the Arauz-Rabascall ticket from participating in the second round."

Prominent voices of the Americas have denounced these charges as fabrications designed to sabotage democratic procedures in Ecuador. Nobel Peace Prize Winner (1980), [Adolfo Pérez Esquivel](#), tweeted: "They will not be able to fool the Ecuadorian people with judicial and media operations from the well known Lawfare manual. Democracy will prevail. Ecuador has suffered a great deal and needs a return to common sense. Our support for candidate Arauz."

Former Colombian President [Ernesto Samper](#), in response to an article published in the ultra-right wing Colombian magazine, *Semana*, alleging that Arauz had links to

the ELN, wrote: “The people of Ecuador should be on the alert that the enemies of progressivism in our countries are intent on stopping by any means the transformations for which Latin America clamours.” In the face of criticism of the unsubstantiated charges made against Arauz in the article, the Director of *Semana*, [Victoria Avila](#), remarked in an interview “I want to make it very clear. I do not want to say that this information is absolutely certain.”

The [Puebla Group](#), which brings together several former presidents of the region, including the Brazilian Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva, issued a statement in which it “categorically rejects the attempt to link Andrés Arauz with the National Liberation Army.”

Former President of Bolivia, [Evo Morales](#), who himself was forced into exile by an OAS backed coup in November 2019, tweets: “We sound an alert about a plan by the right and the U.S. in Ecuador to try to prevent the triumph of Arauz in the second round, using the Attorney General of Colombia, right-wing parties and the OAS. We have the obligation to defend democracy and our regional integration. Be alert!”

The outcome of the presidential election in Ecuador will no doubt have a significant impact on the politics of the entire region. As Correa points out, these elections provide an opportunity “[to recover UNASUR](#)”. If elected, Arauz has promised to champion the revival of UNASUR and return this South American nation to ALBA. There is also a growing consensus in South America in support of these regional integration and cooperation mechanisms. With the election of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) candidate, Luis Arce, for President of Bolivia last October, an Arauz victory in Ecuador would fortify UNASUR at a most critical time. In the face of the ongoing [COVID 19 pandemic](#), the benefits of multilateralism have become obvious in efforts throughout the Americas to obtain urgently needed medical supplies and vaccines from a variety of countries. Given the return of progressive governance in Argentina, Mexico, and Bolivia within the last three

years, a victory in Ecuador could signal a new pink tide.

Fred Mills is co-Director of COHA. William Camacaro is Senior Analyst at COHA

Source: [COHA](#)



Venezuela: Damage to the people caused by the U.S. blockade denounced by UN

written by Struggle - La Lucha

February 19, 2021

The negative impact of the coercive and unilateral measures of the United States on the Venezuelan people has made its way into the news this week.

After several days of official visit to the country, the special rapporteur of the United Nations (UN), Alena Douhan, assured that the policies of economic asphyxiation has accentuated the scenario of crisis and internal tensions, with direct impact on

health, migration, separation of families and all aspects of social life.

At a press conference in Caracas, the UN independent expert urged Washington to reconsider and remove all sanctions against the Venezuelan public sector and to refrain from imposing blockades on the South American nation.

Douhan asserted that the punitive actions implemented by the United States have slowed down Venezuela's development due to the severe impact on its economy, causing a 99 percent drop in foreign exchange earnings in recent years.

In parallel to the official's visit, representatives of the Latin American Foundation for Human Rights and Social Development (Fundalatin) and the Venezuelan Civil Association (Sures), presented the negative impact of the blockade to the National Assembly last Thursday.

Pasqualina Curcio, advisor to Fundalatin, said that the country has lost more than 194 billion dollars as a result of the sanctions, which were supported by the previous National Assembly.

For her part, Lucrecia Hernández, director of Sures, pointed out that these sanctions have violated the fundamental rights of Venezuelans, and called for those responsible to be held civilly, criminally and administratively liable.

Meanwhile, President Nicolás Maduro stressed the day before the UN expert's recognition of the impact on the country of the economic asphyxiation implemented by the White House and its allies.

The UN rapporteur has called on the United States and the European Union to review and lift the sanctions against Venezuela, because they have exacerbated an enormous humanitarian crisis against the people.

Maduro recalled that the Bolivarian government has repeatedly denounced the

severe impact on social, cultural, educational and economic life caused by the systematic adoption of a blockade policy.

