

‘The only way to attain global cooperation, the elimination of poverty, abolition of nuclear weapons, implementation of real democracy, and power in the hands of the people . . .

Fred M'membe
Socialist Party President

THE WAR in Ukraine is ushering in a new period of heightened danger in world politics and the threat of a global conflict that would devastate humanity.

Socialists and people who want peace need to recognise that the entire United States foreign policy and military establishment is now organised around great power conflict against Russia and China as the defining strategy for decades to come.

It is essential to recognise that Russia, China and other countries are not being targeted fundamentally because of human rights, or this or that military action, but because they no longer accept the United States-dominated world order.

We must stand in opposition to this new Cold War-style period of confrontation.

This major power conflict is not in the interests of the great mass of people, in the United States or worldwide. The logic of it will only produce severe economic pain, climate disaster and ultimately catastrophic war.

The working class, the poor, have no interest in being dragged into such a conflict in the name of preserving the dominance of Wall Street and the Pentagon.

Provoked

In the run-up to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and ever since, the corporate media in the United States and its allies has been working overtime to spread misinformation and confusion. They hope that inundating people with non-stop anti-Russian content will manufacture the consent necessary not just for a short-term military escalation in Eastern Europe, but so as to sign people up for a whole new Cold War.

Clearly, there's a need for increased unity for those who oppose United States imperialism and support peace.

NATO provoked the war between Russia and Ukraine. The United States government has been intentionally escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine for years. From continuing NATO's eastward expansion, despite promises not to, to supporting the pro-Western coup in Ukraine in 2014, to heavily arming the Ukrainian government, NATO's aggressive actions set the stage for the war.

The United States was determined to bring Ukraine into a Western sphere of influence, and so refused to acknowledge Russia's legitimate security concerns about NATO expansion and advanced missiles being placed on its borders.

Socialism is the key to peace

Socialist Party President Fred M'membe: The United States government has been intentionally escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine for years



Russia's "red lines" were well known for decades and NATO did all of this knowing it could potentially lead to intervention. In some respects, it appears NATO set a deliberate trap that Russia fell into.

NATO's drive to turn Europe into a staging ground for its military threats against Russia means that not only is Ukraine militarised, but that all of Europe is. Currently, the principal obstacle to establishing a peaceful Europe is the polarisation of the continent

around NATO as a de facto anti-Russian alliance.

NATO is a relic of the Cold War, and needs to be dissolved; its only purpose is to maintain United States military hegemony. The only way to have discussions about the many issues causing conflict between European nations – borders, languages, economic relations, etc – without raising the possibility of war is through the dissolution of NATO, the demilitarisation of Europe, and the removal of United States troops, missiles, and nuclear weapons. Russia

should follow suit with its own demilitarisation, step by step.

The UN Charter of 1945 was written, and agreed to, to protect against a "might makes right" world order where stronger, more powerful countries can do whatever they want while smaller, less powerful nations have no guaranteed rights. This sovereignty-based international system has never been fully realised, and in many ways has masked the imperialist reality and deep power imbalances of the global order.

The UN Security Council,

the only body empowered to authorise sanctions and military action against another country, functions in a completely undemocratic way by concentrating power into the hands of just five permanent members that can veto any resolutions. The Security Council should be abolished. What should be defended, however, is that the UN Charter creates a legal and political baseline to counteract abuses of power perpetrated by more powerful nations against

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Righteous people will prevail in the end

We could be witnessing the end of US hegemony

Fred M'membe
Socialist Party President

EVERY DAY brings more sanctions from the United States on how to better strangle Russia.

Yves Smith, a financial analyst, believes that sanctions could have disastrous consequences and that excluding a major resource-producing country from the global supply chain would wreak havoc on the already COVID-stressed supply chains.

Furthermore, the Western business press's fixation on the hollowed-out financial system, which ignores the real economy, may lead to overlooking the long-term consequences of economic sanctions:

- The US has prevented Russia's central bank from using US\$300 billion of its foreign exchange reserves. There are many countries that have significant foreign exchange reserves. Can they trust that the US will not do the same to them if they disagree with US policies? Non-Western economies, which make up the vast majority of the world, may view these moves as an alarm bell and begin a process of moving away from the US dollar.

- Buyers of Russian oil have been unable to open letters of credit from Western banks to cover purchases. Letters of credit from the bank of the buyer are the standard practice in commodities trading as they guarantee the seller's bank that payment will be made in full and on time. There will be a major fall-out affecting the international trade process if letters of credit are unacceptable.

- Russia and Ukraine provide about 40 per cent of the global supply of fertilizer. As Russia cannot use the Black Sea for logistics purposes and others cannot use letters of credit to pay for fertilizer, the impact can be devastating, especially for poorer nations. A lack of fertilizer means a huge reduction in grains output, and that spells famine. Couple that with a reduced output of wheat from Russia and Ukraine for the international market, and the human toll will be devastating.

- Russia may block raw-materials exports in response to the currency and SWIFT sanctions. This threatens to rattle key materials' supply chains, including cobalt, palladium, nickel, and aluminium. If China decides to see itself as the next nation being threatened and joins Russia in a common protest against US trade and financial warfare, the Western economies are in for a serious shock.

Russia is a major producer of sapphire substrates – the thin plates made of artificial stone, which are used in every chip-making process in the world, including those made by AMD and Intel. Russia also accounts for 100 per cent of the world's supply of various rare earth elements used in special chip etching chemistry, as well as 70 per cent of the world's supply of neon gas, an inert gas that is also used in the semiconductor lithography chain. Should Russia retaliate, what impact could that have on the global hi-tech industry? China could definitely benefit from their relationship with Russia vis-à-vis these minerals to support their hi-tech industry.

Russia, contrary to the propaganda of Western media, is an economy rich in natural resources, and it ranks among the world's top six economies in terms of purchasing power parity. China's real economy is the most developed in the world, accounting for 28 per cent of world manufacturing and high demand for energy and agricultural imports.

As a result of the wave of sanctions imposed by the West, the complementarity and engagement of the Chinese and Russian economies will only deepen, and there are huge opportunities for cooperation between China and Russia in areas like the digital economy and defence. Russia will not be easily crushed by economic and financial sanctions if this pattern continues.

Commodities

The intensified US sanctions will be a long and protracted war that will not achieve its goals, and Russia will not be the only country to suffer. The US sanctions are a pyrrhic victory and will accelerate and deepen the Russian and Chinese economies' independent development in hi-tech, finance, and trade de-dollarisation.

According to a Credit Suisse analysis report released on March 7, the current crisis is unprecedented since President Nixon decoupled the dollar from gold in 1971, and that once the crisis (war included) is over, the hegemony of the dollar will be weakened, while the Renminbi will strengthen significantly, supported by a basket of real commodities. This analysis could be interpreted as a prognosis of the situation by the Western financial community. Once again, contrary to the Western media propaganda, the draft resolution entitled "Aggression in Ukraine" did not receive overwhelming support at the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly on March 2. Governments



General Stephen Townsend: strategic rivals have long since recognised Africa's importance

General says Africa is needed for 21st century technology

THE US commander of the United States Africa Command (Africom), General Stephen J. Townsend, has noted that his country needs Africa for key supplies to produce 21st century technologies, writes Socialist Party President Fred M'membe.

General Townsend says strategic rivals, China and Russia, have long recognised Africa's importance. If African governments overlook the United States as their international partner and opt for China and/or Russia, this will affect the US's global influence.

Based in Stuttgart, Germany, Africom is responsible for US military operations, including fighting regional conflicts and maintaining military relations with 53 African nations.

Appearing before the US Senate Armed Forces Committee recently, General Townsend said: "Africa lies at a global crossroads. This enormous continent's environment is complex – ripe with opportunity but burdened with challenges." He added that geopolitically, Africa is strategic.

In his presentation, General Townsend highlighted that Africa is where the US gets key supplies to produce 21st century technologies and transition to clean energy, including mobile phones, jet engines, electric-hybrid vehicles and missile guidance systems. However, since realising the power Africa has, Russia and China have been making inroads into the continent at the US's expense.

He says strategic rivals, China and Russia, have long recognised Africa's importance.

Both nations leverage opportunities to erode US influence with African nations. Both nations are gaining ground on the continent. Both nations successfully convert soft and hard power investments into new partnerships. Both nations exert political influence at US expense.

General Townsend says the US mission in Africa should maintain America's strategic access and influence on the continent because failure to achieve this objective means failure everywhere else.

representing more than half of the world's population either voted "no" or abstained, a choice which obviously does not mean "yes". Both India and China, together representing more than 25 per cent of the world's 7.9 billion people, abstained from the vote.

"It is almost black humour to look at US attempts to convince China that it should join the United States in denouncing Russia's moves into Ukraine. The most enormous unintended consequence of US foreign policy has been to drive Russia and China together, along with Iran, Central Asia, and other countries along the Belt and Road initiative," stated Michael Hudson.

Sanctions are and will continue to hurt Russia, that is true. Other countries have also been the victims of US sanctions. The US has had sanctions for more than 60 years against Cuba, where the people have not only survived, but continue to support revolutionary movements across the globe, especially in the area of medical assistance and education for poor countries. Venezuela has been sanctioned, and its people have suffered. But they continue to work towards regaining some sense of economic normalcy. Iran has been sanctioned. But today Iran looks to a partnership with China and Russia to develop their economy and provide an alternative for other politically indepen-

dent nations. North Korea has also been sanctioned. It has had a very difficult time, but it is still standing. People around the world realise that the US stick of sanctions is not as invincible as they claim, and that the fight against US hegemony is, despite the hardship, not hopeless. Countries with 65 per cent of the world's population have not endorsed the US-led sanctions. Perhaps this time the US has overstepped its bounds.

