



G7 Summit: Fight every crisis - International solidarity, not war and environmental destruction

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Far from the masses of the population, the heads of state and government of seven of the most powerful countries in the world are to meet in Elmau Castle, near Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Bavaria.

In recent years and decades, the G7 summits and other meetings of central organisations of world politics and economics have been met by radical mass protests openly rejecting their legitimacy. The G7 and other institutions of global capitalism such as the G20, IMF or WTO were not seen by them as part of the solution to humanity's major problems, but as problems themselves.

This is why these meetings have always taken place in regions that are difficult to access. For a long time, the G7 seemed to be a discontinued model of world politics, replaced by formats such as the G20. Under Donald Trump, they regularly turned into an embarrassing display of disunity among the actually allied Western powers.

But it is not only the new appointment to the White House and the revival of the alliance between the US and Western Europe that have breathed new life into the G7. The fact that the latter are needed again expresses above all a fundamental change in the international situation. The economic, political, geostrategic and ultimately military competition between the US-led Western imperialist camp and the competing powers of China and Russia has once again intensified massively in the latest crisis and under Corona. The war over Ukraine once again pushes this antagonism to a higher level, even if it has not flared up directly between the main rivals, the USA and China, but in Europe.

In this situation, the G7 is supposed to prove itself as an instrument of the new unity of the West, NATO and to coordinate common interests against global rivals. Russia's reactionary invasion of Ukraine has given the political, economic and geostrategic goals of the G7 the appearance of democracy, human rights, even ecological and social concern for the world community.

For years, the G7 and similar institutions were considered dubious, illegitimate events, even by the mass of the population. Although they presented themselves as "saviours of the world", hardly anyone believed it. In 2022, things will be different, at least to a certain extent. The meeting of the seven countries is presented with more emphasis than in previous years as a truly decisive meeting. Chancellor Scholz proclaims: "We will use our G7 presidency to make this group of countries a pioneer. A pioneer for climate-neutral economic activity and a just world."

The overarching themes at Elmau will be war, rearmament and sanctions, which are of course also supposed to advance climate and justice.

While the promises of the G7 over the years have almost exposed themselves as empty phrases, we cannot expect that in 2022. Not that the reasons are better argued or more valid, but because the war over Ukraine - not least because of the barbaric nature of Russian warfare - can be sold reasonably successfully as a war between democracy and bloody dictatorship. This gives the G7 summit, as well as other institutions of the major Western powers (e.g. NATO), a legitimacy they have not had for years.

In addition, the war has eclipsed the strategic differences and clashes of interests between the USA and its allies, especially the leading EU powers, Germany and France, for the immediate future and has massively strengthened the US leadership role.

Seen in the light of day, however, the G7 turns out to be anything but a selfless association of well-meaning powerful people for the salvation of humanity, but rather an umbrella under which the seven most powerful Western imperialist nations coordinate their interests and pursue their common goals. Of course, they can do this without such summits, but the G7 format nevertheless expresses a strength that exists not only on a symbolic level. The leading Western powers have institutions and bodies at their disposal to express their common will, their interests vis-à-vis their rivals, whereas the latter do not yet have comparable structures at their disposal.

There are certainly more than seven reasons to mobilise against the G7 and the world order they defend. Nevertheless, we would like to name seven of the most important reasons why we are mobilising together for the demonstrations and actions in Munich on 25 June and in Garmisch on 26 June and beyond.

1. Armament, militarisation, war, interventions

It is not only with the Russian attack on Ukraine that the armament of Western states - including the Bundeswehr - is declared an urgent necessity in the face of an alleged Russian preponderance. In reality, the opposite is the case. According to the SIPRI Yearbook 2021 (SIPRI: Stockholm Peace Research Institute), the G7 spent a total of US\$1094.5bn on their military, compared to the 65.9 bn spent by Russia, that is, more than fifteen times as much. If we add the allied countries within NATO or other US-led "defence pacts", this gap widens.

Secondly, the technological advantage of the USA and its allies over Russia in the field of conventional weapons technology has increased in recent decades. It can only really compete with the USA on an equal footing as a nuclear power.

The West's economic lead and massive rearmament programmes will intensify the race and Russia will not be able to keep up economically. Basically, however, it is not primarily about Russia, but in the longer term about China, which with US\$293bn has the second largest arms budget in the world (and thus spends more than the entire EU after Britain's withdrawal).

