

Ukraine: Twenty days of underground protests by Krivoy Rog miners

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020



Miners protesting underground in Krivoy Rog, Ukraine.

Sept. 21 — “This is not a strike, but a protest action.” Yuriy Samoilov, chairperson of the Krivoy Rog (Kryvyi Rih) organization of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine, prefers to clarify this point when talking about the [underground protest of local miners](#). Workers of the privatized Krivoy Rog Iron Ore Plant (KZhRK) are afraid to officially call their actions a “strike” because of pressure from the Ukrainian authorities.

Protesters remember the sad experience of striking uranium miners when the leaders of the movement were put on trial. The government seeks to punish the organizers of strikes, and the security services conduct a targeted fight against such people, which leaves an imprint on the tactics and rhetoric of the protesters. “There are no leaders in our movement,” says Yuri Samoilov.

On Sept. 2, about 30 miners at the Oktyabrskaya mine refused to come to the surface after their shift. Later, others joined them. At the peak of the underground action, the number of participants reached 300 people. Their demands are of an economic nature: an increase in wages to 1,000 euros, an improvement in unbearable working conditions and the preservation of professional benefits for underground workers.

However, the owners are categorically opposed. From the beginning of the underground action at the mines, they introduced “police management,” when the actual leadership is carried out by the internal security service. The workers and their families are being interrogated by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). And the [yellow trade union](#) in the bosses’ pocket does not organize any protest actions and has stopped communicating with the KZhRK workers altogether.

Similar actions are now taking place in many countries around the world because the capitalist crisis has intensified the attack on the rights of the working class. However, a number of circumstances make these events especially important and, in a sense, unique for modern Europe.

Role of women workers

First, we must speak about the essential role of women who actively participate in the protest movement. Actions in support of the miners are not only held underground. They are supported by rallies near the city administration of Krivoy Rog, as well as in Kiev, near the Verkhovna Rada (parliament) and the president's office. Half of the participants in the Krivoy Rog demonstrations are women, full-fledged current workers at the KZhRK. The plant employs about 2,000 women miners. They perform crushing and screening operations, control lifting installations that ensure the movement of mined ore and work with explosive materials. In a word, they do almost everything that men working at the plant do.

Some time ago, a recertification of working conditions was carried out at the KZhRK, as a result of which the consequences of harmful and especially hard work were left to the miners alone. According to the new conditions, women working here will have to retire at 60 years old, instead of the previous 45 years. At the same time, the wages of women miners are equal to 150-200 euros — although men receive 700 or 800 euros. It is noteworthy that it was not a local, but a Kharkov company, chosen to conduct the recertification because its owner, Alexander Yaroslavsky, also owns mines in Krivoy Rog.

The second feature of the movement is that it is supported not only by representatives of labor collectives, but by almost all residents of Krivoy Rog. After all, they are interested in the workers receiving decent wages and working in safe conditions. The mayor and city councilors invited representatives of the miners' union to meetings and promised to support the miners' demands. In the center of Krivoy Rog, there is a strikers' tent camp, which is maintained not only by the families of the protesters, but also with the assistance of local authorities. And ordinary townspeople support the miners with financial aid, publicity and messages on social media.

The place where the events unfold is also remarkable. The ultimate beneficiary of KZhRK is the richest man in Ukraine, billionaire Rinat Akhmetov, who bought one of the most expensive houses in the world at the beginning of 2020: the luxury villa Les Cèdres in France. On the other hand, Krivoy Rog is the birthplace of President Volodymyr Zelensky. He grew up in this city. Many of the protesters knew him personally. However, the president has not yet expressed his opinion on the miners' protests and does not plan to meet with them. Moreover, according to Yuri Samoilov, Zelensky's team is supporting Akhmetov in the local elections to be held in November 2020. And it is not surprising that the authorities do not interfere with attempts to crush the protest action.

The striking miners are writing appeals to parliament, government bodies and the presidential administration, but have not yet received any response. The same letters were sent to the human rights commissioner, the United Nations mission and other international institutions, all of which also remain indifferent to what is happening in Krivoy Rog. The protesters wanted to set up a tent city in the capital in front of the Rada, but they were dispersed by the police, clearly showing what rights Ukrainians obtained as a result of the Western-backed Euromaidan. The international community is watching in silence, preferring not to react to social protests against Ukrainian oligarchs.

However, the struggle continues. On the 20th day of the protest, there are over 170 workers underground, who are gradually managing to overcome the information blockade of the Ukrainian media controlled by the oligarchy. The action in the mine is already yielding partial results: the administration of the KZhRK promised to increase the salaries of women working at the plant by 25 percent. But this is the only concession the oligarchs have agreed to so far because they are waging a real class war against the protesters and are determined to win.

International solidarity needed

The significance of the underground action in Krivoy Rog is especially important in view of the forthcoming changes in labor laws. The Ukrainian authorities, who successfully combine nationalism with neoliberalism, are determined to impose a new, anti-worker, labor code on the country. The situation of workers will deteriorate hopelessly if they fail to effectively protest this arbitrariness. And the success of the miners would be an important example in this sense, because their struggle is the struggle of the entire working class of the country.

According to Yuri Samoilov, the most important condition for the success of the current struggle is solidarity, including at the international level. Progressive forces around the world should pay attention to the systemic violation of human rights that is taking place in modern Ukraine, where constitutional norms and international agreements in the field of labor and civil rights, formally signed by Kiev officials, are being violated.

The European Union is concerned about pressure on the opposition in Belarus, but Ukraine is a worse example of the suppression of the social and political rights of its citizens. It is shameful and hypocritical to ignore this. The women of the Krivoy Rog plant do not wear white dresses, but they need protection from arbitrariness. Workers protesting underground deserve general sympathy and support.

Translated for Struggle-La Lucha by Greg Butterfield

Source: Liva.com.ua



Instability in Mali caused by imperialist foreign policy

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020

Military mutiny results in the detention of president, prime minister and other officials

A mutiny by lower-ranking military officers on August 18 in the West African state of Mali has prompted the condemnation of regional, continental and international organizations.

President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was forced over the national media to resign from office after being elected just two years ago.

Demonstrations against the government in Bamako, the capital, have escalated over the last few months in the aftermath of legislative elections. Opposition parties and coalitions are accusing Keita of corruption, irregularities in the elections earlier this

year and with the failure to bring stability to the northern region of the country which has been the scene of an insurgency by several Islamist groupings.

The mutiny began among the soldiers at the Kati military base where columns of troops headed towards the capital seizing control of the presidential residence and national media outlets. Later the president and prime minister were not available for comment after being detained by the mutineers.

This incident drew an immediate response from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional organization of 15 governments. An announcement was made indicating that the borders of Mali with contiguous states were to be sealed and the membership of Mali in ECOWAS was effectively suspended.

Later the continental African Union (AU), composed of 55 member-states, followed the lead of ECOWAS by prohibiting the military regime from participating in meetings and deliberations of the organization based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterrez, spoke out against the coup as well saying that the situation should be returned to normal under the elected civilian government in Mali.