The world is probably witnessing the defeat of the US's quest for unipolar hegemony. Not today, not tomorrow, but the time is coming. As Mao said, this is a protracted war, and the righteous people, though they cannot win quickly, shall prevail in the end.

Socialism and global cooperation are key to democracy and peace

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lesser powers – and insists on the sovereignty and independence of formerly colonised nations in particular. While the whole world is crying out for an end to the United States-dominated unipolar world order, "multipolarity" would not be progressive if it means becoming simply a competition of "unilateral" initiatives. Many left-wing and anti-imperialist governments believe that adherence to the UN Charter is an instrument to defend what is positive about "multipolarity" – the space for counter-hegemonic projects to grow.

For decades, politicians and the corporate media, liberal and con-

servative alike, have pushed a false equivalency between fascists and communists. At the end of the day, this anti-communist slander is also a sleight of hand that lets fascists in through the back door.

In Ukraine, where the Communist Party is banned, the rapid and dangerous normalisation of Nazi Germany and its collaborators has taken place. Ukraine has integrated outright Nazis and Nazi-adjacent forces into the armed services and police. Now the United States media, which just a few years ago noted the neo-Nazi presence in Ukraine, assists in their rebranding as "patriots".

Humanity is calling out for an

alternative to capitalism, and we cannot allow the idea of socialism – of working-class power and international unity – to be taken off the table.

The underlying cause of this conflict, beyond NATO, is that we still live in a world that is divided into states run by capitalist elites that prioritise their own wealth and power above all else.

The only way to build a world that allows for global cooperation and peace between all peoples, the elimination of poverty, the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the implementation of real democracy that puts the power in the hands of the people, is through socialism.

US controls every layer of the Web in the new Cold War

THE FIRST casualty in war, hot or cold, is the truth, Fred M'membe writes.

YouTube excluded all content from Russian state-controlled international television network RT from all over the world.

Just one more chapter of the atrocity we have been expecting from them. It's happening. Alternatives urgently needed. Interesting to know that RT and Sputnik announced they are live-streaming (in English) on another platform called Odyssey – odysee.com.

The US controls every layer of the internet from the physical to the top layer. So they shift the battle of which layer as needed.

The internet was designed from the beginning by the US Defence Department. They knew this level of control of the infrastructure – servers, networks – gave them a decisive edge in the battle for ideas.

As the New Cold War against China escalates, the United States political establishment and its allies are intensifying their efforts to restrict discussion on the international political situation, invoking anti-Chinese racist rhetoric and targeted smear campaigns.

This dangerous agenda seeks to justify an aggressive foreign policy towards China and is having a chilling effect on the political climate within the United States and allied countries such as Britain, Australia, and Canada.

Politicians and the mainstream media demonise China in an attempt to justify the New Cold War. McCarthyite witch-hunts are being launched against individuals for merely questioning or criticising their government's foreign policy. Especially concerning is the sharp increase in hate crimes and attacks against people of Chinese and East and Southeast Asian heritage in the West.

It is clear that the propaganda war against China is directly fuelling this rise in racism and creating a climate in which Asian diaspora communities are being increasingly treated as "enemies within".

This repressive environment is not merely a threat to democracy, it also increases the likelihood of dangerous and destructive foreign policy choices by shutting down debate. During the 20th century, McCarthyism prevented robust and objective discussions from taking place in the US about its Cold War foreign policy.

This confining approach contributed to disastrous and criminal US policy decisions, such as the Vietnam War. A similar atmosphere of fear and racism helped pave the way for the illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Instead of adopting these Cold War, ideologically charged, and alarmist approaches, we must create an open environment that fosters fact-based discussion and dialogue.

Racism, witch-hunts, and censorious attacks on free speech are not only reprehensible, but also an obstacle to the global cooperation necessary to resolve the serious problems that the world faces.

● War criminals have ruled USA for 30 years; war is an open sore on the soul of humanity; Sudan faces acute food insecurity – Global View, Pages 8, 10, 11

Musumali pays tribute to slain South Africa land rights activist

Ayanda Ngila shot dead as he was repairing irrigation pipe in Durban

Socialist staff reporter

SOCIALIST Party General Secretary and First Vice-President Cosmas Musheke Musumali has paid tribute to murdered South African land rights activist Ayanda Ngila.

Ngila was shot and killed by four armed men while he was working on repairing an irrigation pipe in the eKhenana Commune in Durban.

“Ayanda Ngila was a brilliant man who dreamt of a better tomorrow and a better future for South Africa,” Dr Musumali wrote in a Facebook post.

“Ayanda was my student. The last time I saw him was in October last year and by that time it was very clear that he was being hunted and that his life was in danger. There are moments when it gets hot and too dangerous, and at that moment one needs to withdraw and take a rest.

“The Socialist Party offered for him to come to Zambia for two to three months to allow the dust to settle back home and then to return to continue with the struggle. The Abahlali baseMjondolo organisation accepted, but it wasn’t possible at the last minute because of home commitments and the struggles.

“We are not sure that Ayanda coming to Zambia would have prevented his death but maybe it would have given him a chance to live and fight at least another day,” he wrote.

“The authorities sent police to arrest him on a number of occasions and this time around they killed him in cold blood. He couldn’t defend himself and couldn’t defend his community. Unfortunately, Ayanda Ngila is not the only one, and he won’t be the last.”

Dr Musumali said South Africa was once again using apartheid tools.

“Workers were killed in Mari-kana for demanding decent wages. Ayanda was killed for demanding the kind of dignity that we have been talking about. He was demanding land for people who don’t have any, but he wasn’t demanding anything more or less than we are



Ayanda Ngila

demanding, and that teaches us something; that the struggle is real. It can be very dangerous and it calls for a lot of sacrifices.

“We have been following what has been happening in South Africa very closely. We have told the South African government through its embassy from time to time that we are disgusted with the methods it is using, and we will continue to do so. We will continue to remind the government that it is not dealing with criminals, but its own people.

“Just as South Africans fought against apartheid and demanded justice, so too, post-apartheid society in South Africa also stands to demand justice.

“Today, Ayanda has been put to rest, but there are hundreds of Ayandas rising in South Africa. Ayanda is now like a hero and the young people are not going to be scared. If anything, they are getting agitated. In his place, there won’t be one person standing up, but a hundred. If they kill the hundred, there will be a hundred thousand more standing up and fighting for justice.

“Violence and death can never stop the determination, the fight for justice, and the fight for freedom for the people, and the sooner the South African government understands that message the better.

“We want a better South Africa just like we want a better Zimbabwe, a better Zambia, and a better Africa, where people can live free from intimidation, free from death. It’s unacceptable. It’s unjustified. We stand firm with Abahlali baseMjondolo. We mourn our comrade with them and the family of the departed.”

M’membe on a very special mission

SOCIALIST Party President Fred M’membe was on a very special mission last month ... and there was no politics involved!

For Dr M’membe flew to the UK for his daughter Beene’s wedding.

Ever the journalist, he reported on the event, posting his speech on Facebook:

“I hope you can hear me OK at the back. If you do miss a few words here and there, please just assume they were very witty and wise!

“Well, for those of you who don’t know me, I’m the father of the bride.

“Given the events of the past two years with COVID, I am amazed that I have made it to England for this wedding. I can’t express how happy I am to be here to share this momentous occasion with my beautiful daughter and my new son-in-law.

“For every one of us here, either the bride or the groom mean a great deal to us. We’ve known them for years. We have watched them grow up and turn into the young adults they are. And now we’re watching the beginnings of the next phase of their lives.

“As I stand here before you, I am conscious that Beene is sitting here in fear and trepidation of the embarrassing tales I might tell about her earlier years like:

- Her singing in a deep voice at an airport in Spain so that she could embarrass her older sister Nyemba;
- Her sneaking out of school in A-Levels to go clubbing; or,
- The night she got drunk when she was eight years old. But I’ll leave that for future family gatherings.

“Instead, I would like to express how exceptionally proud I am of the woman my daughter is today. From childhood, she has always been loving, kind-



Socialist Party President Fred M’membe with his daughter Beene at her wedding in the UK

hearted, funny, independent and smart. I cannot believe how quickly time has gone by.

“Beene, you look beautiful, and I hope this day has been all you have dreamed.

“As overwhelming as it is to give my daughter away, it is so satisfying to know that she is marrying an outstanding young

man, whom I dare say is looking handsome in his suit. You might have noticed that I too am looking good in my suit today.

“From the first time I met Dave, I knew he was special because my daughter had never introduced me to any of her boyfriends. He is a kind and intelligent young man. I am

honoured to have him as my son-in-law.

“Please join me in raising a toast to the bride and the groom. May your marriage be a strong one. May it be full of love, and may you find ways to keep it fun and exciting over the years. “Cheers!”

Copperbelt University protest Water: the most vital resource

SOCIALIST Party Youth League chairman Simon Mulenga Mwila says comrades are “greatly saddened” by the action taken by the Copperbelt University Office of The Dean of Students over the use of accommodation.

Mwila said university authorities had kicked students out of their rooms “simply because they let colleagues who have no accommodation of their own sleep in them”.

“The situation whereby students have nowhere to stay and are forced to sleep in their colleagues’ rooms is of the university’s own making. It has enrolled around 15,000 students but has only 2,100 beds for them,” he said.

