

**Forward to the 15th National Congress**

– See full Central Committee statement

April 2022

Voice of the South African Communist Party

# Umsebenzi



**STOP  
THE  
WAR IN  
UKRAINE**

**Stop all imperialist wars!**

### CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

# Forward to the 15th National Congress in this Year of Congresses

*This statement was released by the Central Committee on 3 April, following its last ordinary meeting before the 15th National Congress in July*

The South African Communist Party Central Committee, elected by the 14th National Congress of the Party in July 2017, held its last ordinary plenary session from 1 to 3 April 2022. It is the last ordinary session of the 14th SACP National Congress Central Committee prior to the SACP 15th National Congress.

The next SACP National Congress will take place in July this year.

As is the case with all our national congresses, our 15th will undertake a comprehensive political review of the past five years, analyse the current challenges, update our programme and develop what we now call strategic perspectives and tasks for the next five years and beyond. Our programme remains grounded on the necessity to drive a second, more radical phase of the national democratic revolution as our most direct route to socialism.

At the heart of our political evaluation will be the imperative to realise lasting solutions to the socio-economic challenges affecting the workers and the poor — the overwhelming majority of our people. These reflect the broader crises affecting capitalism globally: the current Covid-19 pandemic, the economic crises — which in our case is characterised by high levels of poverty, inequality, unemployment and the associated multiple crises of social reproduction — and climate change.

The Central Committee received and discussed a political report presented

by the General Secretary Cde Blade Nzimande, the state of the organisation and other secretariat reports, as well as the draft discussion document on the update of our programme, *the South African Road to Socialism*, and the report on constitutional amendments, among others. Regarding the updated Party Programme, the SACP will publicly release the discussion document, *the South African Struggle for Socialism*, which reflects on the strategic perspectives and tasks of the Party in the struggle.

#### Mapping strategy

The SACP will, in the next few weeks, publicly release other discussion documents which also relate to the programme, resolutions and declaration to be discussed and adopted by the 15th SACP National Congress. These will include discussion documents on energy security, climate change and environment degradation, the struggle against patriarchy, building a left popular front, the economic situation and the struggle for the transformation of the financial sector.

The 15th SACP National Congress

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**Our programme remains rooted in the need to drive a 2nd, more radical, phase of the NDR**

will also elect new national office bearers and the Central Committee for a five-year term which will end in July 2027.

The year 2022 is the year of congresses for many of our formations — the imperative of organisational renewal and programme-based unity of our Alliance and broader movement.

It is the year of the 14th Cosatu National Congress and the 55th ANC National Conference. The components of Alliance formations, including the Young Communist League of South Africa, the ANC Youth League, the ANC Women's League and the reconstituted uMkhonto weSizwe veterans' association, will also hold their national congresses or conferences by the end of December 2022. It is a rare occasion within the Alliance and the broader movement to have all formations and associated components holding their national congresses or conferences in the same year.

The year 2022 therefore poses particular challenges for our movement with implications for our country, especially the challenge of using our conferences or congresses to take forward the struggle for a better life for all, especially the overwhelming majority, the working-class and poor. The single biggest challenge in this regard is to ensure that we do not allow factionalism and narrow accumulation interests to dominate and shape the outcomes of these important platforms. Factionalism can only turn our attention away from addressing the material needs



Delegates mark the opening of the SACP's 2019 4th special National Congress

of our people.

As a movement we are faced with two principal tasks as we convene these congresses or conferences. The first is that of taking to heart, frankly and honestly, the meaning and implications of the setbacks we have had in the November 2021 local government elections. Secondly, in learning the appropriate lessons from these elections, we need to come up with concrete programmes, campaigns and policies that will reignite the hopes and confidence of our people in our movement. Equally important, these congresses or conferences must be used to unite ourselves around the principal objectives of our movement, to rid the movement of factionalism and corrupt and divisive elements, among other negative tendencies.