A [statement](#) was issued by the AU Commission Chair on the situation in Mali, saying:

“The Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat strongly condemns the forced detention of the President of Mali Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, the Prime Minister and other members of the Malian Government and calls for their immediate release. The Chairperson strongly rejects any attempt at the unconstitutional change of government in Mali and calls on the mutineers to cease all recourse to violence, and calls for the respect of the country’s institutions. The Chairperson further calls on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations and the entire international community to combine

our collective efforts to oppose any use of force as a means to end the political crisis in Mali."

ECOWAS sent a delegation to meet with the coup leaders and the deposed politicians. Former Federal Republic of Nigeria President Goodluck Jonathan headed the mission to Mali where talks failed to reach an agreement to return President Keita to office.

According to reports, the military forces in control of the country are seeking to remain in their positions for a period of three years. They have agreed, in principle it appears, to the release of the president and other officials. However, the reinstallation of the president has been rejected by the mutineers.

The role of imperialism in the destabilization of Mali

Since 2012, the country has experienced heightened levels of violence and instability. The imperialist war of aggression waged by the United States, NATO and its allies in the region against Libya during 2011 triggered not only mass carnage in what was then Africa's most prosperous nation. That war, which was approved by the UN Security Council in two resolutions, resulted in the increasing dislocation and conflict throughout North and West Africa.

Many Malians had taken up residence in Libya due to its economic strength and social stability prior to the overthrow of the Jamahiriya, the political system established by former leader, Col. Muammar Gaddafi. During the course of the daily blanket bombing operations in Libya carried out by the Pentagon and NATO in 2011, tens of thousands of people were killed including Gaddafi, who had just two years earlier represented the AU at the United Nations General Assembly in 2009.

These events provided an opening for rebel groupings within northern Mali to make a bid for the control of key areas inside the country. The reemergence of an

unresolved regional issue in Mali involving the Tuareg population in the north placed tremendous pressure on the military to end the insurgency.

The Tuareg question in northern Mali is a direct result of the failure of France to resolve regional issues in the country prior to independence in 1960. Mali represented in its earliest phase of independence the Pan-Africanist and anti-imperialist tendencies within the liberation movements which emerged in the post-World War II period.

There have been several military [conflicts](#) over the status of the Tuareg people even at the onset of national independence in the early 1960s. Later, in 1990, Algeria mediated an end to another series of clashes through the auspices of the predecessor of the AU, the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

However, in recent years the emergence of Muslim groupings which are reportedly linked to al-Qaeda and ISIS, suggests that the objectives of these armed organizations are centered on the creation of a state controlled by Islamic law. Such tendencies within the Muslim world have their origins in geo-political regions where the U.S. is seeking hegemony.

For example in Afghanistan, it was successive Democratic and Republican administrations which armed and politically bolstered select Islamic groupings that served to undermine socialism and the role of the former Soviet Union. Later in Libya, Yemen and Syria, similar organizations waged the ground operations while Pentagon and NATO-allied bombers destroyed large swaths of territory in these states.

The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) carried out its first major military project in Libya by destroying the national infrastructure, expropriating the wealth of the country and consequently plunging the nation into poverty and lawlessness. AFRICOM has established military relationships with many of the AU member-states

under the guise of training and the enhancement of security. Nonetheless, since the formation of AFRICOM under the administration of President George W. Bush, Jr. in 2008, the security status of many states in West and North African has deteriorated.

Implications for a political settlement in Mali

Of course it will be up to the people of Mali to resolve the current political quagmire along with the assistance of ECOWAS and the AU. A coalition of opposition forces known as the M5-RFP and a broader June 5 Movement has welcomed the seizure of power by the military units.

The opposition had in recent months demanded the resignation of Keita and the entire government. Various leaders who were waging a struggle against the ousted government have been quoted as supporting the three year transitional period under the direction of the military mutineers.

A former foreign minister and member of the opposition M5 told [DW.com](https://www.dw.com) that:

“What is important for us is to see that this transition delivers to the Malian people’s expectations. This is a historic opportunity for our country. We must take time to put things back in place.”

During the period after the previous coup in 2012, the military junta did not maintain power for an extended period. The elections held after the coup resulted in Keita coming to power. Keita has been very close politically to France which deployed thousands of troops to Mali when the situation worsened in early 2013. AFRICOM facilitated the intervention by France through the utilization of the Pentagon Air Force which assisted in the transporting of military personnel and equipment. French forces are continuing to occupy Mali irrespective of the recent coup.

France has spoken against the coup along with the U.S. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen what diplomatic posture Washington and Paris will take towards the new regime in Bamako. Both of the officers designated as leaders of the 2012 and 2020 coups were trained in the U.S. by the Pentagon. These military training programs also have an ideological and political orientation as well.

The imperialist states are consistently recruiting potential allies which will adhere to the imperatives of Western foreign policy objectives.

An [article](#) published in the Washington Post emphasizes:

"Col. Assimi Goita, who emerged Thursday (Aug. 20) as the head of the junta in power, worked for years with U.S. Special Operations forces focused on fighting extremism in West Africa. He spoke regularly with U.S. troops and attended U.S.-led training exercises, said officers from both countries, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Goita, who also received training from Germany and France, according to the officers, headed Mali's special forces unit in the country's restive central region, where fighters linked to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have established a stronghold that has alarmed global leaders."

The same pattern holds true for Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo, the leader of the 2012 putsch in Mali. Sanogo was educated in several military training centers in the U.S. The same Washington Post [wrote](#) in 2012:

"Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo, who led a renegade military faction that on Thursday deposed Mali's democratically elected president, visited the United States several times to receive professional military education, including basic officer training, said Patrick Barnes, a U.S. Africa Command official based in

Washington.”

Consequently, the struggle of the Malian people is to overcome the influence of imperialism in its internal affairs. This can also be applied to the AU region as a whole. Genuine independence cannot be secured while the Pentagon and NATO maintain dominance over military affairs.

Source: [Fighting Words](#)



U.S.-NATO hands off Belarus!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
September 23, 2020



Six years after the U.S. government helped to engineer a right-wing takeover of Ukraine using mass protests, another former Soviet republic — Belarus — is now in the gunsights of Washington and the European Union.

It is urgent for the anti-war movement here to raise the demand: U.S.-NATO hands off Belarus!

On Aug. 9, presidential elections were held in Belarus. [According to the central election commission](#), incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko won with 80.1 percent of the vote, easily avoiding a second-round runoff. Opposition candidate Svetlana Tsikhanouskaya, his nearest competitor, won just over 10 percent of the

vote. No other candidate received more than 2 percent.

Tsikhanouskaya claimed to have gotten 60 percent of the vote and accused the government of fraud. [She immediately left the country](#) for neighboring NATO country Lithuania, which is ruled by a far-right government that persecutes communists, bans Soviet-era symbols and uplifts Nazi collaborators.

Other opposition candidates fled to the West and charged fraud as well. At first, they called for a recount; but that was soon dropped in favor of demanding new elections.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), aligned with the European Union, was invited to send election observers but declined, blaming ["the lack of a timely invitation."](#)

In Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, [Tsikhanouskaya announced](#) the formation of a “Power Transfer Coordination Council” to implement the removal of Lukashenko. She suggested that she may declare herself the legitimate president. On Aug. 24, she met with the second-highest-ranking U.S. diplomat, [Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Bigan](#).

