

# UPND's abuse of power 'miles away from democracy' Harassment, intimidation and violence

Socialist staff reporter

THE HARASSMENT of political opposition, arbitrary arrests, barbaric treatment of people in police custody, violence by cadres, attacks on journalists, and vengeful legal action, are just some of the recent abuses by the UPND government that are "miles away from democracy".

Socialist Party President Fred M'membe cited the arrest of a Muvi TV journalist and his cameraman who were covering the arrest of Economic and Equity Party leader Chilufya Tayali as an example of the UPND's oppressive actions.

Dr M'membe also condemned the violence against Tayali in custody after police broke into his home to arrest him.

## Freedom

"The intention was to brutally beat him up," he said. "This is barbarism, this is not the way of the police. The same people who are mistreating Tayali today were complaining about these things when they were in opposition," Dr M'membe said.

"They wanted to be treated differently, they wanted to report themselves to the police instead of being picked at night, instead of their homes being broken into. What was bad for them is also bad for everyone else."

Dr M'membe said that even if Tayali could be a little "prickly" from time to time that did not take away his freedom and rights. "If he crosses a line, there are laws in this country, there are laws of defama-



Clockwise from top left: police in the process of arresting Kaizar Zulu on charges relating to an alleged 2019 incident; the arrest of Harry Kalaba for having lunch with members of his political party; Lovemore Phiri of Pasme FM in Petauke, beaten up by UPND cadres; police break into the house of Economic and Equity Party President Chilufya Tayali; Socialist Party President Fred M'membe visiting arrested Muvi TV journalists

tion as well as others," he said. He advised the UPND against going down the path of vengeance. "Even if people mistreated them, there is no need for revenge."

Dr M'membe said the same UPND leadership that sought media coverage when in opposition

were now trying to prevent journalists doing their job – they were arrested and charged with obstruction.

"They didn't want comrade Innocent Phiri to cover their breaking into Tayali's house and arresting him," he said.

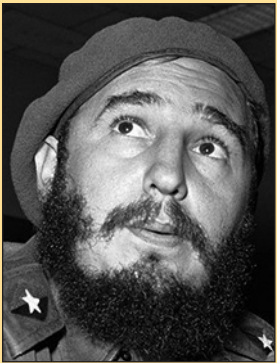
"They used to want the media to

tell people where they were, what was happening to them. They called for the media.

"Today, the same people who used to call for the media don't want the media to cover their friends when they are being arrested.

"What type of a society are we creating? Is this the democracy they promised our people? Is this the justice they promised our people? Is this the fairness they promised our people? Is this the

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# Response to mining anxieties is ‘dismal’

## Living conditions on the Copperbelt precarious

THE LIVING conditions of our miners, subcontracted employees and the masses of our people on the Copperbelt are becoming more precarious by the day, Socialist Party President Fred Mmembe says.

“This is the case despite copper prices being high and the transnational corporations engaged in mining making gigantic profits,” Dr M’membe told a press conference at the party secretariat in Lusaka.

“The anxieties, despair, lamentations and cries of our miners, subcontracted employees, Zambian suppliers and contractors, and the masses of our people on the Copperbelt are getting louder and louder by the day. The response of Mr Hichilema and his UPND government is, as in many other areas of key national interest, dismal and disappointing.

“They are pinning their hopes on the return of foreign transnational corporations that they fraternise with,” he said. “Mr Hichilema is at the forefront entertaining Vedanta and its claims. Yet it is public knowledge that the claims are grounded in illegality and fraud that disadvantaged the Zambian government and its citizens.

“Vedanta defrauded this country of billions of dollars in the form of underpricing the mined copper it sold to its subsidiary company in Dubai. It also got the internally generated cash flow and used it as a loan to invest in KCM. These facts were presented in the London High Court in 2014.

“Given Vedanta’s dishonesty in the manner it managed KCM, Zambians do not believe it has enough moral and corporate responsibility to come back to operate KCM. It is

therefore shocking that Mr Hichilema and his UPND government are oblivious to all this.

“The suffering of our people on the Copperbelt is partly because of the very low contribution to taxes being made by the mining transnational corporations. Zambian workers have to be the burden bearers – collectively paying more taxes and higher electricity tariffs than the mining corporations.

“The mining corporations have been given tax holidays. Their mineral royalty payments have been made deductible in corporation tax computations, meaning mining transnational corporations will be paying very little corporation tax, if not nothing.

“Given the type of people hand-picked by Mr Hichilema to handle KCM, we will not be surprised if special purpose vehicles are set up to establish personal interests in this company.

“We can learn something from what happened in Panama this week where First Quantum Minerals has been given up to December 14, 2022 to sign a long-awaited contract that allows the company to keep running its flagship Cobre Panama copper mine.

“The end of the hold-off seemed very near in January, when First Quantum agreed to up its royalty payments for the giant Cobre Panama copper mine to US\$375 million a year.

“As part of that deal, the miner also accepted to give the government between 12 percent and 16 percent of its gross profit, which would replace the previous two percent revenue royalty.

“First Quantum also agreed to start paying 25 percent corporation tax, from which it was previously exempted until its investments in the mine were recovered.”



Fidel Castro, father of the Cuban revolution and the country’s leader from 1959 until 2008

## Lessons from the Cuban struggle

THERE are many lessons to be learned from the Cuban struggle against imperialism, Socialist Party southern province youth chairman Teinson Munsanje says.

“In our pursuit of solidarity and in a bid to create strong ties with youth engagements in other socialist states, we continue to involve all stakeholders,” he said following a meeting with the Ambassador of Cuba at the country’s embassy in Lusaka.

“We were privileged to learn about Cuba’s history and how Cubans have managed to stand strong despite all the sadistic sanctions imposed upon them by the United States, and how we can learn from their experience.

“This is a country with citizens willing to sacrifice their lives for what they believe in. Many people died for socialism in the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 as they attempted to finally free themselves from the grip of imperialism – just three years before we won our own independence.” Munsanje said much of the credit had to go

to Che Guevara, who continued to spread the messages of socialism and independence abroad even after Cuba gained its independence.

“It was a campaign he kept up until he was captured and executed by Bolivian soldiers, trained, equipped and guided by US Green Beret and CIA operatives in October 1967,” he said.

“What lay at the heart of the fighting spirit of Cubans was a willingness to die for what is right, for their sovereignty, their dignity, and the just cause of socialism.

“It may be different for us in this era, where no blood has to be shed for us to triumph, but there is still the question of how willing we are to risk everything for socialism.

“How ready are we to defend socialism and to reject distractions and temptations? May God give us the courage to fight smartly in our struggles.

“We continue on the trajectory of creating ever more connections and opportunities for our youths,” Munsanje said.

## Defence contracts must be cancelled

THE AWARDING of contracts to private transnational accounting firms to audit our defence forces points to an emerging pattern of the way Mr Hichilema and his UPND government does business, Socialist Party President Fred M’membe says.

Speaking at a press conference at the party secretariat in Lusaka, Dr M’membe said, “Foreign companies are given preference over local ones. Entities associated with the UPND top leadership seem to always get the favours. Laid-down tender procedures are cast aside systematically and with impunity.

“In the process of pushing such unacceptable practices, even critical national security concerns are blatantly ignored. This is very dangerous and totally unacceptable.

“The Socialist Party position is that this award must be cancelled. It is neither in the best interest of good governance nor the security of our country,” he said.

“Our defence forces, like all other aspects of Zam-

bian society, have not been spared from rampant corruption. Audits are indeed one way of accessing information that is urgently needed for remedial measures. Zambians are looking forward to the day when our defence forces and security wings become a good example of professionalism and uprightness.

“However, there are laid-down procedures for going about this task. Whatever the shortcomings of the current audit system are, the decision taken by Mr Hichilema and his UPND government does not help to strengthen the public audit system. It is essentially an act of mistrust in the capacity and integrity of the system.

“There is also a high cost associated with hiring international private audit firms. Yet the Auditor General’s Office currently needs significant investments in staff training, operational systems and infrastructure. Is this not tantamount to neglect of our own public institutions in preference for the business interests of private foreign firms?”

## Have no doubt that education will be our priority, says Bwalya

SOCIALIST Party Spokesperson Frank Bwalya says Zambians should not doubt the commitment of the party to prioritise education – especially youth education – upon forming a government.

“This is because the Socialist Party, under the revolutionary leadership of Comrade Fred M’membe, is the only party in Zambia that has been practising what it preaches in its manifesto regarding the value it places on education.

“The Socialist Party has been empowering Zambians through various local and international educational and training opportunities in agriculture, medicine, economics, entrepreneurship and literacy, to mention but a few areas of study.

“Similarly, the Socialist Party should be trusted to revolutionise the health sector in Zambia when it is in government. An example of the basis for this trust is the gesture of the party to secure scholarships for 16 young people who have been studying medicine in Venezuela.

“This unique gesture demonstrates how the Socialist Party in government will ensure that Zambian doctors and other health workers are well trained. But Dr M’membe and the party leadership know that it doesn’t make sense to have well-trained health workers in institutions without the required state-of-the-art equipment and facilities to do a good job. Hence, the party will also ensure that our health institutions are stocked with modern medical equipment to provide high-quality medical care and cut down the number of Zambians going abroad for treatment.

“To show that we are not politicking, this statement has been issued in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where I and another Socialist Party member, Comrade Grace Natasha Namunyola, have been attending a three-week course on agroecology and related trends in the global socio-economic landscape, sponsored by our party.

“This demonstrates the passion of the Socialist Party when it comes to agriculture because of its potential to create jobs and guarantee food security, thereby contributing to stimulating the economy.

“Upon our return, the party will expect us to share the knowledge we acquired with SP members and other Zambians.”

# UPND resorts to threats, intimidation and harassment

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media freedom they promised our people?”

Another case of violence against journalists involved the beating of Lovemore Phiri of Pasm FM in Petauke. He was attacked by UPND cadres during his breakfast radio programme when listeners were calling in on the topic of the distribution of fertilisers. Dr M’membe said his attackers were known but no arrests had been made.

“We need to counter threats of violence and crimes against journalists to protect freedom of expression for all,” Dr M’membe said. “Ending impunity for crimes against journalists is one of the most pressing issues to guarantee freedom of expression and access to information for all citizens.

“We mustn’t allow journalists to be beaten for reporting the news and bringing information to the public. And those who attack, assault journalists must not go unpunished.

“Only free journalists can be the vigilant watchdogs of the public interest against the temptation on the part of those who wield it to abuse that power.”

Dr M’membe said Socialist Party comrades were also being threatened and harassed by UPND operatives and attacked by the party’s cadres.

“There’s a systematic UPND harassment of our Northern Province chairperson Comrade Matilda Lungu (Mrs Makungo) and her husband Teddy Makungo.

“Since the ward by-election in Senga Hill, which we questionably lost by four votes, the UPND lead-

ership in Northern Province, including the provincial minister, has been trying to get our provincial chairperson defect to their party. But she has refused. Now they have resorted to threats, intimidation and harassment of our chairperson and her husband.

“Recently the UPND provincial leadership organised cadres to go and attack our chairperson and other Socialist Party leaders working with her in Mbala and Senga Hill. Quick intervention helped to avert the attacks.

“Now they have resorted to harassing the bus transport the husband has been running since 1995. They are interfering with loading of the buses, especially in Kasama.”

In another example of abuse of power and the Public Order Act, Dr M’membe described it as “shocking” that under Hakainde Hichilema’s UPND government the police

could summon a leader of an opposition political party – Harry Kalaba – for having lunch with nine or so members of his political party.

“What has happened to Mr Hichilema’s hatred for the Public Order Act? It would appear UPND’s opposition to the Public Order Act was out of self-interest and not out of a principled position.

## Hypocrisy

“They are busy taking all sorts of Bills to Parliament on matters that are of direct interest or benefit to them, but not the Public Order Act. This is because the Act doesn’t affect them anymore – they don’t need police permits to hold meetings anymore, and no police officer would dare arrest or summon a UPND member for

holding a meeting without a police permit. This is the hypocrisy, duplicity, selfishness and dishonesty of Mr Hichilema.