#### **Alliance action**

In the public arena, the consequences of factionalism and divisions reflect in their negative impact on the necessary developmental programmes to address the needs of especially the workers and the poor. Factionalism and divisions also lead to our people losing confidence in our movement.

The Central Committee is still strongly of the view that the ANC and the Alliance remain the best hope for our people and for the inclusive economic development of our country. Our Alliance is faced with the task of seeking to unite itself around

a common economic transformation programme in the wake of the stubborn persistence of poverty, inequality, unemployment and the associated multiple crises of social reproduction. It is also for this reason that the SACP has called for an urgent convening of an Alliance Economic Summit, prior to the ANC policy conference and the beginning of our 15th SACP National Congresses.

The Central Committee re-affirmed the SACP's belief that neither neo-liberalism nor state capture are foundations for a solution to the myriad economic and other challenges facing our country. In fact, the Central Committee is strongly of the view that both neoliberalism and state capture directly contradict and constitute a serious threat to the consolidation, defending and deepening of our national democratic revolution. Should the two tendencies achieve dominance, the national democratic revolution will be fatally compromised. We intend to further elucidate these perspectives in the run up to and at our Congress.

Neoliberalism advances a policy regime that weakens and eventually displaces public participation and the role of the state in the economy. This is done by creating conditions to maximise the exploitation of the working-class and privatisation, privileging profit over social interests, arguing that the socio-economic challenges of our people will

be addressed through a trickle-down. The scale and nature of our socio-economic challenges do not require, nor will they be solved through, a trickle down. Our situation requires a fundamental re-constitution and transformation of our economy.

#### **Double graft**

Under neoliberalism, a trend of financialisation, among others, has come to dominate both the global and our domestic economy. Every facet of economic activity has been reduced to a multiplicity of financial transactions at the direct expense of building domestic productive capacity through increased investment in the productive sectors, including manufacturing. This has led to de-industrialisation in economies such as the South African economy.

There is also a common thread between neoliberalism and state capture, much as these may at face value seem different. Although corruption is not absent in neoliberal manoeuvres, neoliberalism drives its agenda more through policy processes. While state capture sounds radical about keeping state-owned enterprises in the hands of the public, it does so to facilitate their looting through tenderisation.

Both state capture and neoliberalism facilitate accumulation of wealth, using state power, public authority or resources, by profit-seeking interests,

including primitive accumulators. State capture is more identifiable with brazen smash-and-grab corrupt manoeuvres, while neoliberalism involves regulatory and policy capture, including by foreign institutions hegemonised by imperialist interests. All this stands in the way of development and the deepening of the national democratic revolution.

The Central Committee is of the view that developing the national productive forces, diversifying the financial sector through reinstating prescribed assets, amongst others, will go a long way towards reigniting employment creation and redistribution of wealth in our highly unequal society. All our other policy instruments, including our fiscal, monetary and industrial policies must be aligned to this. The latest statistics on unemployment further underline the urgency of firmly placing employment creation as a key part of the Reserve Bank mandate. Given our current economic realities, it is also important that we focus on the expansion of the social wage, including advancing towards a comprehensive social security system.

### Pivotal state role

Turning around state-owned enterprises, as well as expanding and diversifying the publicly owned economic sector, should be among our key economic transformation priorities. The state has a key role to play in the economy, including through direct participation on behalf of the people through, among others, well-governed and thriving state-owned enterprises, and employment creation and direct leadership in economic development and structural transformation. Advancing these developmental perspectives, and rejecting both neoliberalism and state capture, should be the basis upon which we must seek to build the unity of our Alliance and broader movement.

Finally, we must unite around and strengthen our collective efforts to fight other forms of corruption, criminality and lawlessness in our country. To this end, the Central Committee welcomed the changes in leadership emerging within the South African Police Service. ●

**STOP THE WAR IN UKRAINE  
– STOP IMPERIALIST WARS**

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## CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

# Auctioning off the high frequency spectrum

*The SACP's CC pledges to campaign for a wireless open access network to give all South Africans affordable access to 5G and high-speed internet, and to use the network for development*

**T**he Central Committee reiterated the reservations and disapproval expressed by the SACP, both within the Alliance during engagements and through open public policy statements, on the decision to auction off the high radio frequency broadband spectrum.