The West is also the leader in the number of its foreign interventions. The USA alone has conducted 152 foreign missions since 1993, including wars with hundreds of thousands of casualties, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Military interventions in neighbouring countries, for example, by Turkey or Saudi Arabia, or border conflicts between states, are a constant part of world politics. Foreign interventions far from immediate borders and in pursuit of global economic and geostrategic interests, however, are a hallmark of the leading imperialist nations, which claim a de facto monopoly on them and also try to act as the supreme authority on which interventions are legitimate and which are not. While Russian interventions, according to the G7, endanger world peace, the "humanitarian" interventions of Western powers in former colonial areas, whether in Mali, Afghanistan or elsewhere, secure it. In reality, all this drivel is just ideological background music, justifications for the real imperialist goals of the G7 countries.

2. Plundering the global South

Almost more mendacious than the war and rearmament efforts are the cynical pronouncements regarding the fight against poverty in the countries of the so-called Third World. Once again, the German presidency of the G7 vows to work for a "social and just global economic system".

Of all things, the structures of the world economy that are supposed to contribute to this are those that have been securing the economic supremacy of the leading imperialist nations and the dominance of Western finance capital over entire countries for years. The neoliberal opening of entire markets in recent decades has massively intensified the plundering of raw materials, the exploitation of comparatively cheap labour, the restructuring of agriculture by Western agribusiness - up to and including the devastation of entire regions, the spread of poverty and the expulsion of peasants

and indigenous people from their land. Undoubtedly, as the policy of Chinese imperialism shows, the Western powers have no unique selling point when it comes to pursuing their own profit interests.

For the G7, however, under buzzwords like "just order", it is above all about their order, the control of global financial markets and flows by big capital. The indebtedness of the states of the global South as well as the numerous institutions of the world economy dominated by the G7, such as the IMF and WTO, are central levers to enforce imperialist plunder.

The disenfranchisement and impoverishment of the working class, peasants and farmers, as well as their enforcement by reactionary, often dictatorial, regimes, paramilitaries and right-wing movements, are in fact instruments for the implementation of these policies.

3. Climate catastrophe and environmental destruction

The G7 form the core of the globe's environmental destroyers. Historically, the largest emitters of CO2 are concentrated in these countries. In spite of the invocations to the contrary, the real global capitalism defended and pushed by the G7 is based on the exploitation of people and nature.

In reality, there is no exit from fossil fuels in sight. As a substitute for Russian gas and oil, alternative imports from the Gulf states or the USA are to be considered "without taboos". Even where ecological renewal is invoked under the guise of the Green Deal, it is basically a project for the renewal of social capital as a whole. Since the purpose of capitalist production remains profit maximisation, even then, a turn away from extractivist methods and expansive growth is not only not to be expected, it is structurally impossible. Of course, the G7 does not want to abolish capitalism, but to make it more effective and profitable.

This affects above all the countries of the so-called Third World, whose raw materials continue to be plundered and appropriated and which lack the means to counteract the effects of climate change, the extinction of species, droughts, devastation and extreme weather in general.

On the contrary, the environmental policy of the G7 is environmental imperialism. While it may still be given a certain greenwash in the Western states, it is essentially based on shifting the costs of the ecological crisis onto the countries and workers of the global South.

4 Global health and supply crisis

The pandemic once again highlighted the murderous nature of profiteering. In order to maintain global production chains, the deaths of hundreds of thousands, even millions, worldwide were accepted. In the G7 countries, it was still possible to cushion the burdens of this crisis for the working class to a certain extent through short-time workers' allowances, continued payment of wages and other state measures. In the countries of the global South, millions were faced with the alternative of Corona or starvation.

The resources to fight the pandemic were concentrated on the rich, western countries. This was particularly evident and cynical once effective vaccines had been developed. While a majority of the population of the G7 countries have been at least partially immunised, many are still waiting for the first vaccination in Africa.

To this day, governments of the G7 countries, including Germany, refuse to release the patents or funds to set up production and medical supplies. Yet the growing danger of pandemics itself must be understood in the context of the plundering of nature and especially of capitalist agriculture. The fact that millions and millions are left without health protection is itself a consequence of decades of cutbacks, privatisation and a general destruction of collective health and old-age provision. The "successes" of capitalism in recent decades are based not least on the plundering and destruction of public provision and infrastructure by the market, which according to the G7 is supposed to fix it.

5. Exploitation of the working class

The just world that the G7 is promoting is based on the increased exploitation of the global working class.

