

Final Declaration of the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students

The more than 20,000 representatives of the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students from more than 150 countries, who have gathered in Sochi, Russia, from the 14th to 22nd of October 2017, under the slogan "For Peace, Solidarity and Social Justice, We struggle against imperialism - Honoring our past we build the future," proclaim the following:

We greet the people of Russia, especially the youth and the popular strata for welcoming the 19th WFYS with enthusiasm, embracing the thousands of young people from all over the world who do not compromise with imperialism. We note the great historical struggles of the Russian people, its glorious revolutionary history, with its highest moment the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917, exactly 100 years before, when it was proven that it is possible the building of a new, superior society, without exploitation of man by man, socialism. We also highlight their heroic resistance along with the peoples of the world against nazi-fascism, a resistance that Soviet Union was at its forefront, a resistance for peace, justice and social progress. We have gathered here, in the country where during the II world war fascism suffered the greatest defeat in its history. Here, where the will of the people for freedom, together with the solidarity and support of all progressive, communist, anti-fascist and democratic forces on the planet, managed to crush the evil of Nazism-fascism, which is born by the capitalist system.

We pay tribute to the sacrifice made by the millions of people, including many women and youth who gave their lives to put an end to the ruthless fascist bloody massacre of the peoples and especially of the people of Soviet Union who made the greatest sacrifice. Today, in the collective memory of the Russian people and youth have a strong anti-fascist sentiment, expressed in its rejection to the rehabilitation of fascism, and in the defense of Peace, against the menaces and interference promoted by imperialism. We have gathered here from all the corners of the world to hold the biggest youth anti-imperialist event which has been taking place over the last 70 years. We deeply appreciate the fact that the people of the hosting country and generally the peoples of the Soviet Union embraced the World Festival of Youth and Students, contributing to the success of the custom and shaping of their content, hosting it two times, on 1957 and on 1985.

The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students is a big international event, where the anti-imperialist, progressive and revolutionary youth has reassure once again that in the Festival there is no space for the reactionary, fascist and Zionist forces. We assume the compromise of highlighting the protagonist role of WFDY on safeguarding the anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial character of the Festival Movement in favor of peace, solidarity and social justice.

Moreover, the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students is a tribute to all those and especially to the young people who gave even their own lives in the struggle against imperialism; that devoted their lives to the struggle for the ideals of freedom, democracy, national independence, people's sovereignty, peace and social justice. In memory of all of these young people we honor in the 19th WFYS figures that have made a decisive contribution to these struggles, such as Ernesto Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Mohamed Abdelaziz and Robert Gabriel Mugabe.

The road set out by the 1st World Festival of Youth and Students in Prague in 1947 charted the path for a glorious 70-year-old historical journey with the World Federation of Democratic Youth at the forefront. During this journey, the Festival has been established as the world's biggest gathering of struggling youth and since then represents a key forum for the world youth anti-imperialist movement. For 70 years, the Festival has been a bastion of struggle against colonialism, dictatorships, fascism, war, occupation, aggressive interventions, attacks on the sovereignty of the peoples and their cause. It is a forum for the strengthening of young people's

struggles for the right to education, an education for all, for work with rights, health, sport and recreation; a forum for the termination of the exploitation of peoples, oppression and aggression, in order for the youth to live in a society that satisfies their contemporary needs.

The World Festival of Youth and Students has always been a forum of participation, creativity, an exchange of experiences, political and cultural fermentation. It is all of these elements that highlight and strengthen the solidarity and friendship of the peoples. The seminars, lectures and workshops that take place can only strengthen young people's struggles today.

Young people of the world,

Since the 18th WFYS which was held in Quito, Ecuador, in December 2013, what stands out is the further intensification of imperialist aggression in every corner of the globe on an economic, military, political and cultural level; an aggression stemming primarily from the increase in the competitions and contradictions of imperialists, of the ruling classes in different countries, for the control of energy sources and the need for the monopolies to re-divide the markets and the borders. These competitions are leading to an unprecedented militarization of the planet, triggering hotbeds of military tensions and spreading death, provoking the uprooting of people as refugees, poverty and misery. At the same time, the danger of a nuclear disaster still persists and is aggravated by the increasing militarism promoted by the USA and its allies, that aim to assure its global hegemony.