In expressing a different view underpinned by a thorough analysis of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) network sector, the SACP stressed the necessity of handling the governance of the high radio frequency spectrum as a national asset to de-monopolise and transform the ICT network sector. The SACP anchored its proposal on the need to build a capable developmental state that serves the people regardless of their geographic location. We also had due regard to the responsibilities of the state to ensure national security, manage disasters and our overall developmental needs.

### Democratic control

The SACP underlined the need to develop democratic state control of national assets to eliminate uneven development, including paying priority attention to rural development. Democratic state control of the high radio frequency spectrum and its developmental governance could play a key role to bridge the digital divide, to spread connectivity infrastructure across the length and breadth of our country, including in the rural areas. As part of this imperative, South Africa must strive to universalise access to the internet and digital and mobile communication and related opportunities.

It is therefore important to ease access to high radio frequency broadband infrastructure-based communication data, including through a roll-out of free Wi-Fi hotspots in a nationally co-ordinated de-

velopment effort. In doing this, we must place a premium on high radio frequency broadband spectrum access services by the working-class and poor communities across the country. These are some of the perspectives and campaigns that the SACP will continue driving, and also to engage on within our Alliance and publicly.

The SACP will also continue engaging and forging a campaign around the policy of Wireless Open Access Network which the government dropped to pave the way for the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa to auction off the high radio frequency broadband spectrum on a highway speed. Particular attention will also have to be paid to the de-monopolisation of the mobile communication and internet service providers space by allowing more participants, including democratic worker- and community-controlled co-operatives and SMMEs. ●

## Blacking out working class viewers

**The rollout of digital set-top-boxes or decoders for working-class and poor families must be completed on a countrywide basis as a matter of urgency. The switch off of the analogue broadcasting signal to the digital broadcasting signal without first ensuring that all working-class and poor families are covered with the rollout of the set-top-boxes will leave the affected families without access to television broadcasting. This also amounts to depriving the affected families of access to public broadcasting services.**

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

# Unemployment catastrophe hits nearly half South Africans

*SA's jobs bloodbath demands robust state action to build a social security system, and boost cooperatives and SMEs*

**T**he SACP is deeply concerned about the high unemployment crisis. Although the **official** unemployment rate is 35%, the **real** unemployment is 46,2% - nearly half our working age population.

The catastrophe affects a 12,5-million strong population of active and discouraged work-seekers, with youth unemployment the highest of all age categories.

The most affected national groups, regardless of age and gender, are black African, followed by coloured, then by Indian/Asian.

Meanwhile, with an official unemployment rate of 4,2% above the national average, black African women are the most affected in terms of gender. Their expanded unemployment rate is 50,8%, which is about the same level as the expanded unemployment rate of black African, 50,7%.

## Fast track transformation

The racial and gender dimensions of unemployment should be understood as drawing attention to the continuous reproduction of the legacy of apartheid in our economy post-1994.

We cannot therefore overemphasise the importance of redress in employment creation programmes and interventions.

These should include a rigorous pursuit of co-operatives and small, medium and micro enterprise development, as part of the national imperative to advance, widen and deepen structural economic transformation.

Besides addressing unemployment towards securing the right of all to work, structural economic transformation must radically reduce inequality, eradicate poverty and resolve the associated crisis of social reproduction.



Jobless workers picketing for piece-work in Johannesburg

During the tabling of the 2022–2023 fiscal year budget in February 2022, the Minister of Finance, Enoch Godongwana, announced that the government was granting the Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRD) grant a 12-month extension. Instead of terminating the SRD grant at the end of the first quarter of 2022, the government should maintain the grant and consider improving it gradually towards a universal basic income grant, as part of building a comprehensive social security system. This is what the continuing unemployment crisis calls for in the here and now.