These actions caused some commentators in the former Soviet countries to label Tsikhanouskaya “the Belarusian Juan Guaidó,” comparing her to the self-declared “president” of Venezuela, with the backing of the U.S. and European countries, against democratically elected President Nicolás Maduro.

On Aug. 20, during the presentation of an award to Belarus Ambassador Oleg Paferov in Caracas, [Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza](#) said, “Belarus and Venezuela are facing similar attacks that repeat the same scenario.”

Opposition groups protested the election results. State forces clamped down hard on the protests, arresting many. There were reports of police brutality.

Afterward, most protesters were freed and the police backed off, apologizing for the harsh response and permitting protests to continue.

Since then, there have been large demonstrations for and against Lukashenko's re-election in the capital, Minsk, and around the country.

At the same time, [NATO military forces](#) have reportedly engaged in provocative movements near Belarus' borders with Poland and Lithuania. The Belarusian government accused them of trying to destabilize the situation in western Belarus, particularly the city of Grodno, and rushed additional troops to the area to defend the country's territorial integrity.

Both Lukashenko and independent observers say the actions of the U.S. and other NATO powers, and of Tsikhanouskaya and other opposition leaders, reflect the well-worn strategy of "color revolutions" used to overthrow governments considered inadequately subservient to Western imperialist powers and Big Capital, including Yugoslavia, Libya and Ukraine.

Why Belarus is a target

Belarus is a country of 9.5 million people in eastern Europe. It is bordered by NATO members Latvia, Lithuania and Poland to the north and west; NATO-aligned Ukraine to the south; and Russia to the east.

Although relations between Belarus and Russia have been strained recently, the two countries are members of a Union State established in 1996 with strong bonds of economic cooperation and mutual defense.

Belarus is also the last "buffer state" between Russia and NATO since the neoliberal/fascist takeover of Ukraine in 2014. The coup in Ukraine, backed up with anti-communist, pro-privatization and ultranationalist opposition protests called "Maidan," succeeded with the cooperation of leading U.S. politicians like the late

Republican Sen. John McCain and Democrats Joe Biden (then vice president) and John Kerry (then secretary of state), and Western-funded nongovernmental organizations.

For almost 30 years, since the breakup of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, a major U.S. strategic goal under both Republican and Democratic administrations has been to surround and carve up the Russian Federation. Belarus is the final “domino” that has to fall for NATO to militarily dominate all the countries on Russia’s western border.

Belarus is also a key link in the world’s longest oil pipeline, the Druzhba or Friendship Pipeline, which runs between Russia and Western Europe. Big Oil and fracking interests that are among the Trump administration’s strongest backers have an immediate profit interest in disrupting this relationship, just as they are determined to prevent a pipeline through Lebanon and Syria that would make Iranian oil more accessible to the world.

State ownership vs. privatization

There is still another factor that accounts for U.S.-NATO targeting of Belarus, one of great importance to the workers of that country.

Unlike other former Soviet republics, Belarus has not been subjected to the wrenching privatization of large factories and farms that wreaked economic and social havoc on countries like Russia and Ukraine.

Although Belarus is today a capitalist country, it practices a form of state capitalism that has left more of the gains of the Soviet era intact, especially when it comes to social protections for the working class. This is why President Lukashenko has maintained a high level of support since he first took office in 1994.

Ironically, it has been recent moves by the government to enact “contract work” and

raise the retirement age — modest when compared to “reforms” in other former Soviet countries — that have helped to put wind in the sails of the opposition, even though Tsikhanouskaya and other opposition leaders stand for speeding up privatization, imposing austerity on the workers and making the country a vassal of the Western powers.

But appeals by anti-Lukashenko forces to workers at major state enterprises to organize a national strike have so far fallen flat, reflecting the disconnect between the concerns of the workers and the program of the opposition over privatization and austerity.

Andriy Manchuk, a Ukrainian Marxist and editor of Liva.com.ua, [exposed the “Resuscitation Reform Package”](#) promoted by opposition groups earlier this year. It was officially sponsored by the European Union, the U.S. Agency for International Development, Pact, the European Fund for Democracy and the International Renaissance Fund.

“The coalition that promotes it is a clone of the Ukrainian ‘Resuscitation Reform Package’ — they haven’t even bothered to change the name —” Manchuk wrote, “... which was formed in 2014 and supplies the Ukrainian government with neoliberal reformers and experts, with an emphasis on privatization, denationalization of the economy, and promotion of the interests of international financial organizations and transnational corporations.”

Belarus, not West, will decide

Communists and socialists in Belarus who seek to represent the interests of the workers and oppose imperialist intervention are working out the best tactics to use in this difficult situation. They understand the frustrations and fears of the working class and the need to counter the ways that the pro-Western opposition tries to mislead them.

In Russia as well as in the West, there are powerful capitalist interests eager to see the privatization of Belarusian industry and agriculture. Although the present protest movement may subside for a time, the pressure on Lukashenko's government to dismantle workers' rights will continue to grow, as will NATO's military pressure.

The best guarantee for Belarus' continued independence and access to jobs, education and health care is the growth of a working-class movement rooted in the fight against imperialism and for the restoration of socialism.

Here in the U.S., we must fight against every manifestation of military, political and economic intervention by Washington and its NATO allies. Building the movement against war and racism, and organizing workers and oppressed peoples to fight for socialism here, is the best way to assist the Belarusian people's struggle to defend their sovereignty.



Borotba: Workers should put an end to crisis in Belarus

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020

Borotba (Struggle), a revolutionary Marxist organization banned by the U.S.-backed government of Ukraine, issued the following statement on Aug. 25. Borotba activists continue their work from exile, in the anti-fascist Donbass republics, and underground in Ukraine. Translated for Struggle-La Lucha by Greg Butterfield.

The political crisis in the Republic of Belarus has continued for two weeks. The reason was the latest presidential election, the official results of which (the victory of the incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko with 80 percent) categorically did not suit the opposition. Thousands of rallies were held throughout the country. In the early days of the protest, the security forces responded with brutal force. Despite the fact that the protesters failed to achieve their goal — removing President Lukashenko from power — the confrontation continues.

Lukashenko's government

Belarus differs from other post-Soviet countries — Russia, Ukraine, Moldova — in that the permanent President Lukashenko, who came to power in 1994, did not permit mass privatization and destruction of social infrastructure. Most of the large enterprises remain state-owned. Agriculture enjoys state support and provides jobs for a significant part of the country's population.

The cost of economic and social stability was a severe suppression of opposition. However, thanks to these economic and social policies, Lukashenko's support has rarely dropped below 60 percent before.

In 2019-2020, the situation in Belarus worsened. The global recession has affected the economy of Belarus. Economic difficulties have intensified with the COVID-19 epidemic.

It should be noted that in recent years the Lukashenko regime has taken a number of anti-social measures: a tax on “parasites,” reform of labor laws, and some others. However, these decisions were less likely than in Ukraine or Russia to “rob” the majority of workers. The resources obtained from the reduction of the “social sphere” went to state needs, and not into the pockets of oligarchs and officials, as is the case in other post-Soviet countries.