“We feel very strongly that the university management should



Simon Mulenga Mwila

have explored a long-term solution to this problem before taking such inhumane action.”

Mwila said student numbers were responsible for the problem.

“The university has been over-enrolling each academic year resulting in a huge student population who compete for very limited

accommodation. This has led to students who do have rooms coming up with initiatives and solutions to help their brothers and sisters.

“Most of the students without accommodation at the university are vulnerable and come from poor backgrounds. Most of them are on GRZ bursaries and cannot afford to rent rooms at boarding houses. If the university management chases them out of their colleagues’ rooms where do they expect them to sleep at night?

“I am appealing to the government through The Ministry of Education to intervene in this matter quickly and resolve the situation in the interests of the students – the majority stakeholders,” he said.

“In the meantime, please allow students to continue to help each other.”

WITHOUT a comprehensive understanding of water’s true, multidimensional value, we will be unable to safeguard this critical resource for the benefit of everyone, Socialist Party President Fred M’membe says.

He was speaking on World Water Day, March 22, a United Nations event held every year since 1993.

“This is the day we celebrate water and raise awareness of the global water crisis. And a core focus of the observance of this day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030,” he said.

“We have to value water highly. The value of water is about much more than its price – water has enormous and complex

value for our households, food, culture, health, education, economics and the integrity of our natural environment.

“If we overlook any of these values, we risk mismanaging this finite, irreplaceable resource. SDG 6 is to ensure water and sanitation for all.”

The focus this year was on groundwater – “an invisible resource with an impact visible everywhere”.

The UN’s World Water Day website says: “Groundwater is water found underground in aquifers, which are geological formations of rocks, sands and gravels that hold substantial quantities of water. Groundwater feeds springs, rivers, lakes and wetlands, and seeps into oceans. Groundwater is re-

charged mainly from rain and snowfall infiltrating the ground. Groundwater can be extracted to the surface by pumps and wells.

“Life would not be possible without groundwater. Most arid areas of the world depend entirely on groundwater. Groundwater supplies a large proportion of the water we use for drinking, sanitation, food production and industrial processes.

“It is also critically important to the healthy functioning of ecosystems, such as wetlands and rivers.

“We must protect them from over exploitation – abstracting more water than is recharged by rain and snow - and the pollution that currently haunts them, since it can lead to the depletion of this resource.”

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



SOCIALIST Party President Fred M'membe says, "collectively we can forge women's equality".

Speaking on International Women's Day in Lusaka, Dr M'membe said:

"Today, March 8, is International Women's Day, a day to recognise the achievements of the legendary women who are blazing their own historical trails.

"We in the Socialist Party are excited to be celebrating the beauty, diversity, and achievements of women in our country and indeed all over the world.

"This monumental day doesn't just celebrate a single woman, country, or organisation, but recognises women everywhere who are inspiring others to do better, make a difference, and evoke change.

"International Women's Day is a global celebration that highlights the achievement of women championing economic, cultural, political, and social causes worldwide.

"International Women's Day first started in 1908 after 15,000 women marched in New York City demanding voting rights, better pay, and shorter work hours. "As each decade finds a new way to advocate for women's rights around the globe, International Women's Day has been at the forefront of reminding people how far we have come and the work that still remains.

"The theme for this year's International Women's Day is, 'Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow'.

"Collectively we can forge women's equality!"

● **ALTHOUGH** the 2022 UN theme is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow" – looking to highlight the contribution of women and girls around the globe, who participate in their communities promoting on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response, in order to build a more sustainable future for all – the theme is supported by the hashtag #BreaktheBias.

The International Women's Day website says:

"Imagine a gender-equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women's equality.

Collectively we can all #BreakTheBias.

"Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions – all day, every day. We can break the bias in our communities. We can break the bias in our workplaces. We can break the bias in our schools, colleges and universities.

"Together, we can all break the bias – on International Women's Day and beyond."

Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow



LUAPULA PROVINCE



EASTERN PROVINCE





Socialist Party President Fred M'membe: Good politics is at the service of peace. Politics is an essential means of building human community and institutions

Our revolutionary wave will be a shared destiny

THE WORLD is in a very serious crisis. But whenever there's a crisis it is always necessary to go back to history. That is the only way to gain the understanding required to resolve a crisis.

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to resolve a crisis whose causes and nature one doesn't fully understand.

Never before has humanity witnessed such an upsurge in the power and arrogance of reaction, especially of the United States.

This doesn't mean that this will last forever – their power is beset by all kinds of contradictions. But this is the time we are in. And right now, the preservation of values is of decisive importance for all progressives, all true democrats and all revolutionaries – all who want the best for humanity and who cherish the noblest sentiments.

No matter what happens, other times will come. It gets dark sometimes but the morning comes. Right now we are in the midst of a huge reactionary wave; later, a huge revolutionary wave, a huge progressive wave, will come again.

This is the reactionary high water mark, another progressive, revolutionary wave will sweep the world. Just as reactionary ideas now prevail and are very strong, the time will come when progressive, democratic, fair ideas will prevail.

And humanity is very lucky to have China playing such a very progressive role. Humanity is also very lucky to have Xi Jinping, a very brilliant Marxist, at the leadership helm of the Communist Party of China to ensure that the political economy of China is Marxist to ensure us a shared destiny.

He who stands firm to the end will be saved

MATTHEW 24: 1-13: "Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. 'Do you see all these things?' he asked. 'I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.'

"As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. 'Tell us,' they said, 'When will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?' Jesus answered: 'Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, I am the Christ, and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.'

Lives depend on putting the care back into health

WE CANNOT play casino games with the right to healthcare. The right to a decent standard of living also obliges governments, even those like ours, which are poor, to use the maximum resources available to realise this right.

The enjoyment of the right to adequate standards of living entails adequate and equal access to health services for all. This requires an acknowledgement of the problems that beset health services and the willingness to tackle them.

We need to move away from the notion that our health is something to be insured by an "industry". The notion that it is any part of an industry is fundamentally wrong. Health is not a commodity. It cannot and ought not to be commodified. Our health should not be used for profit. We need to take back the ownership of our health. Let's bring the care into "healthcare" instead of giving it to an "industry". Our lives

depend on it. Our viewpoint, as socialists, questions whether major improvements in our health system can occur without fundamental changes in the broad social order.

One thrust of the field – an assumption also accepted by many non-socialists – is that the problems of the health system reflect the problems of our larger society and cannot be separated from those problems.

Finding common ground

I HAVE good friends in most of our political parties. I get on well with most leaders of our political parties. Some friends have asked me how I can still be friends with someone whose politics I despise.

Yes, with most of these we've always disagreed politically, but is a homogeneous viewpoint really an informed opinion? Is it really possible to go throughout life never making any friends who differ from us politically? Is it even right to do so?

Yes, it can be challenging to talk to people who disagree with you politically.

Animosity across political and social groups – where people disrespect or even hate those who believe differently than them – is one of the most pressing problems of our time. It leads to divisions between family members and friends, co-workers and colleagues, politicians, and the public.

The acrimony between political groups makes it challenging for people and the government that serves them to solve societal problems. These divisions also cause people to become skeptical of each other, paving the way for misinformation to spread and take hold.

We need to find practical solutions to the problem of divisiveness. And there's no sensible alternative to being open to listening to and understanding others' viewpoints and finding parts to agree with.

The first must be last of all

POPE Francis aptly warns that thirst for power at any price leads to abuses and injustice.

"Good politics is at the service of peace.

Politics is an essential means of building human community and institutions, but when political life is not seen as a form of service to society as a whole, it can become a means of oppression, marginalisation and even destruction," he warns.

"If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all. Political office and political responsibility thus constantly challenge those called to the service of their country to make every effort to protect those who live there and to create the conditions for a worthy and just future.

"If exercised with basic respect for the life, freedom and dignity of persons, political life can indeed become an outstanding form of charity."

The rights and wrongs . . .

ADMITTING when you're wrong builds trust and shows integrity. Typically, when leaders realise they've made a mistake, others have noticed, too. Leaders who then fail to admit they were wrong leave followers and supporters feeling as though their leaders consider being right more important than being honest.

Taking responsibility demonstrates that leaders value integrity over the easier paths of laying blame or hoping their mistake won't be exposed. Admitting when you're wrong also shows you're aware of, and therefore in a position to learn from, your mistakes. This can build further confidence in your leadership.

Admitting when you're wrong could be one of the most important things you do as a leader.

UPND in a taxing situation

WITHOUT decisive action to remove obstacles to the collection of fair taxes from the mines and reduce the government's need to borrow, the UPND government will be unable to create lasting growth or employment.

The International Monetary Fund programme will not help address the country's rocketing joblessness.

Our shortage of drugs demands an explanation

Business contract decisions to blame

Socialist staff reporter

WHY IS the government "failing to truthfully and simply explain" our shortage of drugs, Socialist Party President Fred M'membe asks.

"It cannot be denied that there's a critical shortage of drugs in our health centres, clinics, and hospitals," he said.

"And the government at the highest level has failed to truthfully and simply explain the reasons for this shortage. Why is it difficult to truthfully and simply explain this drug shortage? Vested business interests? Our people's lives are being sacrificed on the altar of business expediency."

Dr M'membe said the problem involved indecision over who should be given the business contracts to supply the drugs.

"We have a local drug supplier who is forced to send workers home because the government doesn't want to buy drugs from the company.

"The needed drugs are there in the country. It's simply a question of not wanting to buy drugs from those who have them.