Globally, the class has grown massively in recent decades, especially in countries like China, India and many other Asian economies. At the same time, it has also become far more heterogeneous, a development that has itself been deepened by neoliberal attacks in recent decades.

Labour productivity rose massively in many countries. Actually, enough food and everyday necessities could be produced worldwide, and in less time, to ensure a secure life for all without hunger and existential angst. These resources could be used for ecological restructuring and the expansion of meaningful social work (health care, old age care, education, socialisation of domestic work, public transport, housing construction, remediation of environmental damage).

However, the opposite is the case. After all, under capitalism, production is not for the needs of the people, but for the increase of profit. The expansion of precarious work, intensification of work, social cuts and over-exploitation of the working class in the global South are only logical. For years, attempts were made to counteract the fall in profit rates by increasing the rate of exploitation through wage cuts and lowering the prices of consumer goods. At present, wages continue to be squeezed, but at the same time, wage earners worldwide are confronted with massive price increases due to inflation and the decline of their purchasing power in many semi-colonial countries.

The response of the G7: some cosmetic measures in the rich countries with massive loss of real wages; drastic impoverishment, devaluation of entire currencies in the global South. G7 and other neoliberal institutions are to save the national economies - at the expense of the masses through wage freezes, privatisations, cutbacks.

6. Dividing the masses through racism, nationalism, sexism.

It doesn't stop there. Despite all the assertions of equality, humanism and universal human rights, the policies of the G7 in reality promote inequality and division of the working class and all the oppressed through racism, nationalism, gender oppression - to name but a few key mechanisms of oppression.

In this, the lead governments are not satisfied with the quasi-automatic deepening of social inequality as a result of wage cuts and restrictions on social benefits. Rather, the division is actively promoted.

Racist, right-wing populist and other reactionary, even fascist, movements can be found in all G7 countries. While most governments officially oppose them, in reality they meet many of their demands. This becomes clear in the border regimes of the G7 countries - be it the racist border fence of the USA or the murderous regime of Fortress Europe. It is no less clear internally - racism against black people, people of colour, migrants from the global south and Muslims, is part of the structure of the "great democracies", be it in the USA, France or Germany.

While the G7 like to act as defenders of women and the sexually oppressed, there is no real equality of the sexes. On the contrary, violence against women and LGBTIAQ people is part of everyday life in these countries. Rights that have been won, even those that are still inaccessible, are on the line, as the attack on abortion rights in the USA shows. In addition, in a period of crisis and in the face of the intensifying struggle to redivide the world, racism and nationalism not only divide in the economic struggle, they also serve to mobilise the "own" nation under the leadership of the ruling class. Nationalism and racism, especially in their "democratic" guise, serve as a means to justify foreign intervention, armament, surveillance, dismantling of democratic rights and war.

7. G7 as imperial powers of order

The G7 are not simply a group of countries that make common agreements, sometimes pursuing bad, sometimes less bad, goals. They form the core of those states that have dominated the imperialist world order since the Second World War and want to continue to dominate it, even against emerging competition.

They, and the Western states allied to them, unite the largest part of the world's capital stock, i.e. fixed assets, to this day. With the US dollar and the euro, they control their central reserve currencies. Especially in the financial sector, US capital still has a dominance that is unparalleled.

Only a few other countries, global rivals like China and Russia or particularly strong semi-colonies like India, have

been able to form large capitals that can compete with the big corporations from the USA, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada. But it is China's rise that is expressing itself in a remarkable shift even here. For the G7, its supremacy is in jeopardy. Russia's international isolation and China's internal contradictions currently create a favourable situation for pushing forward the assertion of its own interests.

This is all the more the case as Russia's barbaric warfare plays into the hands of the West insofar as its own imperialist policy can be and is sold as a form of "democratic" self-defence in the interest of all humanity. According to US President Biden in Poland in March, we must prepare ourselves for a long struggle for democracy and freedom. The G7 supposedly embody the camp of freedom against Russian and Chinese despotism.

However, we must prepare for a long, hard struggle - against the G7 as well as against all other imperialist powers and the global capitalist order they represent.

The G7 and a whole web of institutions that the US, EU powers and their allies have developed over decades, form an alliance that wants to organise the globe in their interests in the struggle to redivide the world - both against their imperialist rivals like China and Russia and against the working class and oppressed worldwide.

As the world's rulers create their international institutions, we must oppose them with our own truly global structures - an international of resistance and class struggle for a socialist social order.

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