It is also necessary to emphasize the smooth ideological turn of the Lukashenko regime in recent years: fearing absorption by Russia, nationalistic motives were increasingly woven into the state ideology, a policy of “Belarusianization” was pursued and the soft expulsion of the Russian language from the public sphere was carried out.

Against this background, there was a serious deterioration in relations between Belarus and Russia, its main economic partner and political ally. In response to Russian demands for deeper integration and merger into a single state, Lukashenko used the rhetoric of national sovereignty and effectively blocked closer unification. In turn, Russia began to apply pressure by raising the price of energy.

The nature of the protests

The picture of the confrontation between the “people” and the “dictator” imposed by the imperialist media should not overshadow a political and class analysis. Sympathy for the victims of police brutality does not mean supporting their political agenda.

The leading force in the protests against the Lukashenko regime was the urban middle class, which has grown and strengthened during the years of relative

economic prosperity. The middle class considered the framework of the paternalistic welfare state to be restrictive, seeing its ideal in the “free market” and “free enterprise.” Having no experience of neoliberal reforms that have destroyed the economies of Ukraine and Russia, a significant part of the Belarusian people sees the future of their country in market-driven “freedom.”

However, a neoliberal program of large-scale privatization, health cuts and freedom to lay off workers is unlikely to appeal to most workers. That is why the “reform” program, initially widely advertised by opposition candidate Svetlana Tikhanovskaya and her supporters, was later simply hidden. But it was too late.

The position of secession from the Union State [of Russia and Belarus, founded in 1996], as well as the dominance of nationalist bloggers and journalists in the Opposition Coordinating Council, alienated broad strata of the population from the protest movement.

At the symbolic level, the “white-red-white” nationalist flag, which was also used by Belarusian collaborators during World War II, dominates in the protests.

In the absence of prominent leaders, political émigrés controlled by the CIA’s Radio Liberty and the Polish government became the center of control of the protests. Thus, the widespread protest movement was utilized by liberal-nationalist politicians under the control of imperialism, which makes it possible to draw some parallels with the Euromaidan events in Ukraine.

In response to mass protests, Lukashenko began mobilizing his supporters. Although rallies in support of the president were less massive than opposition rallies, they did not have the character of paid extras, as was often the case with [deposed Ukrainian President] Yanukovych. Lukashenko was supported by older people who have a negative experience of the collapse of the USSR and appreciate the remnants of the welfare state preserved in Belarus.

The role of the working class

Unexpectedly for many, an important factor in Belarusian politics was the working class of large enterprises, which actually acted as a separate “party” to the conflict. It was for the allegiance of the working class that the main struggle between Lukashenko and the opposition unfolded.

Outraged by the police brutality of the early days of the protests, the working class began to lean towards the opposition. Demands to stop the beatings and to release those arrested found support from the workers. Sensing this, the opposition declared a national strike. However, by that time the harsh crackdown on the protesters had stopped, and most of those arrested were released. While sympathizing with those arrested, the working class was not at all ready to support the political agenda of the protest leaders — privatization, market reforms, nationalism — and the plan to rouse the workers for a nationwide strike actually failed.

The opposition, in turn, deliberately focused on recruiting workers exclusively from state-owned enterprises into the ranks of the strikers in order to inflict maximum economic damage to the “Lukashenko regime.” At the same time, the leaders of workers’ protests associated with the opposition leadership voiced only political slogans; the social agenda was promoted exclusively by representatives of the left-wing organizations of the Republic of Belarus. Along with demands for the abolition of fixed-term labor contracts, leftist activists opposed the privatization of state-owned enterprises. These slogans naturally conflicted with the general trend of the liberal-nationalist agenda and were de facto banned from the main opposition media sources.

However, theses about the “rising labor movement” were actively broadcast outside the Republic and served as an excuse for supporting the white-red-white protests for many left-wing and democratic organizations outside Belarus. It can be stated that

the real labor movement, thanks to skillful manipulation, served as a screen for the liberal-market movement led by leaders of the pro-Western opposition. Such examples are well known in history: for example, the protest of freight carriers in Chile against the Allende government in 1972-1973, and the protest of miners in 1991 in the USSR.

Borotba welcomes the attempts of the Belarusian left to organize an independent political movement of the working class. But the elimination of the welfare state and the implementation of market reforms cannot be an option for Belarus. On the contrary, the strengthening of the social character of the state and the introduction of truly socialist elements into public life can become a way out and an alternative to the lifelong rule of Alexander Lukashenko. And this development is impossible without a strong left movement and independent organizations of the working class.

Source: Borotba.su



Turkey: People's attorney Ebru Timtik dies on 238th day of hunger strike

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020

Aug. 27 — Today, our comrade, a member of the People's Law Office, Ebru Timtik, was martyred in the 238th day of a death fast hunger strike. She was assassinated by imperialism and fascism because she resisted the injustice, exploitation and oppression imposed by President Erdoan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) on the strugglers and peoples of Turkey.

She fought for the right to a fair trial, which is the main demand of the great Resistance of the Death Fast. She was a fighter for justice, always on the side of the poor, the working class, the people and the youth.

That is why she was imprisoned and killed by the fascist regime of the AKP: because she never stopped, not even for a moment, defending the oppressed peoples of Turkey, neither as a lawyer nor as a struggler. Because together with the rest of the death fast hunger strikers, she put her body on the line against repression and injustice, without hesitation, in the face of torture, assault and imprisonment.

The accusation for which she was convicted as a "terrorist," like the rest of her colleagues, lawyers of the People's Law Office, was that she defended as a lawyer the family of Berkin Elvan and Dilek Doan, assassinated by Turkish police; Hasan Ferit Gedik, murdered by the mafia for fighting against drugs; 301 workers killed by capital in Soma mines; teachers Nuriye Glmen and Semih Ozaka, who were fired under the state of emergency; as well as other cases of social and class injustice.

People's lawyer Aytaç Ünsal has continued his death fast hunger strike for 207 days and political prisoners Didem Akman and Özgür Karakaya for 191 days. Comrade Aytaç's health is deteriorating as he is being held in hospital, under the threat of forced feeding, physical and psychological torture.

The great resistance of the Death Fast has highlighted to the world the injustice and terrorism that prevails inside Turkey. But at the same time, it has developed a huge movement of solidarity in all parts of the world, which gives strength to the struggle of the hunger strikers. From Turkey to Europe and from Latin America to the Middle East, the struggle against fascism, injustice, imperialist and class exploitation knows no borders.

Four of our comrades fell martyrs in Death Fast Resistance: Helin Bölek and İbrahim Gökçek, members of the revolutionary music group Grup Yorum, comrade Mustafa Koçak and people's lawyer Ebru Timtik. We swear revenge on their behalf. The struggle continues.

Ebru, our immortal comrade, brave woman of Dersim, fighter for justice, we promise you: We will demand an account from the AKP.

HELİN, İBRAHİM, MUSTAFA, EBRU, IMMORTAL!
THE DEMANDS OF DEATH FAST RESISTANCE BE IMMEDIATELY ACCEPTED
FREEDOM TO THE LAWYERS OF THE PEOPLE
STRUGGLE FOR AYTAÇ ÜNSAL TO LIVE
WE ARE RIGHT AND WE WILL WIN!