The government introduced the SRD grant at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic following public calls, including from the SACP.

During that time, in the second quarter of 2020, more than 2,2-million jobs were slashed in a jobs-bloodbath principally by capitalist bosses, deepening the unemployment crisis. ●

## SACP salutes mineworkers

The Central Committee congratulates the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) for concluding its National Congress successfully this week, as well as the entire collective of new National Office Bearers on their election.

In the same vein, the Central Committee expressed its sincere gratitude to former national office bearers of the union who served its membership with

dedication and led the union to its national congress this week.

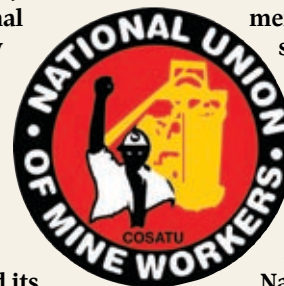
Our message to all NUM

members is this: Please support the collective

of the newly elected national office bearers to consolidate principled programmatic unity and grow the union from strength to strength as directed by the NUM

National Congress theme:

“Back to basics is when we defend and advance to build a radical movement”.



CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

# Stop the war in Ukraine – stop imperialist wars

*In this extract from its CC statement the SACP calls for an immediate end to the war in Ukraine and an end to all imperialist wars*

The imperialist instrument of war called Nato is the principal cause of the conflict in Ukraine through its expansion, aimed at and encircling Russia on several fronts, and more possibly with China as the ultimate target. The Central Committee reiterated the SACP's call to all concerned, to Nato, as well as to Russia and to Ukraine, to stop the military conflict in Ukraine with immediate effect. This must include the United States-controlled Nato both stopping and reversing and ending its imperialist expansion and wars.

Therefore, the Central Committee reiterated the call made by the SACP: No to imperialist war in Ukraine or any part of the world. As the SACP, we stand for peace and not war, which involves loss of life and increases the hardships on the working-class and the poor, including driving up the prices of food, energy and other basic necessities.

Pointing out the facts about the principal imperialist agenda and the destructive history of Nato and its expansionist aggression does not mean that we support any side in the war taking place in Ukraine. This is one reason we are emphatic in our call for a total end of the war and the respect for human rights in Ukraine with immediate effect, without regard to who is involved.

Through its expansion, Nato seeks not only to extend its sphere of military presence and domination but in the end to entrench the monopoly of the world economy through its transnational corporations to control natural resources, other sectors and markets in other countries and global regions. How can we as Africans ever forget the motive underpinning Nato's 2011 bombing of Libya, causing massive destruction and loss of life? Joe Biden, the current president of



**CIVILIAN DEAD:** The bodies of refugees killed in fighting in Irpin, north of Kyiv, lie below a memorial to the dead of the USSR's victorious struggle to defeat Nazi Germany.

the United States (US) was its vice president when that happened. Taking control of Libyan oil was the key factor.

Private wealth accumulation by the capitalist bosses who control the military industrial complex in the United States and other Nato members depends on acts of war. This is one reason why the US, either directly or through its domination of Nato, has caused many wars and why the stocks of its military industrial complex rallied as the conflict in Ukraine passed over into open war. When the working-class and working-class children lose their lives in war, the capitalist bosses laugh all the way to the bank.

In mid-March, Biden announced that the total amount that the US will pump into Ukraine in weapons of war and other military spending amounted to \$1-billion (R14,6-billion) in the previous week, an astronomical increase on top of the \$2.7-billion the US already pumped

into Ukraine in weapons and other military spending between 2014 and the beginning of this year.

In addition to calling for a total end to the war in Ukraine without regard to the sides involved, the Central Committee called on the United States and its imperialist Nato allies to end their imperialist wars across the world, and to withdraw all their troops from every country they have occupied or in which they have built military bases. These include ongoing wars against or occupation of Syria, Panama, Yemen, the illegal blockade of Cuba, all unjustified and unilateral sanctions against other countries, and the imperialist support for the occupation of Palestine by the apartheid Israeli regime, which must end with immediate effect, unconditionally.