“Whatever the Public Order Act’s role in maintaining the rule of law, it is today serving as a tool to undermine the human rights that are essential to our multiparty political dispensation.

“The Act needs immediate repealing. And before it is repealed it needs very limited or restricted application or enforcement.”

Dr M’membe said the arrest of former PF State House key official Kaizar Zulu on retrospective charges for 2019 offences was another example of the vengeful abuse of power and “raises very serious questions about the lack of professionalism and integrity in our police and the entire criminal justice system”.

“If our police was professional and reasonably independent, Mr Zulu would have been arrested and prosecuted in 2019 and not today.

“The police couldn’t arrest and prosecute Mr Zulu when the PF was in power because, like many other ruling party leaders, cadres, members and supporters at the time, he was untouchable. Mr Zulu can only be arrested today in a manner that looks vindictive or vengeful.

Where is the independence, integrity and impartiality of our police and other law enforcement agencies? Why arrest, charge and detain Mr Zulu now?”

Dr M’membe said the action sent a dangerous signal “that our criminal justice system can be used to persecute and fix opponents of those in power”.



# FISP supply and distribution of fertiliser has been ‘a disaster’

## Confusion and cancellation of open tenders will lead to food insecurity

Socialist staff reporter

THE SUPPLY and distribution of fertiliser is a disaster, Socialist Party President Fred M’membe says.

“It is very clear that Mr Hakainde Hichilema and his UPND government have failed to deliver Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) fertiliser before the on-set of the rains. This is after all the promises to our poor people that fertilisers were on the way,” he said at a press conference held at the party secretariat in Lusaka.

“On September 7 this year, agriculture minister Mtolo Phiri assured the nation that fertiliser distribution would start at the beginning of October, but by the end of October distribution had still not started in earnest.

“Addressing a campaign rally for the November 4 Mkushi council chairperson by-election, Mr Hichilema announced that fertiliser was on the way. He emphasised that reports being circulated that there was no fertiliser in Mkushi were untrue because, “trucks of fertiliser are already on the way, and you will receive the fertiliser”, and he threatened to dismiss camp officers trying to mislead the farmers about fertiliser not being available or being delayed.

“Despite growing cries from our poor people about delays in fertiliser distribution, we didn’t want to rush and start commenting on this issue or harangue Mr Hichilema and his UPND government. This is not an issue for lurid, sensational attacks on Mr Hichilema and his UPND government. It’s too serious an issue to play political njuka, in-solo with.

### Patriots

“Socialists are patriots and we wish to see our country succeed and our people live better – with or without us. You will never see us gloat over national reserves, as Mr Hichilema and the UPND did when others were in government and they were in opposition. We wish to see the lives of our people improve, the economy grow and gain in strength. We do not look to defeat Mr Hichilema and the UPND in 2026 on the back of national failure, agriculture collapse. There will be sufficient grounds without that to argue for their removal.”

Dr M’membe said that although Mr Hichilema and the UPND looked strong and confident, very big problems lay ahead.

“Despite the excessive show of confidence, Mr Hichilema and his league don’t seem to know where they are headed and that is very dangerous. He appears to be in control, but no one knows where he is heading. He has not only failed to deliver fertiliser to our poor farmers, but also medicines to our clinics and hospitals for our sick citizens. Our agriculture and health services are in a shambles.

“Clearly, Mr Hichilema has failed to define the purpose of his government. He will in be judged in the end, not on what he says, but on what he does,” he said.

“They are too focused on becoming very rich, being the richest Zambians to really get a good appreciation of the fertiliser busi-

ness in Zambia and get an in-depth understanding of the outlook with regard to fertiliser supply, given the current global geopolitical tensions, COVID-19 pandemic, and the domestic macro-economic environment and challenges that the business is facing.

“If the factors that led to this failure to supply our poor people with fertilisers at the right time and in the needed quantities are not understood and resolved we will not see a reversal of fortunes in agriculture.

“There are serious problems of lack of transparency and predictability in the whole fertiliser supply business. There was a very serious lack of information by the Ministry of Agriculture on tenders for the 2022/23 farming season, and this has, to a very large extent, led to the delay and the many serious hurdles in securing fertilisers, especially in the current environment where the

suppliers are facing price volatility at source in the global market.

“At a minimum, suppliers need four months to secure and deliver fertiliser into the country. This government, without explanation, cancelled the open tenders at the end of August and “secretly” awarded tenders thereafter. Importers can only secure stocks of fertilisers after the government determines its requirements and the financing arrangements governing the programme.

“And offtake of fertiliser on the open market will be low this season given the prices – K1,200 for a 50 kg bag instead of the K250 per 50 kg bag they had promised our people – currently facing the users, and as such this speaks to lower procurement forecasts for the open market as well. The consequences of this don’t require much disquisition.

“If decisions were made in good time and tenders were awarded ac-

cordingly, the procurement of Urea may not have been as problematic as that of securing D-Compound. This required the government to award FISP tenders no later than June.”

Dr M’membe said there was too much “empty talk” by Mr Hichilema and his league for one to really know where they stand and what they are up to.

### Endless

“There have been endless and sometimes contradictory statements on FISP by government officials, who introduced some uncertainty in the fertiliser business, and this has not helped to instil confidence in the business community. For instance, there was no certainty on whether government was going to engage in business with existing fertiliser

companies or not. The intentions of this government weren’t officially communicated to the suppliers. As a result of this, today we have fertiliser suppliers who haven’t been awarded tenders with stocks in their warehouses. What should they do with them? Take them to DRC?

“There’s a need for transparency and fairness. FISP financing arrangements and decisions by government should be availed to would-be suppliers so that all can plan, and suppliers can bring in the fertiliser in good time. Suppliers should be informed in advance whether the bids are open or closed tender, as the two have implications for the entire procurement process and the time it will take. More so for parastatal suppliers like NCZ, which will need to abide by the ZPPA processes and which take more time.

“There’s also a need to broaden

the fertiliser options beyond the use of Urea as a top dresser and D-Compound as the basal dresser. These are not the only good options available. There are other fertilisers that can be used as efficiently and effectively as these, or even better.

“Again, to move forward and overcome the current inefficiencies, self-interest on the part of those leading government must disappear. They are not there to benefit themselves and their associates.

“Agriculture is the major source of livelihood for the great majority of our people – 54.8% of our workforce is deployed in agriculture. It cannot be run in such a cavalier way, premised on personal basis and patronage.

“Mr Hichilema and his league are creating the premise for food insecurity next year. More prudence and efficiency was expected from this government.”



Tools of the trade: bicycles used by teachers as part of the campaign; Socialist Party President Fred M’membe speaking at the launch of the second phase of the programme



## Ignorance, illiteracy incompatible with socialism

SOCIALIST Party President Fred M’membe made a speech at the Lusaka launch of the second phase of the party’s literacy and agroecology programme in which he said ignorance and illiteracy were incompatible with socialism.

This is a transcript of what he said:

“It is my pleasure to come to this school, named after our great revolutionary leader Chris Hani. Without Chris Hani, I would not be standing before you today. He shaped my outlook on the world. He trained me, nurtured me. He was not a Zambian, he was South African and I was Zambian. That’s how much we socialists are internationalist.

“This school is special in many ways. You are the first special people to come to this special school. Comrades, illiteracy is a big political issue. It is an important social issue. It is a great moral issue.

“In my faith, I believe one of the most important items in the Bible is found in John 1, the first verse of which says, “In the beginning there was the WORD”, and with that word many things were created.

“Without the ability to communicate effectively humanity would not be where it is today. Without the ability to communicate, to transfer your words to other people, for your words to be heard by other people, it would be impossible to have the civilisation we have today, and which we are hoping to improve upon in the future.

“One of the greatest achievements of humanity is the ability to read and write. Without being able to read and write, communication becomes very difficult. The sharing of knowledge, the sharing of information, becomes very difficult. Even our faith transmissions would be difficult. Without the ability to write and read there would be no Bible, and imagine how difficult it would have been to preach the gospel without the Bible. The Bible is a written document. Imagine if that document – the Bible – had no people to read it other than the people who wrote it. How difficult it would be to evangelise.

“For we revolutionaries it is the same. The good word of the revolution would be difficult to spread if people could not read and write. In the century that we live in, the 21st century, it becomes increasingly imperative that every human being on the planet can read and write. If you

can’t read and write, many things will be very difficult, and will pass you by. It will be a very difficult situation and your contributions to the development of society will be minimal.

“For us, this programme is the anchor of our struggle. We need a leadership in the Socialist Party that is enlightened, from the branches to the central committee. If you are unable to read and write you will be unable to understand the constitution of our party, the programmes of our party, the structures in the branches, wards, constituencies, districts, provinces and in the country, and also the direction the world is taking.

### Torture

“Unfortunately we still have so many of our fellow citizens in this country who cannot read and write. All of you who are here are able to read and write, but imagine if you were not able to, what would your life be? Then you would understand the difficulties, the torture some of our fellow citizens are going through, citizens who are not even able to send a

greeting on the phone to their family members, friends, and lovers. It is a very difficult situation.

“As I said, to us this programme is a political programme. We don’t have the capacity right now to reach every Zambian who is unable to read and write. The resources required are immense in terms of both human and financial capital. We don’t have those resources so we are limited for now to our party structures.

“We will not extend this programme much beyond the structures of our party. The first priority is our branches, wards, constituencies and our provincial structures. When we are satisfied, then the surplus can be given to others. The priority for now is to ensure that the leadership of our party, which is all our members, are leaders. They need to be enlightened, need to be able to read and write.

“Ignorance and illiteracy are incompatible with socialism. You can be a socialist if you are unable to read and write but it will be very difficult. We depend so much on being able to read and write to communicate with others, to receive the knowledge of others, to

impart the knowledge we have to others. We socialists believe that those who don’t know have a duty to learn, and those who know have a duty to teach. So if you are illiterate, you have a duty to learn to read and write. If you are able to read and write, you have a duty to teach those who don’t know how to. This principle is important to you, the coordinators of this programme.

“Our campaign would be very difficult if a great number of the members in our structures were unable to read and write. They would not be able to read the party constitution, manifesto, or the programmes of the party structures at various levels. They would not be able to communicate with others.

“We believe the highest political thought was reached when every human being, or some of our human beings, started to realise that the knowledge they had must reach all others. That is the essence of socialism.

“The knowledge we have should reach others. No human being has the right to be a lone wolf who keeps everything to him or herself. What we know must be shared with others.”



# New securities Bill allows theft of property akin to cattle rustling

## ‘Hitman’ approach will strike fear in the minds of capital market operators

Socialist staff reporter

SOCIALIST Party President Fred M’membe says the introduction of a new securities Bill allows for theft of other people’s property, the equivalent of “cattle rustling”.

“Mr Hichilema has said it is time for citizens and other stakeholders to open up and tell the government when there are things it is not doing well,” Dr M’membe said at a press conference at the party’s secretariat in Lusaka.

“We agree with him, and want to tell Mr Hichilema that his government is not respecting the constitutional rights of citizens, and that our democratic values are being trampled upon with impunity by institutions that are meant to foster social and economic development.

“Just look at the despicable way the recent by-elections have been conducted and the violence the UPND has unleashed on its opponents in them. To continuously use violence to win an election is in fact to rig an election.

“As Mr Hichilema surely knows, to achieve economic growth and improve livelihoods for the masses of our people, we need law and order and a stable social and legal environment. This is how countries like Singapore have succeeded.”

Dr M’membe said at issue was the introduction of the Securities (Amendment) Bill No 23 of 2022 among five others at a Cabinet Meeting in October presided over by President Hakainde Hichilema.

He said the Securities (Amendment) Bill No. 23 of 2022 was a clear indicator that Mr Hichilema intended “to abuse a state institution – the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) – to the benefit of himself and his friends. He cannot say that he was not aware of what was in the Bill”.