Anti-Imperialist Front

People's Front Greece

Source: Anti-ImperialistFront.org

Message from Aytaç Ünsal

A message from lawyer Aytaç Ünsal, who continues the Death Fast resistance demanding a fair trial, which he started together with the revolutionary lawyer Ebru Timtik, who was martyred on the evening of Aug. 27. Here is what lawyer Ünsal said after the martyrdom of his comrade:

"My dear lawyer, my elder sister, my friend, my comrade of justice. ... They killed you in front of everyone's eyes. They killed a lawyer who was fighting to protect her people, who wanted justice, they killed her without blinking an eye, in front of everyone. But now you are born again in the heart of the people. You are born again as a people's fighter, as a fighter for justice. And you will be born again and again. Is there another example in the world of a lawyer sacrificing his/her life in the name of justice like this? My sister, rest in peace. Now with your anger, we will resist even stronger. And we will win our rights, for you, we will win it."

Source: [GercekHaberAjansi.org](https://www.gercekhaberajansi.org)



Bolivia mass mobilizations against U.S.-backed coup continue

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020



A 12-day national Bolivian blockade led by massive social movements, students, elders, unions and farmworkers ended on Aug. 13. It had paralyzed the entire

country, resulting in food/fuel shortages and in the complete instability of the Andean nation itself. The blockade was temporarily lifted after the government agreed to have presidential elections on Oct. 18, but union workers forewarned that, if another delay occurs, expect more mobilizations to continue.

On that same day, a terrorist attack by a group of hooded men used explosives against the centers of Las Bartolinas, a primary union organization of native Indigenous women, and of the COB, a union federation of Bolivian mineworkers. Fortunately, no one was hurt, but the deliberate brutal attacks on rural Indigenous communities have the people on edge.

Amid the blockades, student hunger strikes, privatization of natural resources, increased deaths due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the deliberate abandonment/neglect foisted upon the Original Peoples, Bolivia continues to endure the worst state violence and political persecution it has seen in decades.

Since the U.S.-backed coup took over, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) and its Indigenous leaders have experienced non-stop civil unrest. On Aug. 18, the alt-right paramilitary group, Resistencia Juvenil Cochala (RJC), which is funded not only by the oligarchs but by the National Endowment for Democracy — a private “nongovernmental” operation that is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development — began passing out leaflets outside local banks with 39 images of Indigenous community leaders. The caption says, “MURDERERS REVEALED!! THESE ARE BOLIVIA’S ENEMIES!”

One of the people listed is a young Quechua medical doctor and MAS member and leader, Marisol Coca Calderón, who resides in the Sacaba/Huayllani area, where a bloody massacre took place on Nov. 15, 2019. During a phone conversation with Calderón, she shared with me how she is being threatened and harassed daily. But because the de facto government supports and funds RJC, there is little she can do.

For now, she continues to organize at a small local center called Juventudes de la Democracia Huayllani, which is a safe space for a community hit hard by the coup. There, they hold group meetings, provide support and guidance for one another and grow their own medicinal plants. I asked Calderón what people can do to help. Her response was, “Please keep speaking about us on social media. You are all our voices. We need your support more than ever. And, if people can help to keep the doors of our center open, it would be a major relief to not only the youth but to the widows and children of our protectors who were brutally killed in November.”

If you would like to make a donation to help keep the Huayllani center open and to show your solidarity, please send to: Cash app: \$AyniAllyuSolidarity. For more updates, please join us on our Facebook group, Ayni Allyu: The Official Llajta of Evo Morales & Indigenous Bolivians.

JALLALLA!

Julia “Pachamama” Fernández is a Los Angeles Native/Quechua/Xicana organizer/activist and member of Ayni Allyu.





After tragic Beirut explosion: Imperialist vultures pounce on Lebanon

written by Struggle - La Lucha
September 23, 2020



A powerful explosion ripped through the port of Beirut, Lebanon's capital, on Aug. 4. At least [171 people have died](#) and thousands were injured, including many Syrian and other non-Lebanese workers. Hundreds of thousands were made homeless by the disaster.

Beirut is the country's main port. For Lebanon's nearly 7 million residents, the devastation will have an untold impact on their access to food, medicine and other essentials for years to come.

Lebanon's poorest will suffer the most. That includes nearly half a million exiled Palestinians living in 12 camps across Lebanon. Hundreds of thousands of Syrian war refugees and workers from Africa and South Asia also live there. Lebanon has more refugees per capita than any other country in the world.

While the West Asian country reels from the explosion and struggles to begin its

recovery, the governments of the U.S., France and Britain — along with their regional attack dogs, Israel and Saudi Arabia — have seized upon the tragedy to ratchet up pressure on Lebanon.

Warships from Britain and France — Lebanon's former colonial ruler — now patrol the waters of the Beirut port, under the pretext of providing "humanitarian aid." Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron rushed to Beirut on Aug. 6, not for altruistic reasons, but to make a thinly veiled power grab.

The U.S. and European Union powers are eager to exploit the tragedy to destroy Lebanon's fragile balance of political and religious forces, established by the Taif agreement that ended the 1975-1990 civil war, and particularly to strike a blow against the anti-imperialist Resistance bloc led by Hezbollah.

It was this movement that drove Israeli, U.S., and French occupation forces out of Lebanon and rebuffed an Israeli invasion in 2006. Its main base is among Shia Muslims, Lebanon's largest community, but its deeds have won it support in all Lebanese communities. The Resistance bloc is part of the regional Axis of Resistance that includes Syria and Iran.

Under pressure, Prime Minister Hassan Diab's government resigned on Aug. 10. He will stay on as caretaker prime minister until a new government is agreed upon.

On Aug. 11, just a week after the Beirut explosion, three Israeli tanks violated Lebanon's southern border and fired a phosphorus bomb. The provocation came as Israel continued its nightly rain of U.S.-made missiles on the desperate and besieged people of the Gaza Strip. As of Aug. 20, those attacks were in their tenth night.

Hezbollah has given aid and solidarity to the Palestinian people of Gaza in their fight against the brutal U.S.-Israeli siege.

Resistance responds to false charges

In the hours after the disaster, a narrative was quickly fashioned by the Western media and local right-wing forces claiming that the explosion was caused by a cache of Hezbollah weapons stored at the Beirut port.

These charges were swiftly refuted by Hezbollah and other sources. But their real aim was to rally the anti-resistance forces inside and outside Lebanon.

[In a televised speech](#) on Aug. 7, Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said, “I categorically deny the claim that Hezbollah has arms cache, ammunition or anything else in the port.

“Hezbollah is bigger, greater and more noble than to be taken down by some liars and inciters, who are trying to push for civil war,” said Nasrallah. “They have failed before and will fail again.”

On Aug. 18, [Lebanese President Michel Aoun](#), in an interview with the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera, confirmed that it was “impossible” for Hezbollah to be responsible for the blast, since the resistance does not store weapons in the Beirut port.

In fact, the blast was caused by [2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate](#) removed from an abandoned ship and stored in a warehouse at the port since 2014 — long before Prime Minister Diab took office in January 2020.