The SACP stands for a just and peaceful world and is firmly opposed to all imperialist wars. ●



Russian tanks crossing into Ukraine from Belarus in February ...



...while a soldier waits in Ukrainian entrenchments

# The double standards of dominant global players

*Much of the world watches silently as the US interferes in many countries' internal affairs, writes Frans Baleni, but treats Russia's national security concerns as illegitimate*



The SACP has expressed its views on the conflict in Ukraine – saying that although it considers Russia's security concerns legitimate, it doesn't support the country's invasion of Ukraine. The source of the conflict stems, for Russia, from negotiated agreements its predecessor, the Soviet Union, reached with the US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) in the 1980s. These agreements are being now violated by the Nato. No one who can support any killings or displacement of innocent people in their own country. The sovereignty of a nation state is sacrosanct.

But we need to ask why is Ukraine treated differently by Nato and the US? There are several countries whose sovereignty has been violated and undermined by the US and West over decades. The US has interfered in many countries and toppled their governments.

What about Chile in 1971 and many other South American and Middle Eastern countries? And many countries on our own continent, including the DRC, with the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961. What was the US doing in Vietnam?

Cuba has suffered illegal sanctions,

killings, economic sabotage, attempts at regime change since 1959. These sanctions were imposed by the US using its veto powers in the United Nations bodies to undermine the overwhelming support for their scrapping.

The US made many unsuccessful attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro. Where is the world order to reprimand and/or punish the US for its illegal actions? These illegal sanctions against Cuba have denied Cubans access to Covid-19 vaccines.

Palestine is another example of the double standards by Nato, US and like-minded thinkers. The people of Palestine have been robbed of their land, sovereignty, human rights and dignity. The so-called world's policeman, the US, is the biggest supporter of the apartheid Israel army which continues to illegally continue to extend Israeli occupation of Palestine. The UN Security Council has become a toothless body because all these illegal acts are happening under its watch.

There are many other instances of these double standards. Let me add Iraq, the world was told, in a charge led by the US, that they had chemical weapons, which was a lie, and the sovereignty of that country was undermined, and its leader killed. Further examples, without

elaboration, include Libya, Afghanistan, Syria and Venezuela.

The approach employed by Nato and US against Russia is not helpful. The choice of words by Joe Biden, such as "war criminal" and "regime change in Russia", adds to tensions. Cde President Cyril Ramaphosa, on behalf of us all, proposed a mediated settlement of this conflict. The war talk simply means more people are likely to die, get injured, get displaced and suffer, and more property damaged.

My biggest fear is that Nato and US might push Russia to a point where it may consider using its nuclear weapons. We all know that if that happens, not only will we be in World War III, but the catastrophe is too scary to imagine.

We call for the invitation of former heads of states with no history of aggression to mediate in this conflict. This war is about capitalism's interests and insecurities, and imperialism. We call for an end of the conflict based on a mediated settlement. ●

**Cde Baleni is SACP International Relations Secretary, a Central Committee member and former general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers**



Russian T-72B3 tanks rumble through Donetsk early in the Ukrainian conflict

# Left unites to demand: Stop war in Ukraine!

*71 communist and workers parties (CWPs), including the SACP, communist youth organisations and a range of progressive parties have put their name to this joint statement of CWP*

**A**n independent struggle is needed against monopolies and bourgeois classes, for the overthrow of capitalism, for the strengthening of the class struggle against imperialist war, for socialism!

The Communist and Workers' Parties signing this Joint Statement are opposed to the imperialist conflict in Ukraine, which constitutes one of the consequences of the tragic situation for the peoples shaped after the overthrow of socialism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Both the bourgeois and the opportunist forces, which for years have fought against the USSR and recently celebrated the 30th anniversary of its dissolution, silencing the fact that the restoration of capitalism meant the dismantling of historic workers' and people's achievements and brought the peoples of the USSR back to the era of class exploitation and imperialist wars,

are completely exposed.