Source: [Resumen](#) North America bureau



Venezuela. Denuncian daños del bloqueo de Estados Unidos al pueblo

written by Struggle - La Lucha

February 19, 2021

Resumen Latinoamericano, 13 de febrero de 2021.

El impacto negativo de las medidas coercitivas y unilaterales de Estados Unidos en el pueblo venezolano marcó la semana noticiosa que culmina hoy.

Tras varios días de visita oficial en el país la relatora especial de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU), Alena Douhan, aseguró que las políticas de asfixia económica acentuaron el escenario de crisis y tensiones internas, con impacto

directo en la salud, la migración, la separación de las familias y todos los aspectos de la vida social.

En rueda de prensa ofrecida en Caracas, la experta independiente de la ONU instó a Washington a reconsiderar la eliminación de todas las sanciones adoptadas contra el sector público venezolano y abstenerse de imponer bloqueos a esta nación suramericana.

Douhan aseveró que las acciones punitivas implementadas por Estados Unidos frenaron el desarrollo de Venezuela debido al severo impacto ocasionado a su economía, al provocar la caída de los ingresos en divisas en un 99 por ciento durante los últimos años.

Paralelo a la visita de la funcionaria, representantes de la Fundación Latinoamericana para los Derechos Humanos y el Desarrollo Social (Fundalatin) y la Asociación Civil Venezolana (Sures), expusieron el pasado jueves ante la Asamblea Nacional el impacto negativo del bloqueo.

Pasqualina Curcio, asesora de Fundalatin, dijo que más de 194 mil millones de dólares ha dejado de percibir el país tras las sanciones, que contaron con el apoyo de la anterior Asamblea Nacional.

Por su parte, Lucrecia Hernández, directora de Sures, apuntó que esas sanciones han vulnerado los derechos fundamentales de los venezolanos, al tiempo que pidió que sean impuestas responsabilidades civiles, penales y administrativas a los responsables.

En tanto, el presidente Nicolás Maduro hizo hincapié la víspera en el reconocimiento de la experta de la Organización de Naciones Unidas al impacto ocasionado en el país por las acciones de asfixia económica implementadas por la Casa Blanca y sus aliados.

‘La relatora de la ONU ha hecho un llamado a Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea a que revisen y levanten las sanciones contra Venezuela, porque han exacerbado una crisis humanitaria enorme contra el pueblo’, subrayó el jefe de Estado.

Maduro recordó que el Gobierno bolivariano emitió reiteradas denuncias del severo impacto en la vida social, cultural, educativa y económica generado por la adopción sistemática de una política de bloqueo.

Fuente: TeleSUR



Congratulations to Donetsk communists on 5th anniversary of Vperyod

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021



Dear comrades,

The Socialist Unity Party of the United States and our publication, Struggle-La Lucha, send you warm congratulations on the 5th anniversary of the website publication [Vperyod \(Forward\)](#), organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Donetsk People's Republic, on Feb. 15.

From our position, struggling inside the belly of U.S. imperialism, it is nearly impossible to get news about developments inside the Donbass republics from the corporate media. What little is reported there is distorted and slanderous. So the existence of Vperyod is essential to us to receive real information on the situation of the workers' and progressive movement in Donetsk.

In addition, the comrades of Vperyod never neglect the importance of international solidarity. On your site we can see the great significance that Donetsk communists attach to the international struggle for socialism and against imperialism, through reports and statements of solidarity, not only with the peoples of the former USSR, but with Cuba, Venezuela and many other places.

We cherish the bonds of solidarity between our publications and organizations. Together, we know that a new world — a socialist world — is not only possible, but inevitable.

Socialist Unity Party (U.S.) and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper

February 12, 2021



Los Angeles: Support Amazon workers' union drive, Feb. 19

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 19, 2021



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2021 AT 12:30 PM

Support Amazon Workers' Union Drive

300 S Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90071-3401, United States

Union activists and community groups are holding a rally in front of the office of Morgan, Lewis and Bockius. This giant union-busting law firm was hired by Amazon to defy fair labor practices and intimidate and lie to 5,800 Amazon workers during their historic drive for a union. This workforce is 85% African American in a "right to work" state fighting against one of the richest corporations in the world. Please join us at this socially distanced, mask wearing rally! For more information call 323 306-6240

On [Facebook](#)