The compound can be used to make both fertilizer and explosives. What sparked the blast is still unknown.

As first reported by the [New York Times](#), the U.S. government knew about the large amount of ammonium nitrate stored at the Beirut port and the danger it posed since at least 2016.

“According to the cable, the consultant, under a contract with the U.S. Army,

advised the Lebanese Navy from 2013 to 2016. The cable said that the adviser ‘conveyed that he had conducted a port facility inspection on security measures during which he reported to port officials on the unsafe storage of the ammonium nitrate.’

“It is not clear when he conveyed the information; however, several current and former American officials who have worked in the Middle East say that the consultant would normally have conveyed his findings immediately to the American officials who oversaw the contract, in this case the embassy, State Department or Pentagon.”

Officially, the U.S. State Department claimed to know nothing about it.

Destructive U.S. sanctions

U.S. sanctions, tied to Washington’s decade-long war of aggression against neighboring Syria, [were tightened in June](#) in an effort to “starve” Lebanon, according to the Resistance.

International sanctions have had a terrible effect on the country’s economy. [Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit](#), poverty was estimated at 45 percent and unemployment at 30 percent.

“In March, as the economy faltered, Lebanon defaulted on a \$1.2 billion payment for foreign bonds for the first time in the country’s history,” [reported the New York Times](#). “Diab’s government released a recovery plan on April 30 that said the economy was ‘in free fall,’ and that Lebanon would seek \$10 billion in aid from the International Monetary Fund. But multiple rounds of talks failed to reach an agreement and the aid never came.”

Mass protests raged throughout 2019, driven by Western-imposed economic hardships. The protests have revived in the aftermath of the port disaster. The U.S.,

France and their allies are working overtime to support the most reactionary, anti-Hezbollah and anti-Iran elements of the protest movement — some of whom have hanged or burned effigies of Resistance leaders. These include the fascist, anti-Muslim Lebanese Forces and Kataeb Falange party, and the Saudi-funded Future Movement.

The Western powers want to misdirect mass anger — which should rightly be aimed against them — toward Hezbollah, which has fought to defend the Lebanese people from imperialist and Zionist aggression.

Some left forces, including the Lebanese Communist Party, have also taken part in protests. The LCP issued a statement denouncing government corruption while opposing Western intervention. It calls for compensation to the victims of the blast and a nonsectarian government in Lebanon.

Iran has called on Washington to drop the sanctions in the wake of the explosion. “The blast should not be used as an excuse for political aims ... the cause of the blast should be investigated carefully,” [Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesperson Abbas Mousavi](#) said on Aug. 10.

Macron’s colonial aims

French President Emanuel Macron wasted no time attempting to assert the former colonial ruler’s authority. On a supposed humanitarian visit on Aug. 6, Macron stepped directly into Lebanese politics, calling for the formation of a “national unity government” to be negotiated under French auspices, and encouraging right-wing elements among the protesters.

“I will propose a new political pact [in Lebanon] this afternoon,” [Macron told protesters](#) in Beirut, who were chanting “revolution” and “down with the regime.”

“I will return on the first of September, and if they [the Lebanese leaders] can’t do

it, I'll take my political responsibility," he said.

Macron's hypocrisy wasn't lost on many Lebanese and international observers, who pointed to his repression of France's "yellow vests" movement and union-led protests against austerity programs he champions at home.

"Perhaps the clearest example of Macron's duplicity is the continued imprisonment by France of [communist guerrilla] [Georges Ibrahim Abdallah](#), imprisoned by the French state since 1984 and eligible for release since 1999," [noted the Samidoun Palestinian Prisoners Solidarity Network](#). "The Lebanese government has officially requested his release and repatriation, yet he continues to be held hostage while calls for his release mount, especially in France and Lebanon.

"Indeed, Macron's visits to the streets of Gemmayzeh in the devastated Lebanese capital were repeatedly greeted with calls of 'Freedom for Georges Abdallah' by youth who refuse to be treated as colonial subjects once again by France, reject the complicity of many Lebanese politicians and see Georges Abdallah as a symbol of Arab and anti-imperialist dignity, resilience and resistance.

"Many Lebanese journalists and activists denounced the neocolonial hypocrisy demonstrated by Macron, emphasizing that his objective is to impose 'structural reforms' on the country according to the requirements of the International Monetary Fund."

Mona Tahini, a Lebanese journalist with al-Manar TV, was [prevented from asking Macron a question](#) during his press conference in Beirut, while other reporters were allowed to ask multiple questions and pose for selfies with the French president. Tahini wears a hijab.

A virtual "humanitarian aid" conference headed by Macron on Aug. 16 [reportedly gathered \\$300 million in pledges](#). But the organizers will not turn over the money to

Lebanese authorities or communities; they will channel it through Western-approved, nongovernmental organizations and United Nations agencies.

U.S.-France-Israel hands off!

The hardships and frustration fueling protests in Lebanon are real. But they cannot be divorced from the long history of Western imperialist intervention that divided Lebanon and Syria and redrew their borders in 1920; carried out unspeakable acts of theft and terror against the people; and created a hierarchy based on religious affiliation, with French-identified Christians at the top and mostly poor and working-class Shiite Muslims at the bottom.

Throughout the 20th century, the U.S. and European powers continued and deepened the exploitation and division, closely connected with the removal of the Palestinian people from their homeland, to secure control of oil profits and strategic military positions.

And today, the U.S.-European response to the Beirut tragedy is closely connected with Israel's genocidal war on Gaza and the West Bank, the "deal" between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Washington to [normalize the occupation](#), U.S. [theft of Syrian oil](#), sanctions and threats against Iran, [Pentagon provocations](#) over trade between Iran and Venezuela, etc.

For anti-imperialists and anti-war activists here, the urgent need is to demand:

End U.S. sanctions against Lebanon and Syria! U.S. troops out of West Asia! End U.S. military support of Israeli apartheid!

No to Washington-Paris intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs! Self-determination for the people of Lebanon!



Bolivian movements and trade unions propose to hold elections on October 11

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020

On August 12, Bolivian social movements and trade unions, which have been mobilizing against postponement of general elections for the past ten days, issued an official statement and proposed to hold elections on October 11.

The main organizers of [the national strike and the nationwide road blockades](#), the Bolivian Workers' Center (COB) and the Pact of Unity (a national alliance of social movements and grassroots organizations), said that they are ready to lift blockades and end the indefinite general strike if the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) sets October 11 as the new date for elections, guaranteeing that it is definitive and approved by law. They also demanded that all the seven members of the TSE, which is under the direct control of the coup-installed government, participate in the dialogue meeting and gave the electoral body a 24-hour deadline to respond.

The same day, Bolivia's Senate also approved a law calling to hold the country's general elections no later than October 18. The law will now go to the Chamber of Deputies for its approval. Once it is approved by the deputies, it will pass to the defacto president, Jeanine Áñez, for its constitutional promulgation.

Former president Evo Morales's party, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), holds the two-thirds majority in both chambers of Bolivia's parliament, the Plurinational Legislative Assembly, and has expressed its willingness to approve the law.