Developments in Ukraine, taking place in the framework of monopoly capitalism, are linked to the US, Nato, and EU plans and their intervention in the region in the context of their fierce competition with capitalist Russia for the control of the markets, raw materials, and transport networks of the country. These pursuits are concealed by imperialist powers, which are in conflict promoting their own pretexts such as "defending democracy", "self-defence", and one's right to "choose their alliances", compliance with the UN or OSCE principles, or supposedly "fascism", while deliberately detaching fascism from the capitalist system that gives rise to and utilises it.

We denounce the activity of fascist and nationalist forces in Ukraine, anti-communism and the persecution of

communists, the discrimination against the Russian-speaking population, the armed attacks of the Ukrainian government against the people in Donbas. We condemn the utilisation of reactionary political forces of Ukraine, including fascist groups, by the Euro-Atlantic powers for the implementation of their plans. In addition, the anti-communist rhetoric against Lenin, the Bolsheviks, and the Soviet Union to which the Russian leadership resorts to justify its own strategic plans in the region, is unacceptable. However, nothing can tarnish the enormous contribution of socialism in the Soviet Union, which was a multinational union of equal socialist republics.

The decision of the Russian Federation to initially recognise the "independence" of the so-called "peoples' republics" in Donbas and then to proceed to a Russian military intervention, which is taking place under the pretext of Russia's

“self-defence”, the “demilitarisation” and “defascistisation” of Ukraine, was not made to protect the people of the region or peace but to promote the interests of Russian monopolies in Ukrainian territory and their fierce competition with Western monopolies. We express our solidarity with the communists and the peoples of Russia and Ukraine, and we stand on their side to strengthen the struggle against nationalism, fostered by each bourgeoisie. The peoples of both countries, who lived in peace and jointly thrived in the framework of the USSR, as well as all other peoples have no interest in siding with one or another imperialist or alliance that serves the interests of the monopolies.

We highlight that the illusions fostered by bourgeois forces claiming that there could be a “better security architecture” in Europe by EU intervention, Nato “without military plans and aggressive weapon systems in its territory”, a “pro-peace EU”, or a “peaceful multipolar world”, etc are highly dangerous. All these assumptions have nothing to do with reality and are misleading for the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle, seeking to cultivate the perception that “peaceful imperialism” may exist. However, the truth is that Nato and the EU, like any capitalist transnational union, are predatory alliances with a deeply reactionary nature that cannot become pro-people and will continue to act against workers’ and people’s rights and the peoples; that capitalism goes hand in hand with imperialist wars.

We call on the peoples of the countries whose governments are involved in the developments, especially through Nato and the EU but also Russia, to struggle against the propaganda of the bourgeois forces that lure the people to the meat grinder of imperialist war using various spurious pretexts. To demand the closure of military bases, the return home of troops from missions abroad, to strengthen the struggle for the disengagement of the countries from imperialist plans and alliances such as Nato and the EU.

The interest of the working class and the popular strata requires us to strengthen the class criterion for analysing the developments, to chart our own independent path against monopolies and bourgeois classes, for the overthrow of capitalism, for the strengthening of the class struggle against imperialist war, for socialism, which remains as timely and necessary as ever. ●

## Signatories to the CWP statement on Ukraine

### SolidNet parties signing the joint statement

Algerian Party for Democracy and Socialism

Communist Party of Azerbaijan

Party of Labour of Austria

Communist Party of Bangladesh

Communist Party of Belgium

Communist Party of Canada

Communist Party in Denmark

Communist Party of Denmark

Communist Party of El Salvador

Communist Party of Finland

Communist Party of Greece

Communist Party of Kurdistan-Iraq

Workers Party of Ireland

Socialist Movement of Kazakhstan

Socialist Party of Latvia

Communist Party of Malta

Communist Party of Mexico

New Communist Party of the Netherlands

Communist Party of Norway

Palestinian Communist Party

Communist Party of Pakistan

Paraguayan Communist Party

Peruvian Communist Party

Philippines Communist Party [PKP 1930]