“Through Bills such as the Securities (Amendment) Bill, Mr Hichilema intends to undermine the Constitution and our democratic values to feed the insatiable and shameless greed of people who want to acquire other people’s property without paying a Ngwee.

### Criminal

“It is a known fact that Mr Hichilema is the majority shareholder in an organisation called Aflife Holdings Group. It seems that it is intended to augment the growth of the Aflife Group through the introduction of bad laws, which have criminal and unconstitutional foundations, to be implemented by a surrogate regulator and a weak board of directors, such as is the case with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

“It is strange that this Bill was not discussed with the stakeholders, nor was it referred to the Law Association of Zambia for its input. This has made it suspicious because why would government want to sneak this Bill into Parliament without consulting the concerned institutions and other stakeholders?

“As such, we take this oppor-



Socialist Party President Fred M’membe flanked by General Secretary and First Vice-President Cosmas Musheke Musumali (left) and national spokesperson Frank Bwalya at the press conference held at the party secretariat in Lusaka

tunity to thank the courageous stakeholders who made submissions against the Bill. We particularly thank Lusaka Securities for articulating and making well-informed submissions on it.

“In introducing the Securities (Amendment) Bill, an attempt was made to hoodwink the nation into believing that it is for the purpose of enabling the Securities and Exchange Commission to efficiently and effectively supervise capital market operators, especially in combating money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, but the purpose of this Bill is frightening and much more sinister.

“In Clauses 19(B)(2)(a), 19(B)(4)(d) and 19(B)(4)(e) the Bill aims to:

1. Provide for the SEC to take possession of a capital market operator,
2. Run the affairs of a capital market operator, and,
3. Transfer all or part of the capital market operator’s business to another capital market operator.

“Surely, these provisions are draconian and run counter to what is provided for in the Constitution. Quite clearly, this Bill aims to legalise the theft of a capital market operator’s business.”

Dr M’membe said the Constitution provided for the protection of the proprietary rights of individuals. “If those rights must be taken away for any reason, there is a due process that must be followed, which includes making representations to a court for a defence before persons can lose their property. This has been trampled upon in this Bill.

“The role of the regulator is to supervise capital market operators and not to run their businesses, and when capital market operators are found to be weak, the regulator should look for ways of enhancing compliance to bring them back to good health. Instead, the Bill focuses on shutting down such operators with impunity.

“How can the regulator be given statutory authority to take over and run a capital market op-

erator’s business and, if he wishes, transfer it to someone else or completely sell its assets without capital market operators having the right of a stay of an action brought against them to enable the operators to challenge the matter and defend themselves in a court of law? Has the regulator got infinite knowledge of how to run every type of business run by capital market operators? Surely, we are seeing signs of a dictatorship establishing itself in Zambia.

“The provisions in the Bill seem to target certain capital market operators for a hostile takeover to the benefit of the friends of those in power, and we are sure that capital market operators such as Standard Chartered Bank, Zambef and others must be extremely nervous.”

Dr M’membe asked how a Bill that promoted oppression and corruption could become law.

“We are convinced that this law was mooted only for the purpose of stealing the businesses and assets of targeted capital market operators,” he said.

### Immunity

“For the evil that is intended, the Bill provides for the Capital Market Tribunal and for the Securities and Exchange Commission to be given immunity for what they do or for what they fail to do. Which court or regulator has such immunity in Zambia? All courts are subject to complaints before the Judicial Complaints Commission. However, the nation through Parliament is being asked to exempt the Capital Markets Tribunal from the balancing effect and protection the Judicial Complaints Commission can give. What crimes are the Capital Markets Tribunal poised to commit?

“We understand that a number of capital market operators took out actions against the SEC before the Capital Markets Tribunal. We believe that the intention of giving the Tribunal immunity is so that it can make bad decisions at the command of the regulator in cases

**Mr Hichilema boasted he would raise the bar when he came into office. Is promoting a thieving Bill such as the Securities (Amendment) Bill raising the bar? Surely, this Bill has demonstrated what kind of leader Mr Hichilema is . . . If (he) is not put in check we will find that our national wealth, and that of citizens, is stolen by his friends**

before the Tribunal. The cases before the Tribunal have compelling evidence against the regulator. However, in the current situation, we doubt that anyone can win a case against the SEC, no matter how compelling the evidence is. “We also believe that the intention of giving immunity to the regulator is because the regulator at the Securities and Exchange Commission is being set up as the Thief-in-Chief for the benefit of certain business people.

“Mr Hichilema boasted he would raise the bar when he came into office. Is promoting a thieving Bill such as the Securities (Amendment) Bill raising the bar? Surely, this Bill has demonstrated what kind of leader Mr Hichilema is.

“If Mr Hichilema is not put in check we will find that our national wealth, and that of citizens, is stolen by his friends.

“For this reason, we want to announce that all transactions that will not be in the best interest of the nation during Mr Hichilema’s term of office will be reversed when we come into office. The Socialist Party will not hesitate to give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar!”

Dr M’membe said many Zambians had left the country to do business elsewhere because of the bad culture that is against successful business people in Zambia.

“When Mr Hichilema was elected into office, it was hoped that Zambian business people in the diaspora would come back and play a role in building a strong private sector of our economy. But look at what they did to James Ndambo not so long ago. Is it safe for Zambians to do big business in the country? Will Zambians feel encouraged to list their businesses on the Lusaka Securities Exchange? Only a crazy person can ever consider listing on the LuSE when bad laws like the Securities (Amendment) Bill are contemplated,” he said.

“We want to make it very clear that we want Mr Hichilema to succeed during his term in office, provided that his success will be to the benefit of Zambians and not for himself and his friends only.

“Accordingly, we have decided to notify the International Monetary Fund and the African Union about the Securities (Amendment) Bill No. 23, 2022 so they can help Mr Hichilema abandon his shameful intentions as exhibited in the Bill. Mr Hichilema must be subjected to the Peer Review mechanism.

### Benefit

“We want leaders in the SADC and COMESA region to know about the Bill Mr Hichilema sent to Parliament. We also want the youths in Zambia to wake up and know about the plans the UPND leadership is making to steal people’s businesses and assets by using an evil legal instrument.

“We are also hereby notifying Transparency International about the bad intentions of the Securities (Amendment) Bill, which they must study and comment on.

“We encourage Mr Hichilema to practise true servant leadership and not to sneak into Parliament evil amendment bills to his benefit and that of his friends. Instead of targeting the businesses of local people through Clause 19(B) in the Securities (Amendment) Bill, we encourage him to assist local business people to become stronger so they can create jobs and wealth and in so doing assist the

national economy to grow firmly, strongly and rapidly.

“We also encourage Mr Hichilema to strengthen governance at the Securities and Exchange Commission.”

Dr M’membe said a keen interest had been taken in the cases before the Capital Markets Tribunal.

“From these cases the regulator impresses us that he may be an economic hitman and has inculcated fear and concern in the minds of capital market operators. We see that he has brought disrespect to the office of the regulator to the extent that the capital markets integrity is in question, especially that he is highly conflicted in his personal dealings. Also the regulator seems to be tainted with corruption.

“We note that by certain of his actions, the regulator has in fact already facilitated the illegal transfer of business from some capital market operators to their competitors without any compensation being paid. This smells of corruption.

“We also note that it seems that the SEC’s Board of Directors is so weak that it is unable to control the conduct of its regulator.

“We further note that the Capital Market Tribunal is appointed by the Ministry of Finance, which is also the supervisor of the Securities and Exchange Commission. This is poor governance and it is obvious that the Capital Market Tribunal is not independent. Therefore, we demand that:

● First, someone other than the controlling ministry should appoint a tribunal in Zambia, and we propose that the Chief Justice should appoint all tribunals in Zambia. This will make them independent. Cases before the tribunal should not be for academic interest only.

● Second, the SEC’s Board of Directors should be dissolved immediately so that a more credible board can be appointed.

● Third, the current regulator at the SEC should be immediately dismissed and a professional person capable of properly supervising and regulating the capital market on the basis of the Securities Act be appointed for the capital market to grow.

● Further, we encourage the Capital Market Tribunal to be courageous and professional and dispose of the cases before it transparently and without fear or favour.

● Also, we encourage the President to protect those regulated to ensure that no one should use the law to settle scores with those they regulate, or enrich themselves at the expense of the governed capital market operators. As such, let us recognise that it is constitutionally wrong to target capital market operators with bogus forensic audits for the purpose of witch-hunting to find contrived cases against innocent business people as the Securities and Exchange Commission is attempting to do.

“In ending, we invite Mr Hichilema to ensure that the primitive culture of stealing other people’s property, which is akin to cattle rustling, is completely abandoned during his tenure of office.”





Socialist Party President Fred M'membe:  
There's too much rhetoric and posturing about  
current agricultural programmes

## My revolutionary work is driven by ethical values

THE ETHICAL values that have propelled my revolutionary, socialist work came from my Catholic upbringing and education, from my teachers – the Capuchin Fathers, the Irish Christian Brothers, and Sacred Heart Brothers. I would even say from my Christian family home.

I was taught very early in my life that I should not lie. I was taught what was right and wrong, things that should and should not be done.

I remember being punished by my Form 1 mathematics teacher at St John's Secondary School to write 3,000 times, "Oh what a web we weave for ourselves when we first practise to deceive".

I had not done my homework and when asked about it, I lied that I had left it in the dormitory. I was told to go and get it. And immediately after I left classroom, the teacher told the class I was not going to come back with any homework. He asked for a bet on it. When I came back empty-handed, the whole class burst into laughter.

I have carried these words and memories of that day with me wherever I am and in whatever I do. And I remind my classmates of this incident whenever we meet. That was my baptism out of lying.

Later on, my revolutionary and political involvement began to create in me a feeling of what was wrong, the violation of an ethical standard, an injustice, abuse or fraud. I began to have an idea of what was fair and unfair. I began to have a concept of personal dignity. I think I have always had a sense of justice – from very early on – because of what I saw and experienced.

Undoubtedly, my Catholic upbringing and education influenced me a lot. The Capuchin Fathers, the Irish Christian Brothers, and Sacred Heart Brothers inculcated a very strong sense of personal dignity in me, regardless of their political ideas, which quite often I didn't agree with. They valued character, rectitude, honesty, courage and ability to make sacrifices.

The Irish Christian Brothers definitely influenced me with their strict organisation, their discipline and their values. They contributed to my development and sense of justice. Following that path, I came to view abuse, injustice as unacceptable.

If you mix ethical values with a spirit of rebellion and rejection of injustice, you begin to appreciate and place a high value on a number of things that other people don't value at all. A sense of personal dignity, honour, and duty form the main foundation that enables people to acquire political consciousness and a revolutionary spirit.

## Poverty, morality, legality

I WAS in Miami for the annual conference of the International Bar Association recently and enjoyed listening to Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley, SC.

She was contributing to an International Bar Association's Poverty and Social Development Committee's session on "Champion poverty alleviation through taking the highroad; a lawyer's path to alleviating poverty while practising law with a high moral conscience" via video connection.

Prime Minister Mottley urged fellow lawyers to take an holistic approach when addressing global challenges.

"All lawyers have come to a place of reckoning . . . forced to contemplate the ways in which legality and morality intersect and, more importantly, where they deviate," she said.

"As human beings, we have a moral duty to help each other and in so doing we make a positive impact on the world in which we live. In this era of catastrophe after catastrophe . . . as it stands there is no version of our future where the poorest and most vulnerable among us will not be disproportionately affected. This is not fair."

Prime Minister Mottley commended the International Bar Association for the formalisation of a committee where it explicitly recognised poverty alleviation as a goal.

"It already demonstrates an ideological understanding of our roles as global citizens and social engineers," Prime Minister Mottley said.

## Agriculture offers growth

AGRICULTURE offers us the highest growth potential, but our agricultural programmes don't seem to be focused and well prioritised.

There's too much rhetoric, posturing with no much substance or clarity. With the right approach and programmes we can grow up to as much as 50 percent of the current GDP from agriculture.