"What we are seeing on television about visiting the Ministry of Health is nothing but political posturing, a facade. The provision of health services to our people cannot be micro-managed in that way. Drug shortages have very serious adverse economic, clinical, and humanistic outcomes to patients. It means patients have to increase out of pocket costs. And this increases rates of drug errors, adverse events, and mortality."

Dr M'membe said Zambians were living in a country with one

of the worst health outcomes globally. "Too many mothers and babies die every day. Every mother is valuable. Life is sacred. One cannot claim to uphold the principle of the sanctity of life if provision has not been made for even minimal healthcare for every person. This is a priority we cannot ignore if we wish to be a caring and compassionate nation.

"In order to avoid drug shortages and achieve universal health coverage for all, there's a need for us as a nation to grow the pharmaceutical industry and ensure that patients get fast access to all the drugs covered under the Essential Drugs List."

Chingola district Socialist Party coordinator Masuzyo Bota is reported as saying the drugs situation shows the UPND government "does not seem to be serious with the way it is handling affairs of the country".

He said it was shocking that six months after the UPND government assumed office, persistent drug shortages had become commonplace.

Peripheral

"Despite several assurances from Minister of Health Sylvia Masebo that drug supply to hospitals and clinics would improve, persistent drug shortages in many health institutions across the country have become commonplace.

"The acute shortage of drugs in hospitals and peripheral health posts across country has been confirmed by the Resident Doctors' Association of Zambia," he said.

"In this regard, I wish to implore the people tasked to provide such necessary drugs to the people to

be on their toes and do the needful as soon as possible before we face a calamitous situation in our country."

Bota urged the government to actualise the employment of 30,000 teachers and 11,200 health workers.

He said this should be done now so that it did not become a campaign tool in 2026, because, "it seriously touches the lives of citizens".

Bota said it was not a secret that health institutions were grossly understaffed,^{TMTM} "therefore, the employment of additional staff must be a priority".

"As promised during the campaigns and many times after the campaign including during the presentation of the overdramatised 2022 national budget, the employment of 30,000 teachers is still hanging in the air. This is an issue that needs to be actualised because many of our citizens are still staying at home with documents they got from institutions of higher learning with the hope that employment was coming, but up to now it has remained a promise. We don't know when they will be employed," he said.

Bota said people needed to embrace the socialist ideology, which puts people first.

He said the Socialist Party promised to offer free quality education from nursery to university level.

"The Socialist Party will endeavour to end class exploitation and oppression and foster sustainable and viable development for all without discrimination so that our official national motto of One Zambia One nation is fully realised," he said.

Gender-based violence and femicide 'a national crisis'

SOCIALIST Party Central Committee and Women's League member Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze has described gender-based violence and femicide in Zambia as "a national crisis".

"It is with a very heavy heart that I speak on behalf of the Socialist Party Women's League about the recent incidents of gender-based violence and femicide that have taken place in our society," she said.

"It is very sad to say the least that such inhumane acts are happening, and to reflect on what they are doing to us as a people and a country.

"Our attention has been drawn to a recent video of a young woman in Eastern Province being raped in broad daylight with fellow women cheering on as men held her down. What led to this terrible, inhumane and totally unacceptable behaviour? Our hearts bleed as our thoughts and prayers go out to this comrade and the many more women like her who have suffered such gross injustices.

"We followed the tragic case



Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze

of 21-year-old Natasha Phiri from Ludazi, who is alleged to have been murdered by her husband with her remains discovered in a suitcase, and also heard of a woman in Kamwala South who was kidnapped, raped and left to die.

"These are just a few of the incidents that have taken place since the start of the year – there are many more untold crimes of this kind.

"It is with a deep sense of sadness that we in the women's league had to witness how both men and women watched and cheered while that helpless young woman in East-

ern Province was raped. This is not the Zambian society we know or desire. We desperately need to return to values that encourage solidarity, empathy and respect for women as human beings.

"Improving the living conditions of our women and the working class in general must be a priority. Our fight for gender justice and women's rights should target not only men, but women as well. Patriarchy is deep rooted in our society and is entrenched in both sexes."

Maramwidze said there was a need to both campaign against the injustices and educate people to address the issues involved.

"We call on the relevant authorities to pursue this matter and allow justice to prevail for both the young woman who was raped and the many more like her.

"We demand an end to these terrible attacks on our women and girls and call upon everyone to fight hand in hand in the battle against this terrible cancer that is spreading like a bushfire across our country."

Reject cheating, lies

The future is not built in the future. It is built on the threshold of the decisions and actions you take today

SOCIALIST Party President Fred M'membe says Zambia's young people have had enough of being lied to and must say they will no longer "be cheated, manipulated with fake promises".

He was speaking as the Socialist Party celebrated International Youth Day, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly since 1999.

International Youth Day gives an opportunity to celebrate mainstream young peoples' voices, actions and initiatives, as well as their meaningful, universal and equitable engagement.

In his speech, Dr Membe said:

"On this day – the day of the youth, the day of you, our young people – there are a lot of things that need to be said about you and the lives you lead, your future.

"I don't have enough time to say them all, otherwise we will be here the whole day.

"I will therefore be very brief and speak about one thing. And since I am speaking about one thing only, I will say it at length. I can pull the string a little longer.

"All over the world, it is you, our young people, who are actually involving yourselves in the struggle to eliminate injustice, inequity, unfairness and inhumanity. You are the ones who most quickly identify with the struggle and the necessity to eliminate the unacceptable conditions that exist in society.

Inhumane

"Today we have an unbridled exploitative neoliberal capitalist order in our country that is trying to make you, our young people, the victims of every kind of unjust, unfair and inhumane conditions imaginable.

"You, our young people, must be permanently on the frontlines of the struggle to build a better future for all in our country.

"The elections of last August have highlighted to you the dire need for the kind of transformational, revolutionary change you seek – and not just any change. And you must be full partners in that effort for you to realise this type of change you need.



fort for you to realise this type of change you need.

"They will tell you that you are future leaders; tell them that you are not future leaders – you are leaders of today trying to step into the future. Tell them that the future is not built in the future, it is built

on the threshold of the decisions and actions you yourselves take today, in the struggles you yourselves involve yourselves in today. Tell them you are leaders of today as well as of tomorrow.

"After being lied to, cheated so many times, it is time for you to

start seeing things for yourselves, listening for yourselves, thinking for yourselves and coming to your own conclusions. Refuse to be what they want you to be, be what you want to be. Bring about the real change, revolutionary change you need to see a reversal of fortunes in your lives.



Musumali tells youngsters to focus on skills and training

SOCIALIST Party General Secretary and First Vice-President Cosmas Musheke Musumali (below) has challenged Zambia youths and women to take skills training seriously if they are to move out of poverty.

Dr Musumali says it will be difficult to implement empowerment programmes if the beneficiaries don't have skills.

He says that because the country has invested in university education rather than practical skills, the number of people who depend on the government for jobs is high.

Dr Musumali said that government should put money into training women and youngsters in agriculture, carpentry and bricklaying, among other critical skills to grow the economy.



"And when you refuse to be what they want you to be, when you revolt against their unbearable conditions of joblessness, poverty and despair, they will want you to do so politely. Why? Oh no, tell them they are dealing with the wrong young people at the wrong time and

in the wrong way. Tell them that in 2026 you won't allow yourselves to be lied to, to be cheated, to be manipulated with fake promises. Tell them that in 2026 you are bringing about real change, revolutionary change!

"Tell them, Nsingu lives in you!"

s and fake promises



Socialist Party Youth League Chairperson Simon Mulenga Mwila addresses comrades in Lusaka



Copperbelt Socialist Party Youth League in action on International Youth Day

Mwila: millions of our youths are living in a state of hopelessness

SIMON Mulenga Mwila, Chairperson of the Socialist Party Youth League, told comrades it was only when young people stood up and did things themselves that they would see real change. His speech in full:

“Dear comrades, allow me to express my appreciation and gratitude to the President of the Socialist Party, Dr Fred M’membe, the General Secretary and First Vice-President, Dr Cosmas Musumali, and the General Treasurer and Second Vice-President, Dr Chris Mwikisa, for their leadership and guidance to our revolutionary Socialist Party and mostly to our vibrant youth league. Let’s give them a round of applause!

“I greet all our distinguished guests, participants, the media and my fellow youths.

“Welcome to our Youth Day celebrations under the theme ‘Youth and the Revolution’. It feels great to be in this space. Viva socialism viva, viva youth power viva.

Desperation

“Dear comrades, the conditions we live in today are an indication of a need for a socialist revolution. Let us take a look around us – from all the corners of kwa and ku of our homeland – what is a Zambian youth experiencing today?

“Comrades, current statistics reveal that in 2020, the unemployment rate in Zambia among youths aged between 15 and 24, without work but available for and seeking employment, stood at 26.1 percent.

“These statistics are an indication that millions of our youths are unemployed. For many of our youths, hunger, desperation, prostitution and drugs are the order of the day. Since the 1990s, our country’s unemployment rate has con-

tinued to increase, and a large percentage of them are the youths of this country.

“We face so many forces that oppress us. As youths, we remain victims of an oppressive neoliberal system and its offshoots: corruption, unbridled competition and individualism. Ala twachula pafula.

“We need to struggle for a more serious system through a people’s movement – our Socialist Party – to liberate ourselves from a system and leaders who perpetuate our suffering. We need a party that has a massive progressive programme of job creation – the Socialist Party. We need real, free education from nursery to university level. We need to hold the UPND government accountable to provide the decent jobs they promised our youths, the jobs they promised our doctors and teachers.

