Home > Analysis by Country > Europe > Ukraine > Printer-friendly PDF

International antifascist forum in the People's Republic of Lugansk

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The 70th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi-Germany was a well chosen date for convening an international conference against fascism and war. The Communist Party of Lugansk, newly formed by some, not all, members of the former Communist Party of Ukraine issued the call.

The Forum was attended by 177 delegates representing 31 organisations from 12 countries (Belarus, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine). More than 20 organisations from around the world sent letters of support to the Forum. The League for the Fifth International was not able to participate in the conference itself, but also sent a letter of solidarity (see below) which was read out to the meeting.

This was the largest international left Forum ever held in Ukraine and it is clear that it could not have taken place in any Kiev-controlled areas at the present time. Many left activists are in jail there or suffer other repression, many have had to go into exile and only a few weeks ago two left critics of the government were killed on consecutive days. Torture is widespread, practised not only by fascists, but also by state forces.

Nonetheless, it was also difficult to hold the Forum in the People´s Republic of Lugansk. The nationalist authorities there tried to prevent it happening and it was only the initiative of Alexei Mosgovoi, the now dead leader of the ?Ghost-Brigade?, to take the Forum to Altschewsk, where his troops are based, that allowed it to take place at all. The delegations visited the town and participated in a parade commemorating the defeat of Nazi-Germany.

There was, of course, a political consensus to protest against the fascist attacks and the fierce repression by the Kiev government. In a declaration, the Forum also called on the EU governments, the United States, the deputies of the European Parliament, and representatives of the countries at the UN to take all possible measures, including economic and political sanctions against the State of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Government, to implement all the provisions of international agreements, including Minsk, aimed at ending the war and restoring peaceful life in the Donbass.

This is, at best, naïve. The US and the EU, with Germany in the lead, support the Kiev regime and have invested billions to establish it. Moreover, the US in particular is actively trying to heat up the civil war and to provoke Russia. Of course, all the participants know this but they had no alternative to demanding peace and appealing to the ?international community? in the old tradition of ?peace-conferences? organised by Stalinists.

Such calls will have no impact on the dire situation facing the people living in the Donbass. The Minsk treaty is not a way to peace but just a device to freeze the situation in the interest of German and Russian

Imperialism. Mosgovoi himself criticised it.

Nevertheless, for the suffering and struggling population of the Donbass, this Forum was also a great sign of international solidarity. In this sense, it fulfilled its purpose and the crowds at the concert given by Banda Basotti, one of the strongest supporters of solidarity with the people's republics, showed this.

The decision of the Forum to establish an International Committee of Solidarity with the Donbass also has great potential value. Its main goal is, ?united action by political parties, public organisations and movements, and independent activists to support the Donbass, preserve peace, oppose fascism and build a just society.?

Now, the participating organisations need to spread and coordinate the international fight against imperialist aggression particularly in their home countries. This should be combined with an international debate over the future of Ukraine. The League will fully support this and will actively help to promote this movement.
Franz Ickstatt

Letter to the International Solidarity Forum: "Anti-fascism, Internationalism and Solidarity," held in Lugansk, May 8, 2015

Dear comrades,

Please accept our best wishes for the success of the International Solidarity Forum being held in Lugansk and our apologies for being unable to send representatives.

We condemn the rulers of the USA and the European Union as the ones primarily responsible for fomenting not only a reactionary coup d?état in February 2014 but also the year long civil war, which inevitably followed it when the people of Eastern and southern Ukraine resisted the illegitimate regime installed in Kiev.

The aim of the US/EU imperialists is to seize hold of the country and integrate it into the EU and Nato. Whilst we consider that Russia also has imperialist interests, which we do not support in any way, we nevertheless recognise that in this case it is the hypocritical western democracies that are the aggressors who those of us in Western Europe and the USA must strive to frustrate and defeat.

It is in the interest of the ordinary people, the workers and the youth of our countries, indeed of the world, to combat the re-launched Cold War since it has the potential to ignite a European and even a world war.

Therefore, we hope that the conference in Lugansk will develop a plan of international actions to unite the people of the continent, East and West, to frustrate our rulers' plans and to aid antifascists and workers in Ukraine, not only in the East but also those in the rest of the country who are bravely resisting both the economic damage being inflicted on them and the murderous activities of the fascists and the repression of the regime.

Forward to a united and socialist Ukraine freed from fascism!
Down with the Nato warmongers and their puppets in the governments of Europe!
For A Socialist United States of the whole of Europe!

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