Today, although 54.8 percent of our workforce is deployed in agriculture, the sector only accounts for 7.5 percent of our GDP. Industry, in which we have deployed only 9.9 percent of our workforce, is making a contribution of 35.3 percent to our GDP. And 35.3 percent of our workforce which, is deployed in services, is producing 57.2 percent of our GDP.

The contribution of agriculture – in which we have deployed most of our workforce – to GDP is dismally too low to make a meaningful contribution to poverty reduction or eradication.

## We will dethrone Mammon

THE GROWTH of our national wealth, instead of bringing comfort to the masses of our people is imposing additional burdens on them.

At the bottom of the scale there's mass poverty and misery. The true test of progress is not the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few – the President and his associates – but the elevation of a people as a whole.

Zambians know to their cost the danger that comes from allowing a few people to grow rich and permitting them to use their wealth to degrade our national life and bring reproach and shame upon all of us, in order that a few unscrupulous scoundrels might be able to add to their ill-gotten gains, become millionaires, or even billionaires.

We are called upon as a nation to decide the question propounded in the Sermon on the Mount as to whether we will worship God or Mammon.

Our programme proposes to dethrone the brutal god Mammon and lift our people into its place.

## The honeymoon is over

WHY are you sighing Mr Boastful, Mr Promiser, Mr Liar?

Why don't you let us be?

Can't you see that the honeymoon is over?

Why do you keep on boasting?

Why do you keep on making promises you'll never be able to fulfil?

Why do you keep on lying?

Can't you see that the honeymoon is over?

Why keep on boasting, promising, lying?

Don't you know that the truth can never hide Don't you know that a dream only lasts while you sleep

But now all are wide awake

Wake up for heaven's sake!

Can't you see that the honeymoon is over?

Can't you see that no one is ready to take your lies any more?

The honeymoon is over, over, over . . .

## Imperialism and villains

"OUR battle of ideas will not cease as long as the current imperialist, hegemonic and unipolar system is still in place and remains a scourge of humanity and a mortal threat to the survival of our species.

"They cannot kill ideas, but they kill the men who embody those ideas! They cannot buy a true revolutionary, but they buy as many traitors and villains as there are in the world, and they have them recruited!"

*Fidel Castro*

## We must respect diversity

THE fundamental value we must have is a respect for diversity and acceptance of pluralism.

Gone are the days when everyone was supposed to think the same way, belong to the same political party, and support the same programme and leader.

This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless it's a good place for all of us to live in.

# TAZARA is much more than just a railway to us

## It is a symbol of our links with China

**Fred M'membe**

Socialist Party President

CHINA should always have a very important strategic position in Zambia's international relations. And in our relationship with China, the Tanzania-Zambia Railway is an economic infrastructure of great historical, moral and political significance.

In today's world, propelled by imperialist lies and propaganda, the history, purpose, and importance of this railway should be explained to our people, especially the younger generations, to help them understand China's altruistic motives for its aid to us and other African countries. It should also help expose imperialist lies about so-called Chinese colonialism in Africa.

The earliest idea of building the Tanzania-Zambia Railway can be traced back to the British colonial era. At the end of the 19th century, the British imperialist or colonialist Cecil John Rhodes put forward a plan to build a "2C" railway running through the north and south of Africa, which was the earliest idea for the TAZARA Railway.

Due to two world wars and also for other reasons, the "2C" railway project fell silent for nearly 50 years. In the late 1940s, the United Kingdom began to renew its interest in the TAZARA Railway, led by the British Colonial Office and jointly funded by the United Kingdom and the United States. The initial survey was carried out in 1952. The survey report said that from the perspective of engineering construction, the project did not have any obvious difficulties and could definitely be revitalised. But, "Unless the necessary development is carried out in the area along the railway, the railway will not be worth building," it said. The British did not immediately take any further action out of a motivation to divide and control the colonies and consolidate the original ruling order.

In the 1960s, African national liberation movements brought the issue of independence to a climax. Tanzania and Zambia gained independence in 1961 and 1964, respectively. After the independence of the two countries, they not only faced the historical task of developing their national economies and consolidating the achievements of independence, but also of continuing to fight against the remnants of colonialism and realise the final independence of the whole of Africa.

It was under these circumstances that the plan to build the railway was put back on the agenda. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had high hopes for it and believed that "when the railway is completed, not only Zambia will benefit, but Tanzania will also benefit . . . not only that, the whole of Africa will benefit from this railway". It was believed that the railway would strengthen Zambia, which in turn would strengthen the power of freedom, and trade among African countries would become more convenient.

As a landlocked, or rather land-



More than 50,000 Chinese workers helped build the TAZARA railway, 70 of whom sacrificed their lives

linked country, Zambia was facing a more severe situation. Copper mines were its pillar industry. It was believed that if you controlled the passage of copper to the sea, you would control Zambia. Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda envisioned before independence to find another railway leading to the Indian Ocean besides the Rhodesian one. This railway would start in the central part of northern Zambia, go around Kapiri Mposhi, pass through the newly independent Tanzania, and finally reach the Indian Ocean. At the end of October 1970, the construction of TAZARA – a landmark project of China's solidarity with Africa – officially began.

In the 1960s, when the two countries were repeatedly denied loans from the West to support the project, they turned their hopes to China. But due to the large amount of financial investment required, there were initial doubts within the Communist Party of China's Central Committee about whether China could manage to provide the required assistance. However, Premier Zhou Enlai – who established China's new foreign aid work – stressed that it was China's inescapable internationalist duty to assist African countries.

## Liberation

According to Zhou, "Concentrating efforts to aid the construction of such a large project will not only be of great significance to the two countries of Tanzania and Zambia, but will also play an important role in supporting the liberation of southern Africa." The railway could help landlocked Zambia access the Indian Ocean, facilitate trade between African countries, and weaken colonialist and imperialist control.

At the decision-making stage, Zhou diligently studied the aid plan with Minister of Railways Lu Zhengcao and affirmed China's position to Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere. "After the railroad is completed, sovereignty will belong to you and Zambia," he said, adding, "We will also teach you about the technology."

China's positive stance, unlike that of the West, eventually led to an agreement in principle. During the construction phase, Zhou also relied on several years of domestic railway construction experience to solve various challenges in railroad exploration, construction, and loan repayment schemes, which ensured the project's smooth progress.

TAZARA took six years to complete, with China sending more than 50,000 workers, 70 of whom sacrificed their lives. China's support for the railway's construction not only countered doubts about the country's strength and technological capability, but also helped gain firm political support from African countries. Today, TAZARA is a landmark project of China's aid to Tanzania, Zambia and Africa in general. Starting by supporting the national liberation movements and promoting friendly cooperation between China and Africa, Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai resolutely decided to aid in the construction of TAZARA when Tanzania and Zambia's pleas for help were repeatedly rejected by the West.

Zhou Enlai played a key role in the decision-making process of aiding the construction of TAZARA. He not only listened to the opinions of relevant departments and carried out administrative mobilisation, but also provided decision-making information for Chairman Mao and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He not only had to develop in-depth contacts with Tanzania, but also work with Zambian leaders. At the stage of railway construction, in order to make the railway meet the requirements of Tanzania and Zambia, Zhou Enlai instructed the Ministry of Railways to send elite soldiers and generals to conduct surveys. At key points of the negotiations between the three countries, he presided over the overcoming of technical difficulties, raised domestic forces to support the railway construction and strengthened foreign aid workers' education. TAZARA was therefore not only a railway to freedom for African national independence and development, but also a historical monument to China-Africa friendship.

TAZARA is therefore more than just a railway to us. It is an emotional, moral and great symbol of our friendship with China, built on the immense sweat of more than 50,000 Chinese workers, the supreme sacrifice by 70 Chinese workers who lost their lives, and the immeasurable efforts of Chinese leaders like Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai, among others. This should never be forgotten, and for these reasons all effort must be made to revitalise and modernise TAZARA and put it to the most efficient, effective, and orderly use. It must be an important part of today's Belt and Road Initiative.



# Youth must stand again

International Youth and Students for Social Equality is calling on youth throughout the world to build a mass movement in a common fight to stop the Ukraine war. The campaign will be launched with a global webinar on December 10 combined with a coordinated series of meetings and other activities in countries throughout the world. Below is IYSSE's statement . . .

INTERNATIONAL Youth and Students for Social Equality – the student and youth movement of the Socialist Equality Parties, the national sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International – is calling for the building of a mass global movement of young people to demand an immediate end to the US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine and the reckless escalation toward World War III.

The war must be stopped before it results in a global catastrophe. The interaction of NATO's imperialist militarism, recklessly pursuing its global geopolitical agenda whatever the consequences, and the increasing desperation of Russia's oligarchic capitalist regime threatens to escalate into a nuclear conflagration.

The hope that "reason will prevail" and the war will soon be brought to a negotiated conclusion is a politically paralysing and dangerous delusion. NATO does not want peace. It wants war. Having deliberately provoked the conflict through decades of NATO expansion toward Russia's borders and the massive arming of its corrupt satellite regime in Kiev, the imperialist powers are determined to exploit the Kremlin's miscalculated, politically reactionary and disastrous invasion of Ukraine to the hilt.

Believing that a military victory over Russia is possible, NATO is brushing aside all Russian "red lines". For most of the post-World War II era – and particularly after the development of hydrogen bombs in the 1950s – the realisation that nuclear war threatened the extinction of human civilisation led to the political conclusion that nuclear weapons would never be used because there could be no winners in such a conflict. The doctrine of "Mutually Assured Destruction" (MAD) was an operative military principle.

But the principle that a nuclear war is unwinnable and could be started only by madmen has been repudiated. Despite the probability that nuclear war will result in societal annihilation, MAD has been replaced by the criminally insane doctrine of "SO WHAT". When the US and the NATO powers publicly broadcast that they will not be "intimidated" by the possibility of nuclear war, they mean that their policies and actions will not be restrained even by the danger of a nuclear catastrophe.

To understand the scale of the present danger, the experiences of the past must be recalled. There is no barbarism of which the ruling class, in pursuit of global power, corporate



Above, clockwise from left: French soldiers in a trench at Verdun; Lenin addressing a crowd during the Russian Revolution of 1917; US soldiers at the Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase; founder of the Fourth International; German Jews being forced to scrub off anti-Jewish slogans put there by Nazi stormtroopers; A government building burns during heavy bombing

profits, and personal wealth, is not fully capable.

Imperialism emerged in the early 20th century with the development of massive industrial corporations and the gigantic growth of international banks and finance capital. Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America were subjected to the tyranny of colonialism. The major powers vied for a dominant position in the struggle for control of markets, raw materials and labour. The outcome of this struggle was global warfare on a scale, and with a level of violence, unprecedented in human history.

World War I, which erupted in 1914, resulted in the death of more than 20 million people. Imperialism introduced the world to the horrors of trench warfare and poison gas and the murderous technical innovations of aerial bombardments, submarines armed with torpedoes, and tanks.

But the horrors of that global conflict proved merely a prelude to the barbarism of World War II, which began in 1939, only 21 years after the end of the First World War. The Second World War witnessed, as a matter of official and deliberate policy, the mass extermination of civilian populations. This included the industrialised genocide of the Holocaust and the fire-bombing of major cities (Dresden and Hamburg in Germany, Tokyo in Japan), and culminated in the dropping of atomic bombs by the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

## Armageddon

The scale of death virtually defied comprehension. The death toll is estimated at up to 85 million human beings, including six million Jews, an estimated 27 million citizens of the Soviet Union, and 20 million Chinese.

Now, in the third decade of the 21st century, there is a mad drive toward a third global conflagration involving the use of nuclear weapons, which would lead to the deaths of not tens of millions, but hundreds of millions, and possibly even billions of people. The president of the United States, even as he acknowledged that the war could result in "Armageddon", has continued and intensified the escalation of the conflict.

With the US-NATO war against Russia, imperialism has served notice that an even greater conflagration is being prepared. In documents published in October this year outlining the strategic aims of US imperialism, the Biden administration

bluntly acknowledged that the conflict in Ukraine is merely a prelude to a confrontation with China.

