

Let's Abolish the Armies! Let's Stop Wars! Let's Unmask Nationalisms

Italian Anarchist Federation

January 15th, 2025

The Italian Anarchist Federation reaffirms its support for the [Italian] Antimilitarist Assembly to build a vast anti-war movement, unitary and independent of the parties, against the warmongering policies of governments. We reaffirm the importance of supporting the struggles against the militarization of schools and universities, the struggles against military installations, production of weapons and military bases that are ongoing from Friuli to Sicily, from Piedmont to Tuscany, the initiatives of workers against the production and trafficking of weapons, and of enhancing solidarity with deserters from all wars.

The world is once again approaching a nuclear catastrophe, a renewed risk that is being anticipated by many conflicts and massacres that, although taking place on smaller scales, do not cease to impress for their tragic nature. Among the many factors that have led to this dramatic situation, there is the growing warmongering insanity of the 'Western' and 'Eastern' ruling classes, which are made up of increasingly incompetent and unlikely people whose charlatanism rivals and sometimes surpasses their lust for power and profit, the latter increasingly based on the war industry.

On the one hand, in the so-called West, increasingly explicit elaborations by politicians and intellectuals from the liberal areas and beyond are drawing the potential scenarios of a new world war. For them, the so-called "free world," an expression already in use in the decades that saw the world divided into two Blocs, is fighting an existential battle against the autocracies of the rest of the planet, identified with new orientalist stereotypes as the place of origin of the threats that may destroy our alleged "civilization." In this both toxic and Manichean narrative, allied nations that share the values of liberal democracy such as Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan, or even the so-called democratic opposition in countries such as Myanmar, are styled as fighting the same global battle of the "good guys" against the "evil." By the same logic, even the fundamentalists of HTS in Syria have been enlisted on the side of the "good guys."

The current Italian government is fully involved in this race for disaster, characterizing its foreign policy in an aggressive sense. This discourse serves first of all as a pretext to justify the increase in military spending and the production of deathly weapons as something even virtuous in the name of the alleged need for 'defense', and to dismiss pacifism and anti-militarism as obsolete and inadequate tools to resolve the new "practical" urgencies - obviously, according to a

single narrative. At all latitudes, nationalist propaganda fuels conflicts and poisons public debate by erecting walls between the oppressed classes.

In the case of Palestine, this implies a constant minimization of Israeli war crimes and of the genocide underway in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon to the point that even European governments have relativized the arrest warrant of the International Criminal Court against the criminal Netanyahu after applauding the one against the criminal Putin.

As for Ukraine, there is an international design aimed at enlisting leftist and autonomous movements, including anarchists or self-styled ones, in the war front against the tyrant. This narrative is based on the rhetoric of national resistance to invasion, in which the end justifies any means (including nuclear war in the most extreme cases), with the aim of splitting pacifist and anti-militarist forces by defusing one of the fights that have historically been most effective in Western countries: opposition to wars and military spending accompanied by objection, refusal to fight in wars and desertion in connection with wider social struggles.

Combatant rhetoric has been abundantly deployed in the last three years by self-styled anti-fascist and anti-authoritarian sectors whose slogans, analyses and public documents do not add anything to Western and liberal war propaganda and to local nationalist narratives, in the complete absence of any qualifying point in terms of class or anarchist readings of the situation. Without claiming, as per our founding principles, any monopoly of anarchism, it is evident to us that such nationalist, militarist and liberal degenerations do not have anything to do with our idea of anarchism and should therefore be addressed like those of any other political force opposed to us: in the acknowledgment of the different positions, without any confusion or formal association between irreconcilable political programs and projects.

On the other side of this front line, the project of a "multipolar" world promoted by some governments within the BRICS+, which is nothing more than a different imperialist program, has fatally seduced remains of Bolshevism and sectors of the left that have gone so far as to consider bloodthirsty dictators such as Putin in Russia, Maduro in Venezuela and various associates as "comrades" or almost. According to the same logic, there are those who legitimize the religious fanatics, misogynists, homophobes and murderers of groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, or the bureaucrats of more or less "national" corrupt authorities, as the protagonists of an alleged resistance to Israel. While the misery and contradictions of these discourses are evident, we can only strongly reaffirm the founding principle of the coherence of means and ends, according to which our anti-militarism can in no case be separated from our anti-authoritarian, anti-clerical, anti-patriarchal and anti-capitalist inspiration.

In future international scenarios, it will certainly not be the installation of old reactionaries such as Donald Trump that will bring an alternative to the progressive warmongering insanity of his predecessor Joe Biden and most of the Western ruling class, nor will a possible military success (or non-failure) of the "non-Western" world bring more justice or question capitalism, coloniality of power and imperialism.

We must not forget, however, the other hundred or so conflicts still underway at the global level, especially in the Global South, including, as our comrades from Brazil and Latin America remind us, the genocidal war that has been going on for over 500 years in their parts against women, against the poor and against indigenous and Afro-descendant communities. If we recognize the still current need for anti-colonial and decolonial action, it is important to specify that this must in no way lead to new forms of nationalism, communitarianism or essentialism of civilization. The concept of the individual remains central against any degeneration that leads

to ethnic, racial and cultural essentialisms, even if based on the idea of "peoples." These latter are always characterized internally by dynamics of inequality and oppression in terms of class, gender and every possible form of discrimination and marginalization.

Despite all the difficulties, there are important spaces for action and organization from below in which our contribution can be decisive in building a social opposition to war and militarism. A central point of our action has been our support for the general strikes of conflictual and grassroots syndicalism, which in recent years have associated social struggles for salary with an anti-militarist approach against wars and the war economy, consistent with our idea that closely links an anti-militarist perspective to a class-struggle perspective.

A major cultural initiative is also needed to counter the militarist propaganda that is served up daily, in a more or less explicit way, in schools and in public communication in increasingly pervasive ways, ready to exploit all places of education to enhance a discourse that presents the supposedly 'good' face of the State armed forces as if they were humanitarian enterprises.

In this sense, our support for revolutionary defeatism, refusal, objection, desertion and draft evasion on all sides of the war fronts remains fundamental, particularly at a time when, to mention but one of the most well-known fronts, even the Russian and Ukrainian military commands recognize desertion as a real problem that hinders their respective death programs. This support is developed within the framework of our internationalist commitment, in particular in the context of the International of Anarchist Federations, which must be developed by promoting new initiatives to deconstruct borders and contest any idea of nationalism and territorial sovereignty of the nation-state or any other entity that aspires to become a state, replacing it with new mechanisms of international solidarity and universal sisterhood/brotherhood.

In the context of actions carried out consistently from below and outside the parties and from the control of the institutions, we need to foster dialogue with all those groups and movements that share our anti-militarist intransigence, building functional alliances on objectives that are well-defined and consistent with all the assumptions that we have expressed in this document. Only by developing and generalizing bottom-up actions based on these assumptions will it be possible to truly renew hope in a world of freedom and equality instead of the one of death, destruction and permanent war that capitalism and the state shamelessly impose on us.

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