The imperialists, having as a goal the increase of their profits and their influence, do not hesitate before any crime. The respect for the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of states is being violated together with the respect for human rights, as the "justice" of the mighty is being imposed by every means. The arbitrariness demonstrated towards international law and the principles of the UN Charter and its sidelining is on the agenda of NATO, the US the EU and their allies in an effort to safeguard their hegemony against other powers.

The peoples of the Middle East are increasingly experiencing the consequences of war amid with Syria at the focal point, and with the continuation of the promotion of religious and sectarian conflicts to serve the agenda of redefinition of borders and control of resources, along with the Zionist occupation mainly in Palestine. The militarization of the European Union continues with NATO making its presence increasingly permanent, as it was shown by the Resolutions of its Summit, that took place in Warsaw during the summer of 2016. Also the EU, submerged in a deep crisis, continues showing its imperialist nature, as seen in its role in the aggression against many countries and its peoples, along with the approach of imposing harsh measures with the support of its governments against the peoples. The attacks on the peoples of Latin America are intensifying with the imperialist interventions, with blockades, and with the ongoing efforts to ferment disturbances and destabilization. The peoples of African countries, many years after the dissolution of the colonies are still under neo-colonial shackles and suffering from exploitation, poverty, marginalization, and ethnic, racial and religious conflicts, along with colonialism and the attempts to attack the right of the peoples to sovereignty and national independence as in Western Sahara the last colony of Africa, and also as in other countries of Africa. In Asia Pacific, the peoples are facing even more severely the nuclear threat, increasing militarism and the exploitation of the multinational companies.

A characteristic feature of imperialism today, as a system in which the monopolies dominate, is the promotion of its reactionary policy at all level. Even in countries that are not on a war footing, the attack is being waged by economical ideological and political means. The cultivation of nationalism-chauvinism, racism and xenophobia and the attempt to manipulate public opinion are just a few examples. The support, tolerance and co-

engagement with reactionary, fascist and ultra-right forces remain a key weapon of imperialism aiming at weakening, suppressing and silencing the reaction of the peoples. It is within this context, that laws for the surveillance of citizens and prohibition of mass meetings are being implemented. At the same time, anti-communism is increasingly being cultivated with the EU at the forefront in the ignorant of history equation of communism with fascism.

It is in this context that the 19th WFYS addresses the youth of the world, to reinforce the youth, workers and peoples struggles in each country for their rights, as the concrete expression of the anti-imperialist movement on a local and international level; to enhance the youth struggles for the rupture with imperialism's plans; to join forces with the peace movements of their countries against the imperialist wars and occupations, in favor of peace and global disarmament. We advocate the necessity of organized struggle against any reactionary and fascist force. We reject anti-communism and we continue to defend, as WFYS has always done, the right of every people to choose the way of development that it has decided, to struggle to take the power in its own hands, and put forth the position for the struggle against NATO and every oppressive military organization, and we defend the right of the peoples to demand the disengagement of their countries from NATO with the goal of the dissolution of NATO. We express our support and solidarity with the peoples, who are victims of imperialism, facing the danger of a nuclear war and sanctions, especially after the open threats expressed by the head of the USA against the people of DPRK. We also support those who are struggling against the wars, crises, exploitation, unemployment, poverty, and their cause, for freedom, peace, popular sovereignty and independence.