Last August, when Biden announced the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, he said that it was the end of the "forever war". Now the US is engaged in a war that could end life forever.

Anyone who believes that the ruling class is not prepared to sacrifice tens of millions of lives in the pursuit of its geopolitical interests need only consider the experience of the past two-and-a-half years. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the corporate and financial oligarchy rejected the most basic public health measures required to contain the spread of the virus because they impinged on profits. More than 20 million people died as a result, more than one million of them in the United States.

All the justifications given by the imperialist governments prosecuting this war stink of lies and hypocrisy. The causes and interests that led to the outbreak of war in Ukraine cannot be understood if the conflict is viewed as an isolated episode, unrelated to events that preceded the date of the Russian invasion and apart from a broader historical context. Responsibility for war cannot be determined by identifying who "fired the first shot". Even more absurd are attempts to explain war as the outcome of the actions of single individuals. All the wars waged by the United States over the last three decades have been justified as moral crusades against one or another "monster"; Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia, Bashar al-Assad in Syria, Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, etc. The latest "monster" is Vladimir Putin, and new devils will be found as the geopolitical need arises. The demonisation of China's Xi Jinping is already well under way.

The United States and its NATO allies are waging an imperialist war

The propaganda campaigns against one or another individual political leader explain nothing about the origins of wars waged by imperialism, let alone the cause of the present conflict in Ukraine.

The proxy war being waged by the United States and its NATO allies is, in its economic and geopolitical essence, imperialist. The United States and NATO could not care less about democracy in Ukraine or the fate of the Ukrainian people, who are being used as cannon fodder. Like World War I and World War II, the fundamental purpose of the

war is to reorganise the globe and redistribute its resources among the imperialist powers.

The US-NATO war in Ukraine is the continuation and escalation to a new and more dangerous level of the wars instigated by the United States over the last three decades. Seeking to reverse American capitalism's long-term economic decline and suppress mounting internal tensions, the US ruling class views war and the achievement of global hegemony as the only solution to its problems. Its militaristic rampage is vindicating Leon Trotsky's prophetic analysis on the eve of World War II of the historic trajectory of American imperialism: The world is divided? It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of "organising Europe". The United States must "organise" the world. History is bringing humanity face to face with the volcanic eruption of American imperialism.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States has viewed the incorporation of Ukraine into NATO's sphere of influence as an essential element of its long-term objectives of dismantling Russia, gaining unrestricted access to the country's vast supply of strategic resources, obtaining decisive control over the Eurasian landmass, and, on this basis, eventually destroying China's ability to challenge the global hegemony of American imperialism. There are countless US government documents and strategic analyses by imperialist think tanks, accessible online, in which these criminal objectives are bluntly stated.

The US and the NATO powers provoked the invasion by the massive military armament of Ukraine, which has been transformed into a virtual protectorate of the US, a member of NATO in all but name. This is part of a decades-long expansion of the NATO military alliance into Eastern Europe, up to the very borders of Russia.

In denouncing Russia, the US and NATO issue many solemn declarations about the sanctity of state borders, the charter of the United Nations and Ukraine's right to "self-determination". No such concerns were raised when the US and European powers dismembered Yugoslavia in the 1990s, culminating in the war against Serbia in 1999. The United States is the world's foremost violator of the principle of "self-determination", intervening in, bombing, and invading countries as required by its own geopolitical

and economic interests. The US military pioneered the use of the term "shock and awe" to describe the second war against Iraq in 2003, launched on the basis of lies, which killed hundreds of thousands of people and destroyed an entire society.

In the wars of American imperialism – including Afghanistan (2001), Libya (2011) and Syria (2011), in addition to Yugoslavia and Iraq – more than 1 million people have been killed and tens of millions have become refugees. As part of the "war on terror", terms such as "enhanced interrogation", "Abu Ghraib", "rendition", "waterboarding", "Guantanamo Bay", "drone assassination" and "Terror Tuesdays" entered the global lexicon. As a US senator, the current occupant of the White House, Biden, voted for all of these wars.

Washington's professed concern for "democracy" is no less hypocritical and deceitful. The government in Kiev was installed by a US-backed regime-change operation in 2014 and represents a Ukrainian oligarchy that is trampling on the rights of the working class. It is allied with and promotes far-right and fascist organisations, including the Azov Battalion, which traces its origins to the mass murderer Stepan Bandera and the Nazi collaborators in Ukraine during World War II.

## Dictatorship

And while the Biden administration justifies its wars abroad by invoking a global struggle for "democracy" against dictatorship, a war against democracy is being waged by the US ruling class at home. The democratic system within the United States is teetering on the brink of collapse. Biden himself has publicly warned it is possible that the existing constitutional system will not survive the decade. Fascism has infected American politics. It is just under two years since Trump's attempt, on January 6, 2021, to establish a presidential dictatorship came very close to succeeding.

The transformation of the Republican Party into a semi-fascist organisation is bound up with a global growth of the far right, from the government headed by Giorgia Meloni, an admirer of Mussolini, in Italy, to the Rassemblement National of Marine Le Pen in France, to the party of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil.

Along with the breakdown of democracy and the resurgence of fascism, there is an open glorification



## NATO's Eastern Flank: STRONGER DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE

40,000 TROOPS UNDER DIRECT NATO COMMAND  
100,000 US TROOPS DEPLOYED TO EUROPE

130 ALLIED AIRCRAFT AT HIGH ALERT  
140 ALLIED SHIPS AT SEA



JUNE 2022

All numbers indicative



# Against US-NATO proxy war



in Romania; Supporters of far-right parties carry torches and a banner with a portrait of Stepan Bandera during a rally in Kiev, Ukraine; Right, clockwise from left: Leon Trotsky, bombardment of Baghdad, Iraq, by US-led forces, 2003; A food line in the USSR, 1991; Centre: A graphic created by NATO showing the alliance's "eastern flank" (zoom in PDF to enlarge)

**The war must be stopped before it results in a global catastrophe. The interaction of NATO's imperialist militarism, recklessly pursuing its global geopolitical agenda whatever the consequences, and the increasing desperation of Russia's oligarchic capitalist regime threatens to escalate into a nuclear conflagration**

and youth of Russia and Eastern Europe were told that this would usher in a new period of prosperity and peace. Nothing of the sort occurred. Not only did the looting of state assets by the apparatchiks-turned-oligarchs lead to a massive decline in living standards and life expectancy, but Russia now finds itself encircled by imperialism. The invasion of Ukraine was a desperate and disastrously miscalculated effort to pressure the United States to make concessions to the "security interests" of Russia – that is, to the right of the oligarchs to plunder the vast resources of the country without excessive interference by the imperialist powers.

It is no doubt true that Russia confronts an existential threat from the US and NATO. But it was the dissolution of the Soviet Union and restoration of capitalism that placed Russia on the imperialist chopping block. Putin seeks to counter this threat by invoking the reactionary, mystical nationalism of tsarist "Holy Russia". In vain. Statecraft and diplomacy inspired by tsarist Russia, overthrown in 1917, can hardly serve as a model for foreign policy in 2022.

Putin has explicitly and repeatedly blamed the October Revolution and the Bolshevik regime led by Lenin and Trotsky for creating the foundations of a modern Ukraine independent of Russia. What Putin, a Russian chauvinist and anti-socialist, despises is that the USSR was founded in 1922, five years after the revolution, as a voluntary union of socialist republics. The Soviet Union, based on work-

ers' power, was deeply committed to the defence of the democratic and national rights of all the nationalities that had been oppressed by the tsarist regime. The bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Union, personified in Stalin's rise to power, found particularly acute expression in the violation and suppression of the legitimate democratic aspirations of the national minorities within the USSR. The national chauvinism of the present Russian government is rooted historically, not only in the reactionary traditions of tsarism, but in those of Stalinism as well.

The IYSSE, true to the traditions of revolutionary Marxism and socialist internationalism, rejects all justifications for war based on the obsolete concept of "national defence". Our position applies to both Russia and Ukraine. We are for the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers against the war policies of Putin and Zelensky. In opposing the reactionary chauvinism of both regimes, we draw attention to the words of Trotsky: Were the present national state to represent a progressive factor, it would have to be defended irrespective of its political form and, of course, regardless of who "started" the war first. It is absurd to confuse the question of the historic function of the national state with the question of the "guilt" of a given government.

## Reactionary

Can one refuse to save a house suited for habitation just because the fire started through carelessness or through evil intent of the owner? But here it is precisely a case of the given house being fit not for living but merely for dying. To enable the peoples to live, the structure of the national state must be razed to its foundations.

A "socialist" who preaches national defence is a petty-bourgeois reactionary at the service of decaying capitalism. Not to bind itself to the national state in time of war, to follow not the war map but the map of the class struggle, is possible only for that party that has already declared irreconcilable war on the national state in time of peace. Only by realising fully the objectively reactionary role of the imperialist state can the proletarian vanguard become invulnerable to all types of social patriotism. This means that a real break with the ideology and policy of "national defence" is possible only from the standpoint of the international proletarian revolu-

tion. [War and the Fourth International, 1934].

Young people embody and represent the hope and promise of the future. But in reckless pursuit of economic and geopolitical objectives, capitalism is placing the very survival of humanity at risk. Four hundred years ago, Shakespeare's Hamlet posed the fundamental existential question: "To be or not to be?" In the present-day world, this question is raised not as a matter of philosophical speculation, but rather as the supreme political challenge confronting mankind. In addition to the danger of nuclear war, climate change and future pandemics threaten the lives of hundreds of millions of people in the coming decades. The working class must put an end to capitalism before capitalism puts an end to the world.

International Youth and Students for Social Equality advances the following strategic principles as the basis for building a powerful movement against the war in Ukraine and its escalation toward a nuclear third world war.

War will be stopped not by appeals and protests directed to the ruling class and its governments, but through the political mobilisation of the international working class. The working class, whose exploitation is the source of all profit, constitutes the vast majority of the world's people. It has no interest in war. It is workers, and particularly young workers, who will serve as the cannon fodder in a new world war.

The war has already produced a massive decline in the living standards of workers throughout the world, contributing to soaring inflation, which is leaving workers unable to pay for basic necessities. The crisis created by the collapse in living standards has led to a global surge of the class struggle in the US, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa.

While it spends trillions of dollars every year on the instruments of war, the ruling class claims that no money is available to fund social programmes critical to the working class, including public education, or to pay decent wages and provide healthcare. The escalation of war is inevitably accompanied by the impoverishment of ever-broader layers of the working class.

IYSSE denounces all those organisations that fraudulently claim to be socialist while serving as the most adamant supporters of US and NATO imperialism, from the Democratic Socialists of America in the

US, to the Greens and Left Party in Germany, to Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain.

Under the false and reactionary slogan of defending "Ukrainian sovereignty", these groups have criticised the US and NATO powers not for arming Ukraine to the teeth and fighting a proxy war against Russia, but for not providing enough arms. For decades, the organisations of the pseudo-left have promoted the politics of racial and gender division, particularly on the campuses, to divide the working class while aiding the upper-middle-class social layers for which they speak in their scramble to secure positions and wealth. Now they are exposing themselves as open supporters of imperialism.

As for the trade union bureaucracies, the so-called "labour movement", staffed by thousands of upper-middle-class functionaries, their support for war is the flip side of their hostility to the working class and their role as instruments of corporate management.

IYSSE rejects the reactionary programme of "national defence" for two fundamental reasons.

First, the national state is an historical anachronism, incompatible with the development of an integrated and interdependent global economy. It places a straitjacket on the development of the productive forces and their peaceful and productive utilisation by all humanity.

Secondly, appeals to "national unity" are based on the denial that all national states are wracked by class conflict, with all power in the hands of the capitalist elites who control governments and utilise state power to advance their economic interests. The foreign policy pursued by the imperialist states – the relentless and violent drive for control over the world's resources – is the extension on a global scale of the drive for profits and wealth of the capitalists within "their own" countries.