“Comrades, we are in a state of hopelessness. It is only when we, as young people in this country, stand up and do things ourselves that we will see real change.

“And we have real models from among our leaders for guidance to confidently wage this struggle to our victory.

“We also can draw inspiration from Commander Nsingu and the 10,000 warriors who were killed 124 years ago for resisting the occupation in the Chipata area in Eastern Province against Cecil Rhodes’s army. They perished defending our homeland and our minerals. As youths today, what are we defending?

“I want to end by quoting our living legend Dr Fred M’membe who has repeatedly said that what we can’t do for ourselves, no one, no one will do for us.

“Aluta continua.
Viva socialism viva.”

War criminals have ruled USA for the past 30 years

Conflicts waged in Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Syria, Libya, Yemen and Iraq were 'crimes against peace'

Joseph Scalice

IN MARCH, US President Joe Biden accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of being a war criminal.

This historically weighted charge was made as an off-hand remark. A reporter asked Biden if he thought Putin was a war criminal as the president was leaving a crowded event. "No," Biden responded and shuffled off camera. The clip was cut and then Biden returned, asking the reporter to repeat the question. "Oh," Biden said with a wave of his hand, "I think he is a war criminal." His voice carried all of the seriousness of a man who changed his mind and decided he wanted a side of fries with his hamburger.

Biden's statement was in keeping with the incendiary and provocative language that Washington has repeatedly used to escalate the conflict with Russia over Ukraine. That Biden returned to the camera to make this statement demonstrates a calculated choice to personalise and heighten tensions for the purposes of propaganda. There is an irreversible character to such statements.

The accusation tossed off by Biden is among the gravest possible. Raised against the president of a country, the charge encompasses not simply culpability for acts of criminality during the conduct of the conflict, but rather the far greater crime of launching a war of aggression, a crime against peace. The launching of such a war is the ultimate cause of all ensuing bloodshed and war crimes.

Judged by this rigorous standard every American president of the past 30 years has been a war criminal.

The legal bases for this principle rest on the charges of war crimes brought against former leaders of Nazi Germany in the Nuremberg trials, and former leaders of the Japanese Empire in the Tokyo trials at the end of World War II. The trials established the international legal principle that plotting and launching a war of aggression was "a crime against peace". This was enshrined as Principle 6(a) in the Nuremberg Principles by the United Nations Human Rights Convention in 1950.

The lead prosecutor at the Nuremberg trial in 1946, Robert H. Jackson, wrote, "If certain acts of violation of treaties are crimes, they are crimes whether the United States does them or whether Germany does them, and we are not prepared to lay down a rule of criminal conduct against others which we would not be willing to have invoked against us."



US President Joe Biden holds a video conference call with Russian President Vladimir Putin prior to the current Ukraine conflict

But while the United States was instrumental in drawing up of these universally binding international legal precedents, Washington has since done everything possible to ensure that the principles never applied to its own actions.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague was established in 1998 with the signing of the Rome Statute to prosecute crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes of aggression. The United States for years delayed and obstructed the creation of this court, and was one of seven countries that refused to sign its charter. While accusing Putin and its other geopolitical enemies of "war crimes" and even "genocide", the United States rejects the authority of the ICC and refuses to acknowledge its jurisdiction over its political and military leaders, or any of its combatants.

Pompous

Washington speaks of a "rules-based international order" with the voice of a pompous and crooked judge, arbitrarily imposing on the rest of the world laws that it flagrantly violates.

The wars launched by the United States in the last 30 years – Iraq, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq again, Syria, Yemen, Libya – have all, by the Nuremberg definition, been wars of aggression plotted by war criminals.

The violation of the Nuremberg Principles was codified as US pol-

icy in the National Security Strategy of the Bush administration in 2002, which asserted the right of the United States to take unilateral military action against another country without presenting credible evidence of self-defence.

Washington declared that it no longer needed to meet the historically established standard, born of the bloody experiences of two world wars, that the threat of imminent attack was necessary to justify military action. To assert that it perceived the possibility of a threat was sufficient grounds to justify invasion. War was the naked instrument of policy.

David North, chair of the International Editorial Board of the World Socialist WebSite, speaking at Trinity College in Dublin in 2004, argued, "The promulgation of the doctrine of preventive war in September 2002, and its implementation in March 2003 with the launching of an aggressive war against Iraq, represents nothing less than the unequivocal repudiation by the United States of the legal principles that were enforced against the Nazi ringleaders at Nuremberg and, therefore, the criminalisation, in the full and most profound legal sense of the word, of American foreign policy."

With manufactured claims of non-existent weapons of mass destruction and the universal mandate of a "war on terror", Washington reduced entire civilisations of the Middle East and Central Asia to rubble. Millions died and mil-

lions more were driven from their homes.

Each of these wars was a crime against peace. Not one of these countries posed any threat to the United States. You could not ask for a more textbook definition of a war of aggression than those launched by Washington over the past 30 years.

The International Tribunal at Nuremberg in 1945 declared, "War is essentially an evil thing. Its consequences are not confined to the belligerent states alone, but affect the whole world. To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime, it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

Refugees

The wars of aggression of Clinton, Bush, Obama and Trump contained the accumulated evil of the torture in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, the drone bombing of children at play, villages leveled by precision missiles and refugees drowned in the Mediterranean. Baghdad crumbled beneath the shock and awe of unstinting US bombing; Fallujah burned with white phosphorus.

The American mass media is complicit in these crimes. They never challenged the government's assertions, but trumpeted its pretexts. They whipped up a war-frenzy in the public. Pundits who now

denounce Putin were ferocious in demanding that the United States bomb civilians.

George Will wrote in the Washington Post on April 7, 2004, "Regime change, occupation, nation-building, are a bloody business. Now Americans must steel themselves for administering the violence necessary to disarm or defeat Iraq's urban militias."

Thomas Friedman wrote in the New York Times in 1999 of the bombing of Serbia under Clinton, "It should be lights out in Belgrade: every power grid, water pipe, bridge, road and war-related factory has to be targeted . . . we will set your country back by pulverising you. You want 1950? We can do 1950. You want 1389? We can do 1389 too."

Biden labels Putin a war criminal in the midst of a new media hysteria. Never referring to the actions of the United States, never pausing for breath, the media pumps out the fuel for an ever-expanding war.

If charges are to be made against Putin, whatever criterion is applied to him must be brought to bear against other leaders, and, above all, against the American presidents.

Hubris and hypocrisy stamp every statement from Washington with an audacity perhaps unique in world history. Its hands bathed in blood up to the elbows, US empire gestures at its enemies and cries war crimes.

wsws.org

CHINA WATCH

INTEREST in China is growing, yet most news and analysis outside the country is produced by mainstream media from the global north. To provide access to Chinese perspectives, the *Dongsheng Collective* – researchers from various countries – offers a China digest of news. This is an edited selection.

USA suspends tariffs

DESPITE threats of new sanctions against China, the White House has suspended tariffs on 352 Chinese products, imposed in the trade war. Product availability outside of China was the main consideration for reinstatement, including home appliances, electric motors, and X-ray hardware, but the measure covers a small part of Trump's levies. More than 40 bipartisan senators are pushing for more exclusions.

South China Morning Post

China largest creditor

CHINA is the largest individual creditor after the World Bank, totaling US\$110 billion among 68 developing countries. Chinese institutions suspended US\$5.7 billion in repayments – including US\$2 billion (2020) during the pandemic – but the measure ended in December. China is set to receive US\$14 billion in debt servicing this year, with a recommendation for further suspensions for poorer nations.

Bloomberg

African exports deal

GREEN lane trade agreements for African countries are to allow for increased exports to China, following the 2021 China-Africa cooperation summit. Trade between China and Africa grew 35 percent in 2021, reaching a record US\$254 billion; and Beijing promises to grow the value of imports to US\$300 billion by 2025.

South China Morning Post

Xinjiang \$275b boost

THE government has launched a US\$275 billion infrastructure plan in Xinjiang to stimulate the economy, signaling confidence in the region's stability. New CPC Chief Ma Xingrui was appointed in December, whose strong development record in Guangdong guides Xinjiang's shifting focus from security to infrastructure – 4,467 projects are planned with 27 receiving US\$790 million in investments.

South China Morning Post

Ban on tall buildings

CHINA has placed limits on tall buildings, over safety, economic, and environmental concerns in the construction sector, responsible for a fifth of the country's emissions. All buildings over 500m, and 150m-plus in cities with over three million people will be banned. China constructed the first 100m-plus building in 1978 (Baiyun Hotel) and by 2007, had the most skyscrapers in the world, today with 101 buildings above 300m.

The World of Chinese

Depression increases

THE rate of depression rate among Chinese adolescents reached 24.6 percent in 2020, with 7.4 percent severe cases, worsened as a result of the pandemic. An estimated 47 million out of 270 million children and adolescents need treatment for mental disorders with a shortage of professional help. A government action plan calls for 60 percent of psychiatric hospitals to set up child and adolescent psychotherapy clinics by the end of 2022.

Caixin Global

Chile's socialist president signs climate treaty

CHILE's new socialist President Gabriel Boric has signed the United Nations Escazu Agreement, overturning the policy of the previous Chilean government that had held back from supporting the environmental treaty.

Chile, the world's top copper producer, initially promoted the agreement, which is focused on access to information and environmental justice in Latin America and the Caribbean, but later refused to sign it on the grounds that it could generate legal uncertainties.

But Boric, who replaced centre-right former President Sebastian Pinera, has pledged to take a strong position on climate change and environmental regulation.