Young people,

The capitalist economic crisis has not only led to imperialism's aggressiveness, but also to the widening of social inequalities, leading to a sharp growth in poverty and destitution. The richest 1% of the world's population owns more than 50% of the total wealth. In the name of development and competitiveness, vicious measures are being institutionalized and imposed against young people and workers with tragic consequences, a just development in an unjust world cannot exist. Unemployment has become a permanent burden for millions of young people, while for others, job insecurity and precariousness is an enduring feature. Social and labour rights are being abolished. Women, children, migrants and many other social groups are still experiencing conditions of slavery in several countries. Health, education and culture are being commercialized at a rapid pace and from a people right are becoming a privilege for the few. The content of education is far from providing an all-round knowledge and critical thought and ends up being tied to the needs of the market and capital. The environment is being sacrificed for the sake of profit. The anti-popular policies being implemented and pursued are crushing the workers' – peoples' needs and are being promoted for maximizing the profitability of the few and privileged capitalists.

Against the barbarism of imperialism, the 19th WFYS calls on the young people of the world not to compromise with the current unjust and exploitative system. In every corner of the world, young people should resist, struggle and assert. We are with the student and the workers movement. We support their struggles at every school, university and workplace. We salute the struggles of young workers for dignified work with rights, the millions of high school and university students fighting for public, free and democratic education for all, the mobilizations of the youth, which is active in the struggles and reacting to the growing aggression against its rights. We firmly believe that the 19th WFYS contribute to these struggles. Together with the working people, we safeguard our rights and fight for new gains.

The 19th WFYS coincides with the very important anniversary for the peoples, the anti-imperialist movement, and the festival movement itself: the 100th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The event

that has changed the course of history and to date projects brightly and keeps the visions of tens of millions of people alive across the world, who is struggling against injustice, exploitation and oppression. The October Revolution has contributed decisively to the development of the labor, the anti-fascist, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movement. It has offered infinitely more to the evolution of society to move forward, to the workers and the peoples and, above all to Humanity. In addition to the decisive victory against nazi-Fascism and saving humanity from the most inhumane regime, the Soviet Union made a huge contribution to the collapse of the unfree and oppressive colonial system, giving many peoples an impetus to gain their freedom and independence.

We join our voices with the people of Russia to commemorate the revolution of Great October 1917. A landmark year for the entire history of humanity. The years that followed the Great October Socialist Revolution are solid proof that the peoples have the strength not only to defeat imperialism but to take power in their hands.

Young people,

Our unwavering faith in the just cause of our struggle stems from the understanding of imperialism as a system based on the exploitation of the peoples and the aggression that they face by the powerful interests of the monopolies. We unite our voices and strengthen our common struggle to overthrow imperialism. We support the democratic right of the peoples to choose their own path of development against imperialist forces and their threats.

Our prosperity and happiness cannot be attained in the system that generates wars, poverty, exploitation, unemployment, the destruction of the environment, and racial, gender and any kind of discrimination.

These struggles, of course, can't just assume a critical, but also have a constructive character. They should be struggles that will build a new situation on the whole planet. A situation that will provide the essentials for the survival of all people on our earth; that will put an end to the exploitation and aggression, to destruction of nature and humanity; that will exploit the achievements of science and technology for the benefit of humanity and not for the interests of the privileged few; that will shape the preconditions for the world of peace, equality, solidarity, friendship and social justice and progress, where the wealth created by the labor of the peoples will be used by the peoples themselves for their needs. 100 years after the October Revolution, the struggle against imperialism remains timely and necessary.

We reaffirm our commitment to the international cooperation of the anti-imperialist movement until the final victory. We strengthen our ties with World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), World Peace Council (WPC) and Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF). We march forward with the ideals of the WFYS, the young people of the world together with the WFYS and through the 19th WFYS will join hands to become the builders of the world of peace and solidarity; a world free from imperialism, of this global system of the domination of capital and the monopolies, where although it may seem all-powerful, it is not invincible!

"For Peace, Solidarity and Social Justice, We struggle against imperialism - Honoring our past we build the future!"

Long live the 19th WFYS!

Long live the friendship of the peoples!

Long live the WORLD anti-imperialist movement!