The opposition of the working class to national chauvinism and the wars waged under the banner of the "national interest" and other hypocritical slogans (such as "democracy" and "human rights") is not simply based on moral considerations. Rather, the masses of working people comprise an international class, whose common interests transcend national states. In the most profound historical and economic sense, the working class has no country.

The globalisation of production has led to a rapid growth of the working class throughout the world, including not only the hundreds of

millions of new workers in Asia, Latin America and Africa, but also broad sections of the population, including young people, who have been proletarianised in the major capitalist countries. At the same time, the extraordinary advances in telecommunications over the past three decades have allowed workers and young people to communicate with each other across national boundaries and organise their struggles based on a common programme and a common plan of action.

In recognition of this global reality, International Youth and Students for Social Equality fights to unite young people and students around the world in a common struggle to turn to the working class and build a movement to abolish capitalism.

Three decades ago, in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the ideologists of the ruling class proclaimed "the end of history". The meaning of this slogan was that the supposed "victory" of imperialism in the Cold War proved there could not be an alternative to capitalism. The national state system, private ownership of the means of production, the profit system and bourgeois democracy, marked the highest and final stage of social development.

## Terrifying

The "end of history" thesis was the capitalist actualisation of Dante's terrifying vision of Hell: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here". Mankind was trapped in a capitalist dystopia from which there could be no escape. Social inequality, poverty, exploitation and the perpetual debasement of culture was the fate to which humanity was condemned.

Embraced and amplified by the media and preached by countless academics, the "end of history" narrative was aimed at sowing discouragement, demoralisation and political apathy. But it was a false narrative. History has returned with a vengeance. The economic, political and social foundations of capitalism are crumbling. The class struggle – the great motor force of historical progress – is breaking through all the institutional mechanisms of social control.

While the development of the war raises great dangers for young people and for all of mankind, IYSSE bases its programme not on despair, but on confidence that we can fight and win the future.

The fatalism of the pessimists expresses an outlook that remains

trapped within the confines of what is possible within the capitalist world order. Optimism arises out of an understanding that the same capitalist crisis that produces war, dictatorship, climate change and social reaction also produces the growth of international working class struggle.

We must turn out to the factories and workplaces, where workers are struggling against inequality and exploitation. They are the great power capable of overthrowing capitalism and forging a way forward for humanity. IYSSE does not only seek the support of workers in the struggle against war. We recognise that the defeat of imperialism depends upon the emergence of the working class, armed with a socialist programme, as the leading and decisive revolutionary force in the fight against the world capitalist system.

Just as it was with the Russian Revolution, the greatest intervention of the working class in world history, that brought an end to the first global carnage of World War I, it will be the intervention of the international working class that will today stop the escalation toward World War III.

IYSSE bases its perspective on the history of the socialist movement, above all the history of the Fourth International, the Trotskyist movement, which maintained the continuity of Marxism through the fight against Stalinism. Young people have been largely cut off from this history, and the entire history of working class struggle, by the attacks of the ruling class on Marxism and the promotion of all kinds of reactionary ideologies and historical falsifications.

In its work among students, IYSSE opposes all forms of anti-Marxist theories, particularly those associated with the reactionary Frankfurt School and the doubly reactionary irrationalism of postmodernism, that deny the revolutionary role of the working class and oppose the political struggle for socialism.

Moreover, IYSSE exposes the drive to subordinate science and scholarship to imperialist militarism. It has consistently opposed attacks on historical truth and democratic rights, resisting all attempts to suppress the growing opposition to fascism and war.

IYSSE will set into motion a movement that unites young people in a common fight, directed to the working class, against war. We say to students and youth throughout the world: if we are to have a future, we must fight for it. We cannot stand on the sidelines while the ruling classes plot to turn the entire world into a nuclear inferno.

This campaign will be launched through a global webinar on December 10, titled "Stop the US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine", which will be streamed live at 1pm Eastern Standard Time (US). The webinar will be combined with a coordinated series of meetings and other activities in countries throughout the world. This meeting will explain the historical origins of the war and expose the real political and economic interests that are driving its escalation. Above all, the webinar will present a revolutionary strategy and explain what must be done to stop the war. We call on all those who wish to participate to register for the webinar and contact IYSSE.

Join International Youth and Students for Social Equality. Stop the reckless drive toward nuclear war. Take up the fight for a socialist future without poverty, exploitation, war and all forms of oppression.

*wsws.org*

● For more information and to join IYSSE, click here: [wsws.org/iysse](https://wsws.org/iysse)



# Ukraine: it is time for the guns to fall silent

## Talks must stop the war spiralling out of control

**Fred M'membe**  
Socialist Party President

RECENTLY I had an interview on Russia's Radio Sputnik International, and I made the following observations:

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.

And, 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.

● It disrupts social unity and damages the possibility of international solidarity.

● 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.

Ukraine, shaped out of Lithuanian, Polish, and Tsarist empires, is a plurinational 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 sociopolitical 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 Croatia 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.

By contrast, Czechoslovakia,

one of the countries in the communist East, broke up along ethnic lines peacefully in 1993 into the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

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).

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?

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.



Little international attention was paid to ethnic cleansing in the Donbas region and the empowerment of neo-Nazi elements such as the Azov Battalion (above) that shattered the plurinational compact

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 *armiya, 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, 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 the empowerment of neo-Nazi elements, shattered the country's plurinational compact and produced serious armed conflict in the Donbas 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 Donbas region, all parties agreed to a set of de-escalation measures, including ceasefire, known as the Minsk Agreements (2014-15).

Emboldened by the West, the Ukrainian ultra-nationalists grew their power, and the possibility of negotiations to settle the conflict waned.

Violations of the Minsk Agreements by all sides undermined the process.

### Casualties

For eight years, the people of the Donbas lived in a constant state of war, which, according to the United Nations, caused more than 14,000 deaths and in excess of 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 restart.

Rather than allow this war to escalate and for positions to continually harden, it is important for the guns to go silent and the discussions to recommence.

Unless at least the following three 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 plurinational compact.

If substantive negotiations and agreements regarding these essential matters do not materialise, 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.

## 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 Chinese perspectives, the *Dongsheng Collective* – researchers from various countries – offers a China digest. This is an edited selection. <https://dongshengnews.org/en>

### Mediation centre plan

CHINA plans to set up an international mediation centre in Hong Kong to handle intergovernmental and political and trade disputes. The aim is to prioritise mediation for dispute resolution, and seeks to unify visions of different countries around a common charter. The proposal is related to a recent goal of promoting peace and security in conflict-affected countries.

*South China Morning Post*

### Africa tax expansion

CHINA is to expand its zero tariff policy to nine more African countries for 98 percent of taxable items, starting this month. The measure covers about 8,800 products, including agricultural and chemical goods, and is part of China's goal to increase African imports to US\$300 billion by 2025.

*South China Morning Post*

### New COVID-19 rules

THE government has clarified details of 20 new COVID-19 regulations amid surging cases and the need for more precise local implementation. Local authorities have been told not to carry out mass testing when there is no outbreak and pay special attention to people's mental health when in quarantine.

*Global Times*

### Data trading takes off

STATE-owned Shenzhen Data Exchange has begun official data trading with the goal of reaching a volume of 10 billion yuan (US\$1.395 billion) by 2025. During the trial year, it facilitated 415 trade deals worth 1.1 billion yuan (US\$150 million). Beijing considers data trade a new factor of production like land, capital, and labour.

*South China Morning Post*

### Boost in corn protein

CHINESE scientists have managed to significantly increase protein content in corn varieties thanks to cloning of a gene that controls nitrogen use in the plant. More than 70 percent of corn in China is used for feed, but livestock and poultry still rely on soy imports. An increase of 1 percentage point in protein could mean a reduction in the need for soy imports of almost 8 million tons.

*Global Times*

### Action on air pollution

CHINA has presented an action plan to eliminate heavy air pollution in 70 percent of its major cities by 2025. By 2021, 87.5 percent of days had reasonably good air quality, 6.3 percentage points more than in 2015. The plan's measures include reducing emissions from diesel trucks and increasing the proportion of freight transported by rail by 0.5 percentage points by 2025.

*China Daily*

### Lifelong learning goal

FACED with an aging population, China has set up a National University for the Aged, seeking to build a "lifelong learning society". The new university will be merged with the Open University of China. With already more than 76,000 universities for seniors, China aims to create one university for every county by 2025.

*Global Times*



# Africa must not be the ‘breeding ground’ for NATO’s new cold war

## With 29 bases on the continent, the US sees it as its ‘southern flank’

Vijay Prashad

ON OCTOBER 17, the head of US Africa Command (AFRICOM), US Marine Corps General Michael Langley visited Morocco. Langley met with senior Moroccan military leaders, including Inspector General of the Moroccan Armed Forces Belkhir El Farouk.

Since 2004, AFRICOM has held its “largest and premier annual exercise”, African Lion, partly on Moroccan soil. This past June, ten countries participated in African Lion 2022, with observers from Israel (for the first time) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

Langley’s visit is part of a broader US push on to the African continent, which we documented in the Tricontinental dossier no 42 (July 2021), *Defending Our Sovereignty: US Military Bases in Africa and the Future of African Unity*, a joint publication with The Socialist Movement of Ghana’s Research Group. In that text, we wrote that the two important principles of Pan-Africanism are political unity and territorial sovereignty, and argued that “the enduring presence of foreign military bases not only symbolises the lack of unity and sovereignty; it also equally enforces the fragmentation and subordination of the continent’s peoples and governments”.

### Choices

In August, US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield travelled to Ghana, Uganda, and Cape Verde. “We’re not asking Africans to make any choices between the United States and Russia,” she said ahead of her visit, but, she added, “For me, that choice would be simple.” That choice is nonetheless being impelled by the US Congress as it deliberates the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act, a bill that would sanction African states if they do business with Russia (and could possibly extend to China in the future).

To understand this unfolding situation, our friends at No Cold War have prepared their briefing no. 5, *NATO Claims Africa as Its “southern neighbourhood”*, which looks at how NATO has begun to develop a proprietary view of Africa and how the US government considers Africa to be a frontline in its Global Monroe Doctrine.

In August 2022, the United States published a new foreign policy strategy aimed at Africa. The 17-page document featured 10 mentions of China and Russia combined, including a pledge to “counter harmful activities by the [People’s Republic of China], Russia, and other foreign actors” on the continent, but did not once mention the term “sovereignty”. Although US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has stated that Washington “will not dictate Africa’s choices”, African governments have reported facing “patronising bullying” from NATO member states to take



Top: Richard Mudariki (Zimbabwe), *The Passover*, 2011; Above left: Zemba Luzamba (DRC), *Parlementaires debout (Parliamentarians Standing)*, 2019; Above right: Amani Bodo (DRC), *Masque à gaz (Gas Mask)*, 2020

their side in the war in Ukraine. As global tensions rise, the US and its allies have signalled that they view the continent as a battleground to wage their new cold war against China and Russia.

### A new Monroe Doctrine?

At its annual summit in June, NATO named Africa, along with the Middle East, “NATO’s southern neighbourhood”. On top of this, NATO’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg ominously referred to “Russia and China’s increasing influence in our southern neighbourhood” as a “challenge”. The following month, the outgoing commander of AFRICOM, General Stephen J Townsend, referred to Africa as “NATO’s southern flank”. These comments are disturbingly reminiscent of the neocolonial attitude espoused by the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, in which the US claimed

Latin America as its “backyard”. This paternalistic view of Africa appears to be widely held in Washington. In April, the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the Countering Malign Russian Influence Activities in Africa Act by a vote of 415-9. The bill, which aims to punish African governments for not aligning with US foreign policy on Russia, has been widely condemned across the continent for disrespecting the sovereignty of African nations, with South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor calling it “absolutely disgraceful”.

The efforts by the US and Western countries to draw Africa into their geopolitical conflicts raise serious concerns: namely, will the US and NATO weaponise their vast military presence on the continent to achieve their aims?