"This agreement represents a milestone on the way to a new relationship between the state and its inhabitants in environmen-

tal matters," Boric said during the signing ceremony.

The Escazu Agreement, signed in 2018 by many countries in the region, including Argentina, Mexico and Brazil, came into force in April last year. It aims to contribute "to the protection of the right of each person, of present and future generations, to live in a healthy environment and to sustainable development".

It also seeks to address various environmental rights, such as access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making processes, and access to environmental justice, including the creation of mechanisms to protect environmental defenders.

Access to environmental information is potentially important in countries such as Chile,

where questions have been raised over water use by copper and lithium firms and the effect of mining on glaciers, among other issues.

Twenty-four countries in the region signed the treaty and 12 have ratified it.

Boric, a 36-year-old former student activist, was sworn into office on March 11. The nation's youngest-ever president, he was elected on a pledge to tackle Chile's deep-rooted inequalities and to improve access to healthcare, education and pensions.

"Environmental activists, you have taught us to persevere and we are here for you," Boric tweeted.

"Just as today we advanced signing Escazu, tomorrow we will continue for decent pensions, quality health and the eradication of gender violence in educational establishments," he wrote.

Six ways the ‘multipolar future’ changes the balance of power

We need to transcend the apartheids of our time and move to socialism

Vijay Prashad

THE WAR in Ukraine has focused attention on the shifts taking place in the world order.

Russia’s military intervention has been met with sanctions from the West as well as with the transport of arms and mercenaries to Ukraine. These sanctions will have a major impact on the Russian economy as well as the Central Asian states, but they will also negatively impact the European population who will see energy and food prices rise further.

Until now, the West has decided not to intervene with direct military force or to try and establish a “no-fly zone”. It is recognised, sanely, that such an intervention could escalate into a full-scale war between the United States and Russia, the consequences of which are unthinkable given the nuclear weapons capacities of both countries. Short of any other kind of response, the West – as with the Russian intervention in Syria in 2015 – has had to accept Moscow’s actions.

To understand the current global situation, here are six theses about the establishment of the US-shaped world order from 1990 to the current fragility of that order in the face of growing Russian and Chinese power. These theses are drawn from our analysis in dossier 36 (January 2021), “Twilight: The Erosion of US Control and the Multipolar Future”, they are intended for discussion and so feedback on them is very welcome.

Thesis One: Unipolarity. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, between 1990 and 2013–15, the United States developed a world system that benefited multinational corporations based in the United States and in the other G7 countries (Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Canada).

The events that defined overwhelming US power were the invasions of Iraq (1991) and Yugoslavia (1999) as well as the creation of the World Trade Organisation (1994). Russia, weakened by the collapse of the USSR, sought entry into this system by joining the G7 and collaborating with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as a “Partner for Peace”. Meanwhile, China, under presidents Jiang Zemin (1993–2003) and Hu Jintao (2003–2013), played a careful game by inserting its labour into the US-dominated global system and not challenging the US in its operations.

Thesis Two: Signal Crisis. The US overreached its power through two dynamics: first, by overleveraging its own domestic economy (overleveraged banks, higher non-productive assets than productive assets), and second, by trying to fight several wars at the same time (Afghanistan, Iraq, Sahel) during the first two decades of the 21st century.

The signal crises for the weakness of US power were illustrated by the invasion of Iraq (2003) and the debacle of that war for US power projection, and the credit crisis (2007–2008). Internal political polarisation in the US and a crisis of legitimacy in Europe followed these developments.



Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (Canada), *The One Percent*, 2015

Thesis Three: Sino-Russian Emergence. By the second decade of the 2000s, for different reasons, both China and Russia emerged from their relative dormancy.

China’s emergence has two legs: China’s domestic economy – China built up massive trade surpluses and, alongside these, it built up scientific and technological knowledge through its trade agreements and investment in higher education. Chinese firms in robotics, high-tech, high-speed rail, and green energy leapfrogged Western firms.

Initiative

China’s external relations – In 2013, China announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which proposed an alternative to the US-driven International Monetary Fund’s development and trade agenda. The BRI extended out of Asia into Europe as well as into Africa and Latin America.

Russia emerged on two legs as well. Russia’s domestic economy – President Vladimir Putin fought some sections of the large capitalists to assert state control of key commodity export sectors and used these to build up state assets (notably oil and gas). Rather than merely leech Russian assets for their overseas bank accounts, these Russian

capitalists agreed to subordinate part of their ambitions to rebuilding the power and influence of the Russian state.

Russia’s external relations – Since 2007, Russia began to edge away from the Western global agenda and drive its own project, first through the BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) agenda and then later through increasingly close relations with China. Russia leveraged its export of energy to assert control of its borders, which it had not done when NATO expanded in 2004 to absorb seven countries that are near its western boundary. Russian intervention into Crimea (2014) and Syria (2015) used its military force to create a shield around its warm water ports in Sebastopol (Crimea) and Tartus (Syria). This was the first military challenge to the US since 1990. In this period, China and Russia deepened their cooperation in all fields.

Thesis Four: Global Monroe Doctrine. The United States took its 1823 Monroe Doctrine (that asserted its control over the Americas) global and proposed in this post-Soviet era that the entire world was its dominion.

It began to push back against the assertion of China (Obama’s Pivot to Asia) and Russia (Russiagate and Ukraine). This New Cold War

driven by the US, which includes hybrid warfare through sanctions against 30 countries such as Iran and Venezuela, has destabilised the world.

Thesis Five: Confrontations. The confrontations hastened by the New Cold War have inflamed the situation in Asia, where the Taiwan Strait remains a hot zone – and in Latin America, where the United States attempted to create a hot war in Venezuela (and attempted but failed to project its power in places such as Bolivia).

The current conflict in Ukraine, which has its origins in many factors, including the demise of the Ukrainian plurinational compact, is also over the question of European independence.

Sovereignty

The US has used “Global NATO” as a Trojan horse to exercise its power over Europe and keep it subordinated to US interests, even if it harms Europeans as they lose energy supply and natural gas for the food economy.

Russia violated the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine, but NATO created some of the conditions which accelerated this confrontation, not for Ukraine but for its project in Europe.

Thesis Six: Terminal Crisis. Fragility is the key to understanding US power today. It has not declined dramatically, nor does it remain unscathed. There are three sources of US power that are relatively untouched:

● Overwhelming Military Power. The United States remains the only country in the world that is able to bomb any of the other UN member states into the stone age.

● The Dollar-Wall Street-IMF regime. Due to the global reliance on the dollar and to the dollar-denominated global financial system, the US can wield its sanctions as a weapon of war to weaken countries at its whim.

● Informational Power. No country has as decisive control over the internet, both its physical infrastructure and its near monopoly companies (such as Facebook and YouTube, which remove any content and any provider at will), no country has as much control over the shaping of world news due to the power of its wire services (Reuters and the Associated Press) as well as the major news networks (such as CNN).

There are other sources of US power that are deeply weakened, such as its political landscape, which is deeply polarised, and its inability to marshal its resources to

send China and Russia back inside their borders. People’s movements need to grow our own power, by organising the people into powerful organisations and around a programme that has the capacity to both answer the immediate problems of our time and the long-term question of how to transition to a system that can transcend the apartheids of our time: food apartheid, medical apartheid, education apartheid, and money apartheid.

To transcend these apartheids leads us out of this capitalist system to socialism.

● Recently, we have lost many comrades, old and young. Amongst them, our Senior Fellow Aijaz Ahmad (1941–2022), one of the great Marxists of our time, left us at the age of 81.

When Marxism was under attack after the fall of the USSR, Aijaz held the line, teaching generations of us about the necessity of Marxist theory; that theory remains necessary because it continues to be the most powerful critique of capitalism and, as long as capitalism continues to structure our lives, that critique remains boundless.

For us at Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, Aijaz’s mentorship was invaluable. In fact, the dossier *Twilight*, which helped us orient ourselves in the current conjuncture, was written after substantial discussion with Aijaz.

We also lost Ayanda Ngila (1992–2022), who was the deputy chairperson of eKhenana land occupation, part of South Africa’s militant shack dwellers movement, Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM).

Ayanda was a courageous leader of AbM who had recently been released from a second spell of being held in prison on trumped up charges.

He was a kind comrade to his peers and a student and teacher at the Frantz Fanon School. When he was gunned down by his adversaries in the African National Congress, Ayanda was wearing a T-shirt with a quote from Steve Biko: “It’s better to die for an idea that is going to live than to live for an idea that is going to die”.

On the walls of the Frantz Fanon School, the comrades at AbM painted their ideals clearly: Land, decent housing, dignity, freedom, and socialism.

We concur. So would Aijaz.

Tricontinental

New world order will involve decoupled financial system

MARKETS often react strongly to geopolitical events, but then later shrug them off. Not this time. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is a key economic turning point that will have many lasting consequences. Among them will be a quickening of the shift to a bipolar global financial system – one based on the dollar, the other on the renminbi (yuan).

The process of financial decoupling between Russia and the West has, of course, been going on for some time. Western banks reduced their exposure to Russian financial institutions by 80 per cent following the country’s annexation of Crimea in 2014, and their claims on the rest of Russia’s private sector have halved since then, according to a recent *Capital Economics* report.

The new and more aggressive sanctions announced by the US will take that decoupling much further. It will also make Russia much more dependent on China, which will use the US and EU sanctions as an opportunity to pick up excess Russian oil and gas on the cheap. China is no fan of Vladimir Putin’s war, but it needs Russian commodities and arms, and sees the country as a key part of a new Beijing-led order, something Moscow is aware of.