Áñez's government, which usurped power following the civic-military coup against Morales in November 2019, has [postponed the elections three times since March this year](#), citing the health risk due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Since August 3, hundreds of thousands of Bolivians have been mobilizing and maintaining road blockades in all the nine departments of Bolivia to demand [the restoration of democracy, free and fair elections and Áñez's resignation](#). More than 140 major highways, roads and streets have been blocked by protesters across Bolivia. The number of road blockades and organizations and unions joining the national strike are increasing with each passing day.

In recent days, several massive protests were also carried out in the capital, La Paz, and the neighboring city, El Alto, against the regime. Today, on August 13, a massive march will be held in La Paz. The protesters from different parts of the department will march to the seat of government or the presidential palace.

Meanwhile, the de-facto government has adopted [the strategy of criminalizing the social protests, politically persecuting the social leaders, and threatening the protesters](#). It has accused the protesters for blocking the passage of ambulances and vehicles transporting medical supplies. Trumped up charges of genocide and terrorism were even pressed against Morales, who is currently exiled in Argentina,

MAS presidential candidates, Luis Arce and David Choquehuanca, as well as the secretary general of COB, Juan Carlos Huarachi. The far-right has also mobilized violent right-wing extremists groups to attack the protesters.

Bolivian social movement leaders have denounced that the coup regime leaders have been explicitly promoting acts of violence against the protesters and participating in the violation of human rights of the protesters. The defense minister, Fernando Lopez, expressed support for the armed paramilitary group, *Unión Juvenil Cruceñista* (UJC), which has been attacking pro-democracy protesters. Meanwhile, the health minister, René Sahonero, called on the doctors to deny medical attention to the protesters. Bolivian citizens denounced Sahonero's call as a violation of the human right to public and universal health.

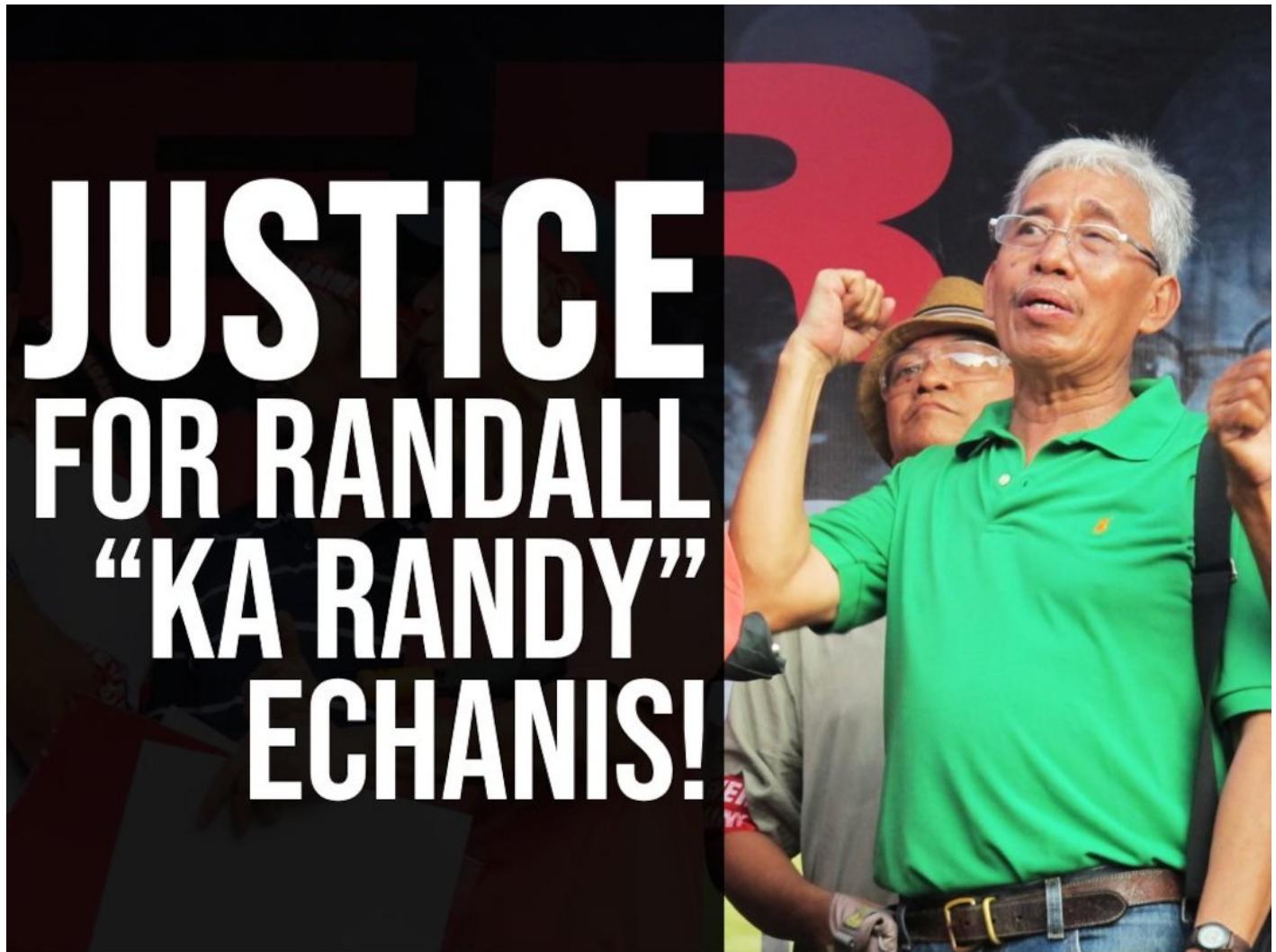
Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)



Condemn assassination of

Philippines peasant leader Randall Echanis

written by Struggle - La Lucha
September 23, 2020



Following is a statement from the Socialist Unity Party:

We of the Socialist Unity Party and Struggle-La Lucha newspaper in the United

States are shocked and appalled by the cruel and cowardly murder of Randall “Ka Randy” Echanis, chair of the Anakpawis Party-List in the Philippines, along with a neighbor who came to his assistance. We condemn his assassination as a crime against all who labor, against all those who are exploited and oppressed, in the Philippines and all over the world.

We hold the murderous Duterte regime, its Davao death squads and the Philippine military responsible for this monstrous deed. Its backers and funders in the Trump regime and Pentagon are also guilty.

We condemn the seizure of his body and mistreatment of his family and friends by the Quezon City Police and demand the body be released to his family now.

Randy Echanis devoted most of his 72 years of life to the people, especially to the peasants, farmworkers and tillers in the Philippines. He worked and sacrificed for decades in their cause, most recently as national chairperson of the Anakpawis Party-List and deputy secretary general of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, the Peasant Movement of the Philippines.

He also served as a political consultant for the National Democratic Front of the Philippines during the peace talks with the Philippines government, focusing on the urgent need of the peasant masses for real agrarian reform. He helped craft the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill, which aimed to break up the big landlord monopolies and give land to the landless.

Randy was murdered — stabbed and shot to death — during a raid of his own home, despite his being ill and undergoing medical treatment. Later that night, 10 police forcibly took Randy’s body from the funeral home where he was laid and took him to another. Early the next morning, the Philippine National Police arrested Pao Colabres, a paralegal, who was guarding Randy’s body during a vigil.