Europe is a garden . . . the rest of the world . . . is a jungle, and the jungle could invade the garden . . . Europeans have to be much more engaged with the rest of the world. Otherwise, the rest of the world will invade us

Josep Borell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

### AFRICOM: protecting US and NATO’s hegemony

IN 2007, the United States established its Africa Command (AFRICOM) “in response to our expanding partnerships and interests in Africa”. In just 15 years, AFRICOM has established at least 29 military bases on the continent as part of an extensive network, which includes more than 60 outposts and access points in at least 34 countries – more than 60 percent of the nations on the continent.

Despite Washington’s rhetoric of promoting democracy and human rights in Africa, in reality, AFRICOM aims to secure US hegemony over the continent. AFRICOM’s stated objectives include “protecting US interests” and “maintaining superiority over competitors” in Africa. In fact, the creation of AFRICOM was motivated

by the concerns of “those alarmed by China’s expanding presence and influence in the region”.

From the outset, NATO was involved in the endeavour, with the original proposal put forward by then Supreme Allied Commander of NATO James L Jones, Jr. On an annual basis, AFRICOM conducts training exercises focused on enhancing the “interoperability” between African militaries and “US and NATO special operations forces”.

The destructive nature of the US and NATO’s military presence in Africa was exemplified in 2011 when, ignoring the African Union’s opposition, the US and NATO launched their catastrophic military intervention in Libya to remove the government of Muammar Gaddafi. This regime change war destroyed the country, which had previously scored the highest among African nations on the UN Human Development Index. More than a decade later, the principal achievements of the intervention in Libya have been the return of slave markets to the country, the entry of thousands of foreign fighters, and unending violence.

In the future, will the US and NATO invoke the “malign influence” of China and Russia as a justification for military interventions and regime change in Africa?

### Africa rejects a new cold war

AT this year’s UN General Assembly, the African Union firmly rejected the coercive efforts of the US and Western countries to use the continent as a pawn in their geopolitical agenda. “Africa has suffered enough of the burden of history,” Chairman of the African Union and President of Senegal Macky Sall said. “It does not want to be the breeding ground of a new cold war, but rather a pole of stability and opportunity open to all its partners, on a mutually beneficial basis.” Indeed, the drive for war offers nothing to the peoples of Africa in their pursuit of peace, climate change adaptation, and development.

At the inauguration of the European Diplomatic Academy on October 13, the European Union’s chief diplomat, Josep Borrell, said, “Europe is a garden . . . the rest of the world . . . is a jungle, and the jungle could invade the garden.” As if the metaphor were not clear enough, he added, “Europeans have to be much more engaged with the rest of the world. Otherwise, the rest of the world will invade us.” Borrell’s racist comments were pilloried on social media and eviscerated in the European Parliament by Marc Botenga of the Belgian Workers’ Party, and a petition by the Democracy in Europe Movement (DiEM25) calling for Borrell’s resignation has received in excess of 10,000 signatures. Borrell’s lack of historical knowledge is significant: it is Europe and North America that continue to invade the African continent, and it is those military and economic invasions that cause African people migrate. As President Sall said, Africa does not want to be a “breeding ground of a new Cold War”, but a sovereign place of dignity.

Tricontinental



# Tanzania's president in Beijing aid coup

## Hassan wins support at highest diplomatic level

Jevans Nyabiage

TANZANIA'S President Samia Suluhu Hassan has won her country multimillion dollar deals with China in her first state visit to Beijing since taking office.

Hassan's Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping noted it was also the first visit to China by an African leader since the recent 20th Communist Party Congress.

Hassan and Xi witnessed the signing of 15 strategic agreements, including an upgrade to the Tanzania-Zambia railway TAZARA, first funded by China 50 years ago and still its largest foreign aid project.

There was also a debt waiver and duty-free access to China for Tanzanian products.

The two leaders agreed to elevate China-Tanzania relations to a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, generally regarded as China's highest diplomatic level, which promises full pursuit of cooperation and development.

"China firmly supports Tanzania in safeguarding its sovereignty, security and development interests, and firmly supports Tanzania in exploring a development path that suits its national conditions," Xi said.

"China is willing to continue to expand the import of Tanzanian speciality products, support Chinese enterprises to invest and start businesses in Tanzania, and provide assistance within its capacity for Tanzania's economic and

social development." A statement from Hassan's office said China had agreed to write off 31.4 billion Tanzania shillings (US\$13.49 million) worth of debt.

Details on which loans would be written off were not provided. However, China said in September it would waive 23 interest-free loans which matured at the end of last year for 17 African countries.

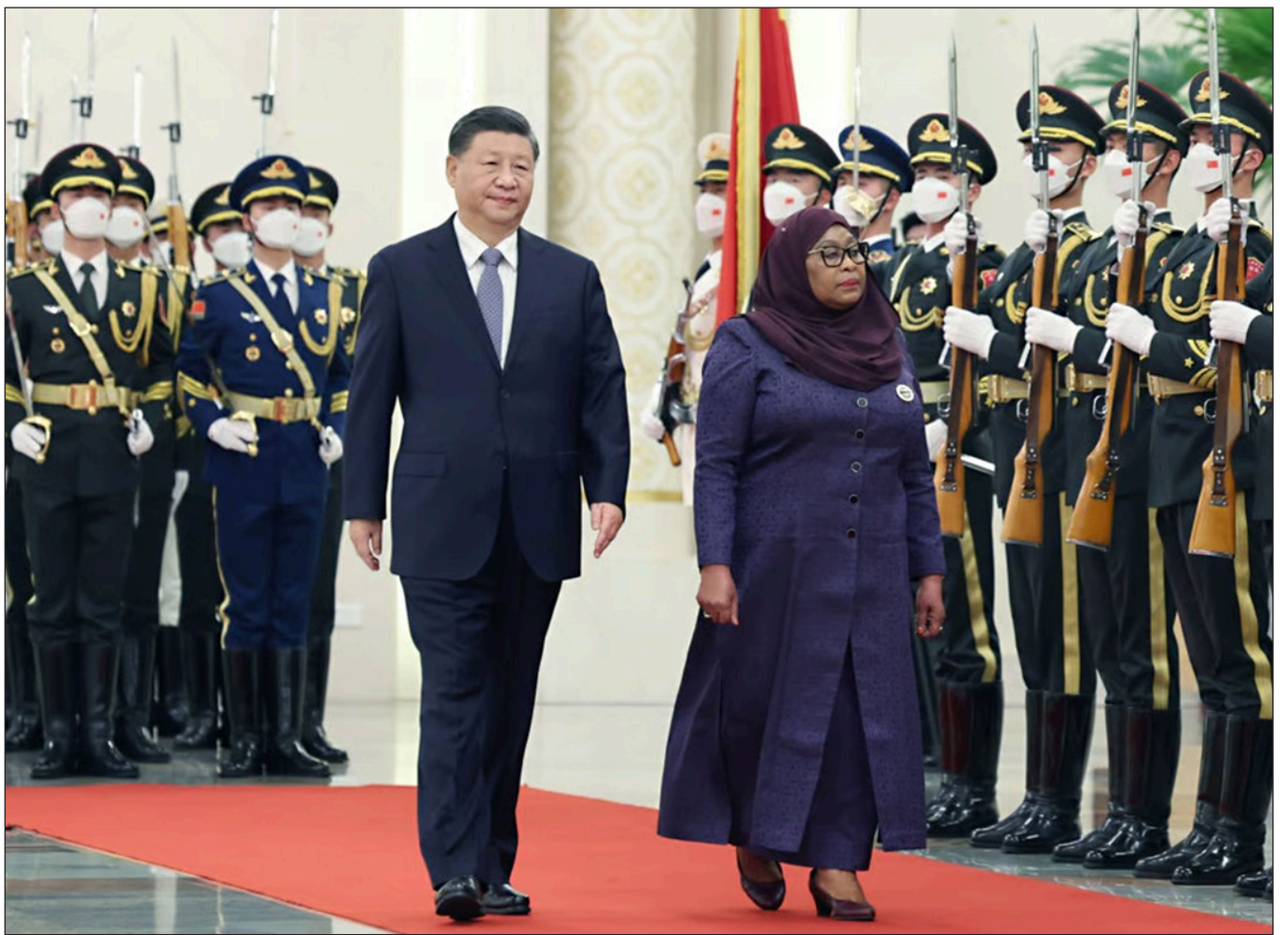
Beijing traditionally waives interest-free loans, offered by its foreign aid agency the China International Development Agency (CIDCA), which took over the role from the commerce ministry's foreign aid department in 2018. But they amount to just five per cent of the total Chinese loans advanced to Africa.

Beijing will advance a US\$56.72 million loan on concessional terms to build Zanzibar International Airport's new terminal. It will also provide a grant of 100 million yuan (US\$13.6 million) as part of an economic and technical cooperation agreement.

China did not reveal how much it will spend on the renovation and upgrade of the TAZARA railway, although a joint statement said "the two sides are ready to actively advance" the project.

The Chinese embassy in Zambia said in August that the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation had been appointed to carry out a feasibility study on the project, as part of the reconstruction effort.

China's involvement in the TAZARA railway began in the 1970s under the leadership of Mao Zedong and then premier Zhou Enlai, when the country was facing its



Top: Tanzania's President Samia Suluhu Hassan with China's President Xi Jinping during her visit to Beijing. Above: Zanzibar International Airport. China is to loan US\$56.72 million for a new terminal

own financial difficulties, having just emerged from the tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution.

Lusaka was desperate for a railway link to the Tanzanian coast. Neighbouring white-controlled Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) had cut landlocked Zambia's only outlet to the sea for its main export copper, in response to its support of African nationalist guerrillas fighting for the transfer of power to the Rhodesian black majority.

China stepped in after the US and Russia refused to fund a new

railway, on the grounds it did not make economic sense, and TAZARA was built for about a billion yuan – billions of US dollars at today's rates – in interest-free loans.

The 1,860km (1,155) miles of track stretching from Zambia's copperbelt to the Tanzanian port of Dar es Salaam on the Indian Ocean was built between 1970 and 1975 with the help of 50,000 Chinese workers.

China remains a leading source of foreign direct investment in Tanzania, accounting for 1,098 proj-

ects up to October this year worth US\$9.6 billion, creating 131,718 jobs, according to the Tanzanian president's office.

Xi said more Chinese companies would be encouraged to invest in Tanzania's development, including its transport, energy, information and communications links, as well as other infrastructure.

In turn, Tanzania has pledged an improved business environment and help for Chinese companies operating in the country.

The two countries also signed

protocols granting duty-free access to 98 per cent of Tanzanian products. China promised to increase imports of speciality goods from Tanzania, and support Chinese companies to invest and operate there.

Tanzanian avocados will soon follow the trail blazed by Kenya, which is already exporting the fruit to Chinese markets, with the signing of a phytosanitary protocol between Beijing and Tanzania.

A protocol on inspection, quarantine and veterinary sanitary requirements for wild seafood exports was also signed.

David Shinn, a China-Africa expert at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, said the effect of the tariff arrangements would be limited, with the East African nation having little that China wants to buy.

"Tanzania imports 10 times more goods by value from China than it exports to China," Shinn said.

China's main imports from Tanzania are oily seeds, such as soybean and sesame, as well as raw and refined copper, precious metal ores, and coconut and other vegetable fibres.

In return, Tanzania buys Chinese rubber footwear, synthetic filament, yarn woven fabric, and rubber tyres.

South China Morning Post

## Never let anyone interfere with progress, Xi says in Vietnam



China's President Xi Jinping (left) and Vietnamese Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong wave to pupils holding flags during a welcoming ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi, Vietnam

CHINESE President Xi Jinping told the visiting leader of Vietnam's ruling Communist Party on a recent visit that both countries and parties should "never let anyone interfere" with their progress, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

The bullish message against outside interference came at a time of strained relations between China and the West, especially with the United States over Taiwan, the Ukraine conflict, trade and other issues.

Xi and Nguyen Phu Trong shook hands and embraced before taking part in a televised welcome ceremony in Beijing's Great Hall of the People – an unusual display of close contact between Xi and another leader, as China persists with strict COVID lockdowns.

