

Report from International of Anarchist Federations congress in Athens

International of Anarchist Federations

20-04-2026

The 13th Congress of the International of Anarchist Federations (IFA-IAF) was held in Athens on April 3–5, 2026, organised by the Anarchist Political Organization – Federation of Collectives (APO). Among the other federations participating were the Federazione Anarchica Italiana (FAI, Italy), the Fédération Anarchiste (FA, French-speaking regions), the Federazione Anarchica Siciliana (FAS, Sicily), the Federación Libertaria Argentina (FLA), the Federacija za anarhistično organizacije (FAO, Slovenia & Croatia), the Федерация на анархо-комунистите в България (FACB Bulgaria), the Anarchist Federation (AF, Britain), as well as observers from Brazil (Aurora Negra & Terre Libre) and Serbia (Klasna Solidarnost). Members and affiliated groups from Mexico, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, German-speaking regions and the Kurdish Anarchist Forum did not participate, the latter due to concerns about the situation in the Middle East. Cuban comrades were also invited, but communication has become increasingly difficult due to the economic blockade.

To ensure smooth running, the conference was hosted in a single venue, the Lelas Karagiannis 37 squat, an impressive building that is the oldest squat in Greece. Food was covered by the comrades of the squat, while accommodation was also offered to visitors. Translation equipment was rented for simultaneous interpretation, although the main language was English. A public event was also held in the same venue on Saturday on the topic “The position of anarchists towards military conflicts and the threat of generalisation of war”, organised by APO.

The IFA conference is held every three to four years, with intermediate meetings (CRIFA) for the coordination of the federations, the planning of actions and the development of texts for discussion and consensus building. Decision-making is bottom-up: the federations propose topics and present their positions at the conference. The structure included plenary sessions, such as one on anarchist approaches to uprisings internationally (Iran, Mediterranean, Madagascar, Indonesia, Nepal), as well as workshops on Sudan, the rise of the far right, education, the environment, patriarchy and gender violence, and the digital sphere (digital material and cybersecurity). Administrative issues of the IFA were also discussed.

The first plenary session, “Against the Modern Totalitarianism of the State, Capitalism and War”, highlighted anti-militarism positions. Topics discussed included opposition to NATO bases and operations (Italy, Sicily, Crete), NATO expansion into Eastern Europe, the reintroduction of conscription (Croatia, France), the suppression of solidarity with Palestine (e.g. through anti-

terror laws in Britain), and the increase in military spending through “dual-use” infrastructure, such as airports, ports, or rail network extensions where workers could intervene.

Although it is not always possible to reach consensus, the conference made significant progress on a number of issues. In particular, the Italian and Greek federations had both submitted detailed positions on the gender issue, with texts approved by their federations that included analyses of systemic gender violence (APO) and transfeminism (FAIt). For example, from the FAI Italy submission:

“The rooting and expansion of transfeminist and queer movements is becoming increasingly necessary in the face of the intensification of patriarchal oppression in the current phase, in which, in various parts of the world, its connection with religious oppression is becoming increasingly strong. In Italy, the Meloni government has promoted specific legislative acts of a patriarchal and family-centric nature to strengthen births within the traditional family. Family-centrism and the defence of the traditional, sexist and hierarchical family, however, are not only a legacy of the reactionary right, as there is also a form of family-centrism in the tradition of the left.” The FAI also linked increasing militarisation to the strengthening of the culture of male dominance.

The APO focused on patriarchal violence:

“In a period in which modern totalitarianism is mobilised to suppress peoples who are in revolt and nationalist and fascist voices are growing, women, in every part of the planet, and especially those from the popular strata, face, in addition to the risk of death, displacement, hunger and disease, the daily threat of gender-based violence, sexual torture and executions, as tools of conquest and subjugation.”

The APO also highlighted the attacks on abortion rights in the US and the systematic use of gender-based violence as a weapon of war in Sudan and Palestine, but also, similar to the Italian Federation, the nationalist invocation of “feminine nature” to impose the role of motherhood for the benefit of the nation.

The workshop “The Rise of the Far Right and the Anti-Fascist Response” was presented by AF and FA. AF used the context of the rise of Reform UK to analyse cultural aspects of far-right ideology and action. There was keen interest in the use of public order laws in Britain to curb protests. While pre-emptive arrests through conspiracy charges are nothing new in the UK, they seem to be harder to justify in countries with a history of dictatorship or where anti-fascism is even mentioned in the constitution. In Italy and Greece, the roots of fascist dictatorships remain deep. However, cultural motifs such as “God, Fatherland and Family” are re-emerging, while in Italy anarchists and their spaces are specifically targeted by the police under Meloni. Although the heyday of Golden Dawn in Greece has passed, partly due to the repression after the murder of an anti-fascist singer, its members’ connections to a more “milder” far-right have not disappeared.

In countries such as Brazil, Bulgaria and Serbia, the threat of neo-Nazi violence remains intense, as they act and organise events openly, attacking and even murdering anarchists. Anarchists have developed creative responses, such as organising mass self-defence classes in neighbourhoods, e.g. in the favelas of Brazil.

The workshop on education was an important opportunity to understand the changes in Greece, where models of partnership with private companies are promoted in high schools and teachers who resist privatisation and the intensification of student evaluation are targeted. There is also a growing threat to anarchist organising in universities. Therefore, the need for strong grassroots unions is crucial. On the other hand, encouraging examples were presented, such as

the Escuela Libre de Constitucion (ELC) free high school in Buenos Aires and the Anarchist Education Laboratory (LEA) in São Paulo, at the Centro de Cultura Social (CCS). The LEA initiative, implemented by the Terra Livre Library, aims to study, produce and experiment with pedagogical practices for children, including their application in anarchist book festivals.

The workshop “Plunder of Nature” introduced by APO focused on the political, cultural and social problems surrounding the climate crisis and the plunder of nature and local communities by the state and capital. Popular resistance to resource extraction, “green” capitalism and the control of nature and communities was discussed, as well as increasing urbanisation, commercialisation and regeneration. Strong connections with anti-militarism were highlighted, especially in relation to struggles against infrastructure projects. Problems with the UN’s \$1 trillion investment agenda for 2030 were also highlighted.

At the end of the three-day event, the 13th IFA Congress produced a joint statement entitled “Against the Global Dictatorship of State and Capitalism, Against War and Fascism”, with a focus on anti-militarism, in conjunction with the corresponding plenary. A statement of solidarity with Cuban anarchists was also produced. Both will be ratified by the IFA federations before publication.

Loud applause was heard when Klasna Solidarnost (Serbia) announced its intention to apply to join the IFA as an affiliated group (a status for groups with the prospect of becoming a federation). A venue for the next congress was proposed, while the FA agreed to take on the role of Secretariat, continuing the work of the FAO of previous years. It was also agreed to organise a new meeting in the Mediterranean, as well as to publish the next issue of the IFA magazine on anti-militarism, to which the IFA member federations would submit articles.

Following the informative workshop on Sudan by FAS and FA, a solidarity poster highlighting the struggles of Sudanese anarchists was presented. After the conference, a solidarity meeting for Sudanese migrants was held in Athens, offering those who remained the opportunity to learn more about the situation. IFA comrades were also invited by FAO to the next Balkan Anarchist Book Festival in Skopje, Macedonia in September.

The conference concluded with a resounding tribute to FA comrade Jean-Marc Raynaud – founder of Libertarian Editions and the anarchist school “Bonne Aventure” – who passed away at the end of March.

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