“China is our strategic cushion,” Sergei Karaganov, a political scientist at the Moscow-based Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, told *Nikkei Asia* recently. “We know that in any difficult situation, we can lean on it for military, political and economic support.”

That does not mean China would break US or European sanctions to support Rus-

sia, but it could certainly allow Russian banks and companies more access to its own financial markets and institutions. Indeed, just recently, the two countries announced a “friendship without limits”, one that will certainly include closer financial ties as Russia is shut out of western markets.

This follows a 2019 agreement between Russia and China to settle all trade in their respective currencies rather than in dollars. The war in Ukraine will speed this up. Witness China recently lifting an import ban on Russian wheat, as well as a new long-term Chinese gas deal with Gazprom. All of this supports China’s long-term goal of building a post-dollarised world, in which Russia would be one of many vassal states settling all transactions in renminbi. Getting there is not an easy process.

The Chinese want to de-dollarise, but they also want complete control of their own financial system. That’s a difficult circle to square. One of the reasons that the dollar is the world’s reserve currency is that, in contrast, the US markets are so open and liquid.

Still, the Chinese hope to use trade and the petropolitics of the moment to increase the renminbi’s share of global foreign exchange.

Finance is a key pillar in the new great power competition with America; currency, capital flows and the Belt and Road Initiative trade pathway will all play a role in that. Beijing is slowly diversifying its foreign exchange reserves, as well as buying up a lot of gold. This can be seen as a kind of hedge on a post-dollar world.

Financial Times

War is an open sore on soul of humanity

It's never good for the poor or the workers

Vijay Prashad

IT IS impossible not to be moved by the outrageousness of warfare, the ugliness of aerial bombardment, the gruesome fears of civilians who are trapped between choices that are not their own.

If you read that paragraph and assumed I was talking about Ukraine, then you were right, but of course, this is not just about Ukraine. In the same week that Russian forces entered Ukraine, the United States launched airstrikes in Somalia, Saudi Arabia bombed Yemen, and Israel struck Syria and Palestinians in Gaza.

War is an open sore on humanity's soul. It draws precious social wealth into destruction: "The impact of war is self-evident," wrote Karl Marx in the *Grundrisse* (1857–58), "Since, economically, it is exactly the same as if the nation were to drop a part of its capital into the ocean." It disrupts social unity and damages the possibility of international solidarity. "Workers of the world unite in peacetime," wrote Rosa Luxemburg in *Either Or* (1916), "But in war slit one another's throats."

War is never good for the poor. War is never good for workers. War itself is a crime. War produces crimes. Peace is a priority.

The war in Ukraine did not begin with the Russian intervention. There are a series of authors for this war, each one important to understanding what is happening today.

Pluri-nationalism vs ethnic chauvinism

UKRAINE, shaped out of Lithuanian, Polish, and Tsarist empires, is a pluri-national state with large minorities of Russian, Hungarian, Moldavian, and Romanian speakers. When Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union, the question of ethnicity was held in check by the fact that all Ukrainians were Soviet citizens and that Soviet citizenship was supra-ethnic.

Barrier

In 1990, when Ukraine departed from the Soviet Union, the question of ethnicity emerged as a barrier to full participation in society for all Ukrainians. The socio-political problem faced by Ukraine was not unique; ethnic nationalism surfaced in almost every country in the post-communist East, from the terrible break-up of Yugoslavia initiated by Croatian independence in 1991 to the military confrontation between Georgia and Russia in 2008.

Ethnic cleansing was treated as utterly normal, such as when the West cheered on the forced removal of half a million Serbs from Krajina, Croatia, in 1995. In contrast, Czechoslovakia, one of the countries in the communist East, broke up along ethnic lines peacefully in 1993 into the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Regional peace vs NATO imperialism, part I

AFTER the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact (1991), the United States sought to absorb all of eastern Europe into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). This was despite the agreement made in 1990 with the last government of the Soviet Union that, in the words of then US Secretary of State James Baker, NATO would not move "one-inch eastwards". In the new period, eastern European countries and Russia sought integration into the European project through entry into the European Union (for political and economic purposes) and into NATO (for military reasons).

Expansion

During the presidency of Boris Yeltsin (1991–1999), Russia became a NATO partner and joined the G-7 (which, for a time, became the G-8). Even in President Vladimir Putin's early years, Russia continued to think that it would be welcomed into the European project. In 2004, NATO absorbed seven eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia); at that time, NATO's secretary general, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, said that Russia understood that NATO had "no ulterior motives". However, Moscow eventually called NATO's persistent march eastward into question, and, in 2007, Putin accused NATO of "muscle-flexing" in eastern Europe. From then on, NATO's expansion became an increasingly contentious matter.

Although Ukraine's entry into NATO was blocked by France and Germany in 2008, the question of Ukraine being drawn into the NATO project began to define Russian-Ukrainian politics. This last point highlights how the discussion about "security guarantees" for Russia is incomplete; it is not about Russia's security fears alone – since Russia is a major nuclear power – it is also about Europe's relationship with Russia. Namely, would Europe be able to form a relationship with Russia that is not predicated upon US dictates to subordinate Russia?

Democracy vs the Coup

IN 2014, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich sought a loan from Russia, which Putin said he would provide if Yanukovich would sideline the country's oligarchy-controlled financial networks. Instead, Yanukovich turned to the European Union (EU), which offered similar advice, but whose concerns were set aside by the United States, a dynamic that was on full display when US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland told US Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt, "Fuck the EU".

Earlier, Nuland had boasted about the billions of dollars the US spent on "democracy promotion" in Ukraine, which in fact meant the strengthening of pro-Western and anti-Russian forces. Yanukovich was removed and replaced in a parliamentary coup by a string of US-backed leaders (Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Petro Poroshenko).

President Poroshenko (2014–2019) drove a Ukrainian nationalist agenda around the slogan *armii, mova, vira* (military, language, faith), which became reality with the end to military cooperation with Russia (2014), the enacting of legislation which made Ukrainian "the only official state language" and restricted the use of Russian and other minority languages (2019), and the Ukrainian church breaking ties with the Patriarch Kirill of Moscow (2018).

These measures, along with

In the same week that Russian forces entered Ukraine, the United States launched airstrikes in Somalia, Saudi Arabia bombed Yemen, and Israel struck Syria and Palestinians in Gaza

the empowerment of neo-Nazi elements, shattered the country's pluri-national compact and produced serious armed conflict in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, which is home to a substantial Russian-speaking ethnic minority. Threatened by state policy and neo-Nazi militias, this minority population sought protection from Russia. To mitigate the dangerous ethnic cleansing and end the war in the Donbass region, all parties agreed to a set of de-escalation measures, including ceasefire, known as the Minsk Agreements (2014–2015).

Regional peace vs NATO imperialism, part II

EMBOLDENED by the West, the Ukrainian ultra-nationalists grew their power, and the possibility of



Clockwise: Vasily Tsagolov (Ukraine), *Untitled*, 2008, Anton Kandinsky (Ukraine), *Grenade*, 2012, and Otto Dix (Germany), *Schädel (Skull)*, 1924



negotiations to settle the conflict waned. Violations of the Minsk Agreements by all sides undermined the process. For eight years, the people of the Donbass lived in a constant state of war, which, according to the United Nations, led to more than 14,000 deaths and over 50,000 casualties between 2014 and 2021. There appeared to be no exit from that situation. What began to take place was essentially ethnic cleansing, with large sections of Russian speakers fleeing across the border to the Rostov region of Russia, and Ukrainian speakers moving westwards.

There was little international attention paid to this crisis and the rise of the neo-Nazi elements. NATO powers refused to take these issues seriously or provide Moscow with security guarantees; particularly, to guarantee that Ukraine would not be provided with nuclear weapons and would not become a member of NATO. Furthermore, Russia intervened to seize Crimea, where its navy has a warm water port. These moves further destabilised the situation, threatening the security of the region. NATO's refusal to negotiate over Russia's security is the spur that led to the intervention.

Wars make very complicated historical processes appear to be simple. The war in Ukraine is not merely about NATO or about ethnicity; it is about all these things and more. Every war must end at some point and diplomacy must re-

start. Rather than allow this war to escalate and for positions to harden too quickly, it is important for the guns to go silent and the discussions to recommence. Unless at least the following issues are put on the table, nothing will advance:

Adherence to the Minsk Agreements. Security guarantees for Russia and Ukraine, which would require Europe to develop an independent relationship with Russia that is not shaped by US interests.

Reversal of Ukraine's ultra-nationalist laws and a return to the pluri-national compact. If substantive negotiations and agreements regarding these essential matters do not materialise soon, it is likely that dangerous weapons will face each other across tenuous divides and additional countries will get drawn into a conflict with the potential to spiral out of control.

The Soviet Ukrainian writer Mykola Bazhan wrote the powerful poem *Elegy for Circus Attractions* (1927) on the tensions of a circus. Could there be any better metaphor for our times?

*A lady will shriek out
piercingly . . .
Then panic takes aim and flies
into their heart-breaking howls,
crumpling their naked mouths!
Grind up the spit and tears,
whisk lips into grimaces!
They're swinging like
corpses on threads,
the voices.*

Tricontinental

20 million people in Sudan face acute food insecurity this year

African countries hit by price increases and shortages of imported grain

Jean Shaoul

THOUSANDS of workers and students have taken to the streets in cities across Sudan in protest at rocketing food and fuel prices. Food prices are 100 to 200 percent higher than they were a year ago and inflation stands at 250 percent.