Trong's visit was the first by a foreign leader since Xi secured a precedent-setting third term as General Secretary at the Chinese Communist Party's 20th party congress in October.

"The development of the cause of human progress is a long and tortuous process, and the development of socialist countries faces a very complicated international environment and serious risks and challenges," Xi said, according to CCTV.

"The Chinese and Vietnamese parties should persist in working for the happiness of the people and the progress of mankind, push forward socialist modernisation with all their might, and never let anyone interfere with our progress or let any force shake the institutional foundation of our development," Xi said.

The visit by Trong, who holds more power than either Vietnam's president or prime minister, was a showcase of communist unity. Vietnam and China are among the last five communist-ruled states in the world, along with Cuba, Laos and North Korea.

China is Vietnam's largest trading partner and a key source of imports for its fast-growing economy, including raw materials and machinery for its crucial manufacturing sector.

Although the two neighbours have a long history of mistrust and territorial disputes, including over islands and waters in the South China Sea, their communist parties remain officially close.

Like Xi, Trong has also stayed on as party chief beyond the usual tenure of one or two terms, cementing his influence in a party traditionally governed by consensus among its politburo and powerful central committee. His last trip abroad was to Cambodia.

Reuters



# ‘Brazil is back’ Lula tells Cop27 as he pledges environment action

## Deforestation of Amazon rainforest, illegal mining top of agenda

SOCIALIST president-elect Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva told the world that “Brazil is back” at Cop27, vowing to begin undoing the environmental destruction seen under his far-right predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro, and work towards zero deforestation of the Amazon rainforest.

Followed by a carnival atmosphere wherever he went, Lula told the climate summit that his administration would go further than ever before on the environment by cracking down on illegal gold mining, logging and agricultural expansion, and restoring climate-critical ecosystems.

In his first big overseas speech since winning the presidential election, Lula said Brazil did not need to clear another hectare of rainforest to be a major agricultural producer, and he would use his presidency to demand that rich countries deliver on their promise of US\$100bn of climate finance for developing countries and to create a fund for loss and damage finance.

Punctuated by chants of “olé, olé, olé, olé, Lula, Lula”, the president-elect’s speech brought a much-needed feeling of hope to Cop27.

### Decisive

Leading Brazilian environmental figures were always nearby, including climate scientist Carlos Nobre, whose studies warn that the Amazon is close to crossing an irreversible tipping point, and the former environment minister Marina Silva, who oversaw an enormous drop in deforestation during Lula’s first presidency.

“Today, I am here to say that Brazil is ready to join once again [the] effort to build a healthier planet. Brazil has just ended elections, one of the most decisive in its history. It was followed in an unprecedented way by other countries. It could help control the rise of the authoritarian right and climate deniers around the world,” Lula said.

Of the impact of the climate crisis, he said “nobody is safe”, detailing the consequences of global heating. “In the US, they live with tropical storms and more and more powerful hurricanes . . . In Brazil, which is a forest and hydrological power, we experienced drought and devastating floods. Europe faces extreme heat with fires and unprecedented deaths. And although it is the continent with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions, Africa has drought in Chad, Kenya and Somalia. I repeat: nobody is safe.”

In a speech that ranged from inequality to reform of the UN security council, Lula placed a lot of emphasis on building partnerships.



Lula visiting Brazil’s Landless Workers’ Movement, Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST), in Espírito Santo, 2020

He vowed to work with other Amazonian countries – including Peru, Colombia, Guyana and Venezuela – to work towards sustainable development in the region while also protecting key ecosystems, early in his presidency.

“There is no planetary security without a protected Amazon. We will do whatever it takes to have zero deforestation and degradations of our biomes. For this reason, I would like to announce that efforts to fight climate change will have the highest priority in my next government. We will prioritise the fight against deforestation of all of our biomes and reverse damage done in recent years by the previous government,” Lula said.

Around the world, he underscored Brazil’s new partnership with Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – the big three rainforest nations – to work together on their conservation.

“The planet warns us at every moment that we need each other to survive. Alone we are vulnerable to the climate tragedy. Nevertheless we ignored these warnings . . . We have spent trillions of dollars that only result in destruction and death. We experience a moment where we have multiple problems; nuclear war, crisis of food supply, energy, erosion of biodiversity, inequality . . . these are hard times. But it was always in difficult times that humanity

overcame challenges. We need more confidence,” he said.

“We need more resources for a problem that was created by rich countries but is disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable . . . I would like to remind you that rich countries said they would raise US\$100bn at Cop15 in Copenhagen to help the less developed countries to face climate change.”

There were queues at the venue for Lula’s speech an hour before it began, and an overspill room was also packed. At a side event earlier that day, he said that Brazil should host Cop30 in 2030 in the Amazon in part to display its importance to the world.

The G20 communiqué lifted

spirits at the Cop as it contained language on keeping to the 1.5C temperature limit and the need to address loss and damage, meaning the financial assistance needed for poor countries to respond to climate disaster – a key bone of contention.

The first official draft text of the “cover decision” of the Cop would come later in the day, the Egyptian climate envoy, Wael Aboulmagd, told journalists. Some delegations were worried that the time for consultation and reaction to the draft seemed to have been compressed to about one day, compared with about two-and-a-half days last year at Cop26 in Glasgow.

Most were expecting the cover

decision – a discursive document running to several pages and describing a long series of resolutions and commitments on everything, from cutting emissions to funding adaptation measures – to be the key outcome of these talks. In it, they were hoping for affirmation that countries were still committed to vital goals, such as the 1.5C temperature limit, and phasing down coal.

In a sign that deep divisions remained on key issues, the Alliance of Small Island States, representing some of the most vulnerable countries, took aim at unnamed rich countries over loss and damage. Sir Molwyn Joseph, minister of health, wellness and the environment for Antigua and Barbuda, said: “Some developed countries are furiously trying to stall progress and, even worse, attempting to undermine small island developing states. Not only are they causing the worst impacts of the climate crisis, they are playing games with us in this multilateral process.”

Frans Timmermans, vice-president of the European Commission, said the EU was supportive of loss and damage but said some countries currently classed as developing were now prosperous enough to contribute to loss and damage funding.

He added that the proposal by some developing countries for a new loss and damage funding facility would hold up the delivery of finance, because it could take years to get started, whereas using existing institutions to deliver funding could be done faster. “Let’s start funding loss and damage now, because if it’s a [new] facility we all know it will take years,” he said.

Egypt appointed pairs of ministers, one from a developed and one from a developing country, for each of the outstanding big issues, including loss and damage, climate finance, and adaptation, in an effort to move negotiations faster.

UK Guardian

## Court rejects Bolsonaro’s election challenge

THE HEAD of Brazil’s electoral court has rejected an attempt by outgoing president Jair Bolsonaro’s party to overturn the results of October’s run-off election, which he lost.

Alexandre de Moraes, a supreme court justice, also fined the parties in Bolsonaro’s coalition 22.9m reais (US\$4.3m) for what the court described as bad faith litigation.

Bolsonaro had challenged the Brazilian presidential election he lost last month to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, arguing votes from some machines should be invalidated.

His coalition said its audit of the October 30 second-round run-off between Bolsonaro and Lula had found “signs of irreparable . . . malfunction” in some electronic voting machines.

De Moraes had issued a prior ruling indicating Bolsonaro’s party could suffer if it made such a challenge, and demanded extra information from the party, which it declined to provide.

De Moraes then wrote in his final decision, “The complete bad faith of the plaintiff’s bizarre and illicit request . . . was proven, both by the refusal to add to the initial petition and the total absence of any evidence of irregularities and the existence of a totally fraudulent narrative of the facts.”



Jair Bolsonaro’s party lost its election challenge and was fined US\$4.3 million

Party lawyers had filed a 33-page request citing a software bug in the majority of Brazil’s machines – they lack individual identification numbers in their internal logs – to argue all votes they recorded should be nullified.

Neither Costa nor de Bessa explained how the bug might have affected election results. Independent experts consulted by the Associated Press said that while newly discovered, it did not affect

reliability and each voting machine was still readily identifiable through other means.

In his ruling, de Moraes noted the same. He also wrote that the challenge to the vote appeared aimed at incentivising anti-democratic protest movements and creating tumult, and ordered an investigation of the president of Bolsonaro’s party, Valdemar Costa.

Mauricio Santoro, a political science

professor at the State University of Rio de Janeiro, said, “De Moraes’s message to the political establishment is: the game is over. Questioning the result of the elections is not fair play, and people and institutions who do that will be punished harshly.”

Costa said his intention was merely to prevent the results of the 2022 vote from haunting Brazil into the future.

Lula’s victory has been ratified by the superior electoral court and acknowledged by Brazil’s leading politicians and international allies. Bolsonaro himself authorised his government to begin preparing for a presidential transition in the days after October’s run-off election.

Earlier, Gleisi Hoffmann, the president of Lula’s Workers party, described Bolsonaro’s election complaint as “chicanery”.

“No more procrastination, irresponsibility, insults to institutions and democracy,” she wrote on Twitter. “The election was decided in the vote and Brazil needs peace to build a better future.”

Brazil began using an electronic voting in 1996. Its system has been closely scrutinised by domestic and international experts who have never found evidence of it being exploited to commit fraud.

UK Guardian/Reuters/Associated Press





## WAKANDA HAS HEROIC LEADERS, WE HAVE PUPPETS

### Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, 2022 movie

MANY people in Zambia and across the globe have made their way to cinemas to watch Wakanda Forever since its release.

I have also taken time to watch the film. It is insightful, thought provoking, evokes a mix of emotions, and captures the spirit of fighting and struggling for one's nation. It equally sends a wave of sadness, especially with the mourning of Black Panther star Chadwick Boseman (T'Challa), who was initially supposed to be a member of the cast but died from colon cancer in 2020. However, all the characters play unique and fantastic roles.

While the movie has many catchy moments and storylines, what stood out for me was how the leaders in the world of Wakanda – a fictional African country – fight hard to protect their nation's strategic mineral, vibranium, in the wake of King T'Challa's death.

In the film, Wakanda's economy is based on the production and uses of the fictitious metal, portrayed as strategic for 21st century technologies, an aspect that

scientists may find fascinating. The movie also reveals women running the military and production sector of the economy, with roles played by Queen Ramonda, Shuri, Nakia and Okoye, the general of Dora Milaje.

We are taken on an intriguing journey in which Wakanda is under immense pressure from big powers that want to access its strategic mineral. There is a scene in what resembles the United Nations General Assembly, in which Queen Ramonda, mother of T'Chella and Shuri, exposes the West's schemes, particularly those of France and the USA's CIA, to attack Wakanda. The CIA and US Navy SEALs duly invade using a vibranium-detecting machine to locate potential deposits under water in Wakanda. Their mission is unsuccessful, though, because an expedition of water-breathing superhumans led by Namor – the mutant son of a human sea captain and a princess of the mythical undersea kingdom of Atlantis – attacks them. While Wakanda was not involved in the attacks, the CIA believes it was responsible.

For Wakanda, the emergence of Namor's superhumans, who help the country expose the West's ploy

to detect and access vibranium, is seen as a cause for concern, realising that its national and military security has been compromised. So, not only is it presented with the West as a threat, but also from Namor, who confronts Wakanda's leaders, presenting a serious challenge that results in a war leading to many deaths, including that of Queen Ramonda. Shuri fights to avenge the death of the queen – her mother – through her new leadership role as female Black Panther. In the end, Wakanda defeats Namor's fighters, and the two parties decide for the sake of peace to form a strategic alliance to defend their interests against the West.

While the story of Wakanda is fictitious, it resonates well with aspects of our own country's history and present-day dynamics. We also have strategic minerals, such as copper and cobalt, needed for development in the 21st century. Unlike in the Wakanda story, though, where its leaders are forming strategic partnerships and fighting to preserve the vibranium needed to develop Wakanda, what we have in Zambia are puppets, sell-outs.

*Fred M'membe, Socialist Party President*

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