2024 WAPE Forum Statement

The 17th World Association for Political Economy Forum was held at Pantieon University in Athens, Greece, from 2 to 4 August 2024. The conference was organized by Greek Association for Poltical Economy and Pantieon University and attended by over 160 scholars from XX countries. Meeting with "Political economy vs economics in a turbulent multipolar world" as the theme, respectively discusses the modern Marxist economic methodology, theory and policy, analysis of contemporary bourgeois economics, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the death of Lenin and study of Lenin's works, analysis the future of capitalism and socialism in the 21st century, against the new imperialism and promote the construction of the community with a shared future for mankind, the international economic order rationalization and dollar, developing new quality productive forces and socialist production relations and other important theoretical and practical issues.

The participants issued the following statement:

It is no exaggeration to say that the world now stands at its most dangerous moment in human history. Already on at the tipping point of irreversible climate change, it is now on the brink of a nuclear war between powers with more than 10,000 nuclear weapons but also capable of breaking out elsewhere and spreading fast.

This not is the result of some kind of general spread of militarism among the earth’s many states. It is driven by the aggression, individual and collective, of its most powerful capitalist imperial states, which were also historically the imperial states, led by the United States. Unrelenting NATO expansion was the primary cause of the current Ukraine conflict; the escalating tensions between China and the USA’s allies is driven by these powers determination to stem China’s peaceful rise by any means at their disposal – shattering all the ‘free trade’ rules which these same powers stridently proclaimed when they believed their interests were served by it; and US determination to use Israel as its Middle Eastern military outpost in order to obtain control over the region’s oil reserves the true driver of the ongoing genocide in Gaza which threatens to spill over into war with Iran and other powers in the region capable of resisting this imperial drive. .

This aggression is impelled by the desperate desire of these countries to avert their ongoing imperial decline, their decreasing ability to control what happens on planet earth. It has not only brought the world to this sorry pass, it is also making the diplomacy and international cooperation necessary to avert nuclear war and climate change, not to mention the myriad other problems plaguing the world, more remote and difficult, just as they had made dealing with COVID 19 more difficult and fraught.

Against them stands the World Majority driven to defend itself both economically and militarily, both by their genuine community of interest despite the diversity of their economic systems and by the common need to defend their economic sovereignty and their military security both against heightened new imperial agression, and to develop their own economic systems and livelihood through peaceful cooperation. Led by China and Russia, the GDP of BRICS countries has slightly exceeded the Group of 7, and the Belt and Road Initiative and Shanghai Cooperation Organization have played an positive role. While the new imperialist camp spares no effort in trying to pry away important members of the World Majority over to its side, so far these efforts have not succeeded, not least because the declining imperialist camp has little to offer.

And this is not all. This aggression is fundamentally irrational in two distinct senses. First, it is being pursued relentlessly even though it is failing. The imperialist countries are unable to win in the conflicts they are inciting and they are unlikely to avert their decline. Indeed, pursing this course of course of action is undermining them as economies, societies and polities. But it is also irrational in another sense which makes it many times more dangerous. It has over the past made decades mired the imperialist societies in economic decline and skyrocketing inequality. Their result has been profound social division has it now generated political conflict and enabled the emergence of far right forces within them that is increasingly making them ungovernable. The desperation of competing political forces to take and keep power is leading them to more and more dangerous and delusional positions on foreign policy while making their governments less and less accountable to the people.

The only way in which these states will be prevented from leading the world to disaster is by the rise of socialist and anti-imperialist forces within them capable of winning power and using it to reconstruct their unproductive, financialized and unequal economies and their strife-torn and malingering societies and to transform their foreign policies from ones of imperial aggression to one of cooperation and respect for the world’s other nations, cultures and economies. Economic reconstruction is particularly urgent given that their inevitable loss of imperial control over the rest of the world means that their standards of living will have to be maintained, like in all other countries, on the basis of their own efforts, not on that imperial tribute in its variety fo forms, from debt repayments to the availability of artificially cheap goods.

Humanity faces a choice between socialism or barbarism as never before. In light of this situation, the 17th World Association for Political Economy Forum believes that we should continue to transcend hegemonism and narrow nationalism in the international community, promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind and the new internationalism, as well as to promote the adaptive development and innovation of Marxist economics. Peace, human development, justice, security and preservation of the planet required redoubled efforts of forces of international socialism and anti-new imperialism, to unite the people of the world and progressive countries, and work with comrades from other countries:

1. We should respect the development path and social system independently chosen by the people of all countries, resolutely oppose all forms of new hegemonism, new imperialism, new colonialism, new racalism, new fascism, and neoliberalism, oppose the cold War mentality, oppose interference in other countries' internal affairs, and oppose hypocritical double standard on internationl affairs.
2. Prevent NATO from taking more military adventures and build up a stable world economic, political and military security system.
3. Reform the United Nations, by reversing Western and corporate control that have made the organization and its agencies ineffective tools of new imperialism, and restore it to the original principles embodied in its Charter, so that the global South can gradually get free from the economic and political ruling by the new imperialist power either within and out from the global south.
4. Strive to end the ecological emergency of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, and oppose biological laboratories and biological warfare that endanger the lives and health of people around the world. Create institutions of international economic governance that can foster development rather than impose imperialist control.

5. Adapt to the change in the turbulent multipolar world, innovate Marxism and its economic theories, to form an international academic community of innovative Marxist economics, to eliminate the influence of neoliberal economics and new Keynesian theories and policies. Let work together hand in hand to promote world peace, development, justice, security, people's livelihood.