It is painfully evident that state forces, led by the U.S.-backed President Rodrigo Duterte, are responsible for the murder of Ka Randy. It is also evident that what Ka Randy represented and fought for — land for the landless, the breakup of the land monopolies — challenges the interests of Duterte and the Philippine state, a government by and for the big landlords, compradors and imperialist monopolies.

Today in the U.S., millions are rising up against police terror and murder, which especially targets the Black community. We see the struggle against state terror as the same here and in the Philippines. The bloody hand that murdered Ka Randy and so many activists in the Philippines is no different than the hand that murdered George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain and so many others in the U.S. It is the hand that murdered Fred Hampton and Martin Luther King Jr.

The state terrorists in the Philippines carried out this murder in a way calculated to horrify and terrify the people of the Philippines, to silence their cries for peace and justice. It will not work. Such crimes have never stopped the people's struggle for justice and freedom. It will not save the criminal regime of Rodrigo Duterte or the system he represents from its ultimate downfall.

Struggle-La Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party send our deepest condolences and solidarity to Randy's partner, Erlinda Lacaba-Echanis, and to all of his family, friends and comrades. We continue to support the struggle to topple the tyrant Duterte and win liberation for the Filipino people.

Justice for Ka Randy! Justice for the workers and peasants of the Philippines! Down with the criminal Duterte regime!

Condemnation of the murder of Randall Echanis

By Jose Maria Sison

Chief political consultant, National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)

August 10 — In the strongest terms, I condemn the murder of Randall (Randy) Echanis and his neighbor, who were unarmed. Randall was a peaceful social activist. He was a mild-mannered man of 72 years. He had a consistent modest personality with a high level of education and intellect. He had long dedicated himself to his social advocacy and had made tremendous sacrifices for many decades.

He was outstanding as an advocate of genuine land reform, rural development and national industrialization. He was the national chairperson of the Anakpawis Party-List and deputy secretary general of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. He was a leading consultant of the NDFP on agrarian reform and member of the NDFP Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms. He played a key role in the drafting of documents on agrarian reform and rural development and the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms.

Even after the termination of the peace negotiations by Duterte, Randall was supposed to enjoy the protection of the safety and immunity provisions of the JASIG (Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantee) just like all the other negotiators, consultants and staff of the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) and NDFP in the peace negotiations. Duterte and his gang of butchers are truly monstrous for murdering the unarmed Randall and his neighbor.

It is widely known that Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año has been boasting to his staff and other people that he has mapped out the locations of all social activists through the local governments and neighborhoods and that he can wipe them out any time. This boasting of Año is taken seriously by

all the social activists that he threatens to kill.

With the murder of Randall and his neighbor, the Duterte gang of butchers has aroused the indignation and just wrath of the peasant masses and the entire Filipino people. All social activists have no choice but to intensify in every necessary way their struggle against the tyrant, traitor, butcher and plunderer Duterte.

The murder of Randall and his neighbor will have far-reaching consequences towards the intensification of the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation against the evil Duterte regime and the unjust ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt officials who are servile to foreign monopoly capitalism.

Source: [National Democratic Front of the Philippines](https://www.nationaldemocraticfront.org.ph/2017/07/20/condemn-the-cold-blooded-murders-of-randall-and-his-neighbor/)



Philippines: Condemn the cold-

bloody murder of Randall Echanis by Duterte's death squads

written by Struggle - La Lucha

September 23, 2020

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) condemns in the strongest terms the cold-blooded murder of Randall Echanis, Chairperson of the Anakpawis party-list and peace consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). Ka Randy, 72, was killed early this morning by armed men in his rented home in Novaliches, Quezon City.

Echanis's murder is undoubtedly the handiwork of the Duterte fascist regime, ordered by its cabal of criminal terrorists in the National Task Force and carried out by Duterte's death squads in the military and police. Duterte himself has publicly ordered his military and police forces to hunt down consultants of the NDFP after he terminated peace negotiations in 2017.

The extrajudicial killing of Echanis is a vicious attack against the democratic forces who continue to stand firm even in the face of the all-out attacks of the tyrannical regime against the people and their civil and political rights. It was carried out by state forces in the most treacherous of manners in the vain hope of terrorizing the people and cowing them to submission. It forms part of the continuing scheme of the Duterte regime to consolidate its fascist reign through murder and other acts of state terrorism.

The regime has stepped up its attacks in its desperation to quell the seething unrest amid the deepening socio-economic and public health crisis and rising discontent in both the cities and countryside.

All democratic forces must unite and condemn the murder of Ka Randy. They must demand that Duterte himself be made to pay for the Echanis murder as well as for the murders of fellow peace consultants Julius Giron and Randy Malayao. They must not relent in their demand for justice for the thousands of others who have been killed, imprisoned, tortured and terrorized in the course of the fascist regime's fake drug war, bloody counterinsurgency, war against the Moros and all-out drive of political repression and state terrorism.

In behalf of all revolutionary forces, the Communist Party of the Philippines extends its deepest sympathies to Echanis' wife, children and family, friends and comrades in the national democratic movement. Having devoted most of his life to the cause of national and social liberation, Ka Randy is, indeed, a hero of the Filipino people. He was a stalwart of the cause of the workers and peasants and was a unifying force among the different classes and sectors.

The CPP pays tribute to Ka Randy as an ageless revolutionary fighter. He was among the thousands of young activists who joined the revolutionary mass movement in the late 1960s and fought courageously against the US-Marcos dictatorship. When martial law was declared in 1972, he joined the armed struggle and was among the pioneers of the New People's Army (NPA) during its period of expansion and growth in the northern Luzon regions.

He was captured, tortured and incarcerated under the Marcos dictatorship. He was again arrested and detained under the Aquino and Arroyo regimes. He will later continue to work for the national democratic cause by advancing the cause of land reform in all possible fields of democratic struggle. He has become known as one of the pillars of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, as well as the Anakpawis party-list.

Because of his advocacy for the cause of the peasantry and the toiling people, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines asked him to serve as one of its

consultants in peace negotiations, specifically on the matter of land reform. He gave his expertise in the NDFP's efforts to prepare its draft Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (Caser) which outlines the measures necessary to address the key issues at the core of the civil war in the Philippines, with land reform and national industrialization as the centerpiece programs.

Among the Red fighters during his younger years, Ka Randy was known by his nom de guerre as Ka Makar, which he said, was not only a tribute to Macario Sakay, erstwhile Filipino revolutionary who continued fought with arms against the American colonial forces in the early part of the 20th century, but was also an acronym for "Maso" and "Karit." Indeed, as a revolutionary fighter, Ka Randall always firmly held the hammer on the one hand, and the sickle on the other, worked to build the worker-peasant alliance, and upheld the cause of proletariat to his last breath.

The Party and the entire revolutionary movement will forever uphold the memory of Ka Randall Echanis. Uphold his example of selfless and untiring service to the toiling masses and people.

Justice for Ka Randall Echanis!

End the tryanny and terrorism of the Duterte fascist regime!

Long live the memory of Ka Randy!

Source: [Philippine Revolution Web Central](https://www.philippinerevolutionwebcentral.com/)