In the capital Khartoum, the protesters were met with tear gas and stun grenades as they came within 200 metres of the presidential palace.

The mass protests followed the sharp dive in the value of the Sudanese pound in the last month, as the military junta ended its fixed currency policy, and took place alongside ongoing strikes by teachers and railway workers in Atbara over their abysmally low salaries.

According to the United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP), nearly half of Sudan's 44 million people will face hunger this year as a result of the military's ouster of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok last October (prompting international financial institutions to suspend billions of dollars in crucial budget aid), the war in Ukraine, and sanctions imposed on Russia.

The WFP says that about 20 million people are likely to be at "emergency" or "crisis" levels of "acute food insecurity", double 2021's figure. The situation has worsened dramatically due to soaring global grain prices, the shortage of foreign currency and drought in some parts of the country, fueling the escalating protest movement demanding an end to military rule.

Like many countries in Africa, Sudan sourced about 35 percent of its wheat imports in 2021 from Russia and Ukraine and now must find an alternative supplier demanding far higher prices. Russia and Ukraine accounted for nearly one third of the world's grain exports, one fifth of its corn trade and almost 80 percent of sunflower oil production. According to the US Department of Agriculture, world wheat supplies will tighten, with exports from Russia and Ukraine likely to be seven million tons smaller than expected before the war.

Following the US/NATO-provoked war, exports from Russia and Ukraine have virtually ground to a halt because of sanctions imposed by Washington and the European powers on Russia's banks, shipping and airlines, and Ukraine's ban on the exports of grain and other food products to prevent a domestic humanitarian crisis. The northern Black Sea ports, where some of the most destructive fighting has taken place and through which most of Russia and Ukraine's grain exports are shipped, have closed, while flight bans are causing cargo planes to divert around Russian airspace. This has exacerbated already-rising food prices due to pandemic-related supply chain problems and deepening poverty.

The northern Black Sea area exports at least 12 percent of the world's traded food calories,



Sudanese anti-coup protesters take part in ongoing demonstrations against the military rule in Khartoum, Sudan

while 45 percent of Ukraine's exports – Ukraine has one-third of the world's most fertile soil – are agricultural-related. As some of Ukraine's exports are used for animal feed, the export ban and disruptions are likely to impact livestock. Farmers fleeing the fighting and the war's destroying infrastructure and equipment threatens this month's planting season.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the price of wheat increased 80 percent between April 2020 and December 2021 as the pandemic took hold, sending food prices to their highest levels since the 1970s. Wheat prices have jumped 37 percent and corn 21 percent so far in 2022. Wheat futures are 80 percent higher than six months ago, and corn is up 58 percent.

Safety net

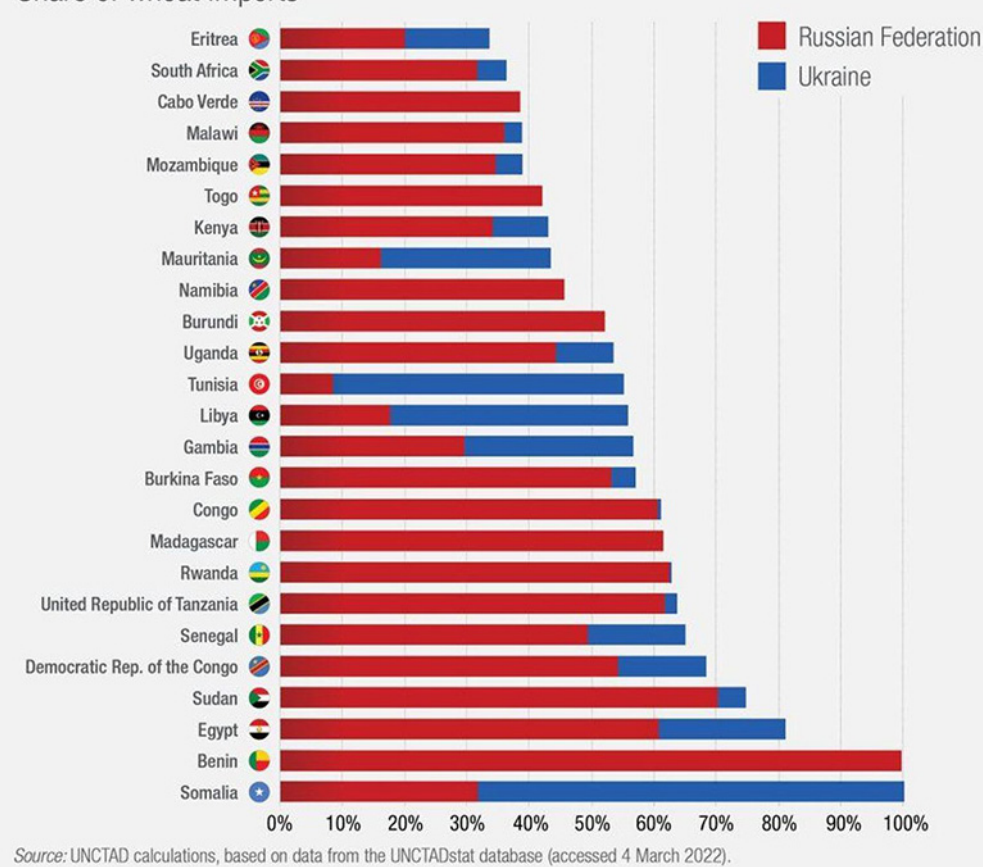
Twenty-three of Africa's 54 countries depend on Russia and Ukraine for more than half the imports of one of their staple goods. Some countries are even more reliant: Sudan, Egypt, Tanzania, Eritrea and Benin import 80 percent of their wheat, and Algeria, Sudan and Tunisia more than 95 percent of sunflower oil from Russia and Ukraine. They too are seeing higher prices across the board, exacerbating hunger under conditions where most African elites provide no social safety net.

Twenty-five African countries import more than a third of their wheat from Russia and Ukraine. Fifteen countries import more than half their supplies. (Source: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development-@UNCTAD/Twitter)

The cost of living will soar, particularly in countries that import most of their food, and where the economic effects of COVID-19 hit hardest: Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Rwanda and Egypt. This is likely to double the number of people facing hunger in Africa, expected to reach more than 500 million of Africa's 1.2 billion people.

African dependence on wheat from Russia and Ukraine

Share of wheat imports



The dangers are particularly acute in Egypt, the world's largest buyer of wheat and the largest importer of wheat from Russia and Ukraine, accounting for 80 percent of total imports. Around 30 million of Egypt's 104 million people live on less than US\$1.50 a day and more than 70 million depend on government-subsidised imports for their bread and vegetable oil.

The government has banned the export of wheat, flour, and other staples, which will precipitate a sharp increase in prices and impact countries such as Yemen, already facing the world's greatest humanitarian crisis. Last year, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi an-

nounced he would raise subsidised bread prices. But with Egypt's bread subsidies already costing US\$3.2 billion a year, the Finance Ministry estimates it will have to budget an additional US\$763 million in 2021-22.

Last July, the government reduced subsidies for sunflower and soybean oil by 20 percent, and unblended vegetable oil by 23.5 percent. This week, Prime Minister Moustafa Madbouly set the price of unsubsidised bread at 11.5 Egyptian pounds, up 25 percent, as the currency fell by 14 percent against the dollar following the war in Ukraine.

Libya, reliant on Ukraine for

more than 40 percent of its wheat imports, saw the price of wheat and flour rise by up to 30 percent. According to the WFP, even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, 12 percent of Libyans, 511,000 people, would need food assistance in 2022. There are also 635,051 migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in Libya, one quarter of whom are considered moderately or severely food insecure. These terrible figures testify to the devastation caused by the 2011 NATO war against what was a middle-income country.

South Sudan, torn apart by civil war and conflicts between rival cliques over control of the coun-

try's oil resources since independence in 2011, faces starvation, with 8.9 million of the country's 12 million people – including 680,000 people affected by floods since May 2021 – expected to face hunger in the coming dry season.

In Ethiopia, fighting in and around Tigray province in the north has displaced more than two million people. Most of the remaining four million Tigrayans do not have enough food and are surviving by reducing meals, selling crops to pay debts or begging. There are 454,000 malnourished children, more than a quarter severely, and 120,000 malnourished pregnant or lactating women. The situation has been made worse by the UN's inability to get emergency food supplies into Tigray since mid-December.

Provoked

According to the WFP, 44 million people worldwide are on the brink of famine and another 232 million are only one step behind. The WFP has been badly hit as it gets half of the wheat it distributes in humanitarian crises from Ukraine. It must turn to other suppliers at a higher cost amid massively increased demand from countries torn apart by US-led or provoked wars and conflicts such as Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia and Sudan, even as its funds from the advanced countries collapse as resources are diverted to Ukraine.

The world's leaders and analysts know that the expanding hunger will stoke social instability, migration and political unrest, just as the rising cost of living precipitated the Arab Spring in 2011.

Last year, there were five coups in West Africa. Only 22 percent of the continent's 1.2 billion people have been vaccinated against COVID-19, while US\$100 billion in aid to deal with the pandemic promised by the advanced countries has yet to be delivered. Around 20 countries are massively in debt and close to defaulting on international loans.



EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE AND AGRICULTURE

The masses of our people are engaging themselves in these struggles to gain material benefits, to live better lives and in peace, to have **free education, quality healthcare, clean water, decent sanitation, a solid roof over their heads,** and all the services required in an organised society

Fred M'membe, Socialist Party President

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