Communist Party of Poland

Romanian Socialist Party

South African Communist Party

Communist Party of the Workers of Spain

Sudanese Communist Party

Communist Party of Swaziland

Communist Party of Sweden

Syrian Communist Party

Communist Party of Turkey

Union of Communists of Ukraine

Communist Party of Venezuela

### Communist youth organisations signing the joint statement

Youth Section of the Party of Labour of Austria

Bangladesh Youth Union

Young Communists of Belgium

Communist Youth of Bolivia

Communist Youth Union, Czech Republic

Communist Youth of Denmark

Communist Youth of the

Communist Workers’ Party, Finland

Union of Communist Youth, France

Communist Youth of Greece

Communist Youth of Guatemala

Conolly Youth Movement, Ireland

Workers Party Youth, Ireland

Front of the Communist Youth, Italy

Front of the Communist Youth, Mexico

All Nepal National Free Students Union

Communist Youth Movement, Netherlands

Democratic Students Federation, Pakistan

Democratic Youth Front, Pakistan

Palestinian Communist Youth

Paraguayan Communist Youth

Union of Socialist Youth, Romania

Revolutionary Communist Youth

League (Bolsheviks), Russia

Collectives of Young Communists, Spain

Socialist Students Union, Sri Lanka

Socialist Youth Union, Sri Lanka

Communist Youth of Sweden

Leninist Communist Youth Union of Tajikistan

Communist Youth of Turkey

League of Young Communists

USA

Communist Youth of Venezuela

### Other parties signing the joint statement

Movement “Che Guevara” (Union of Communists in Bulgaria)

The Road of Independence

- Turkchypriot party/Cyprus

Communist Front (Italy)

Communist Revolutionary Party of France (PCRF)

People’s Liberation Front (JVP)

- Srilanka

Swiss Communist Party

# World Communist perspectives on war

*Communist and workers parties have universally condemned the war in Ukraine and imperialism's role in provoking it. Below is a selection of the dozens of statements from parties throughout the world*



## Communist Party of Ireland

The current situation confronts us with the spectre of an inter-imperialist nuclear war. There is an urgent need for neutral and non-aligned states to join together to work for nuclear disarmament and the dissolution of war alliances. There is a great opportunity for Ireland to use its membership of the UN Security Council to take an independent stand appropriate to a sovereign state.

In these dark days in Europe, it should not be forgotten that western powers are pursuing their warring activities such as supporting Saudi Arabia in its continual slaughter in Yemen and supplying it with bomber aircraft and armaments resulting in the devastation of urban areas. Like the wars in Africa that conflict is largely ignored by western media. Supporting proxy wars both large and small, as well as using illegal sanctions and subversion to advance and protect its economic, political and strategic military interests globally.



## Communist Party USA

The main task has to be to work to develop a peace movement and to change the Biden administration's policy. That's the best way and only way to support the workers of Russia and Ukraine.

The context set by US imperialism's role over the past months cannot be ig-

nored, including Cold War rhetoric, sabre rattling, and what might be called a de facto Natoization of Ukraine. By Natoization is meant the arming of the country beginning with Trump and continued by Biden, and the building of infrastructure with potential military uses along with provocative Western military exercises by US and UK armed forces.

Building the peace movement must be considered within the context of fighting the fascist danger. In other words, it's imperative that a broad movement be built around the key issues today: a cease fire, withdrawal of troops and setting a date for such, ending sanctions, bringing in the UN.



## Communist Party of Greece

The formal beginning of the war is the despicable Russian military intervention and invasion of Ukraine; however, the region has been sitting on a powder keg for many years now.

Irrespective of the pretexts used by both sides, the military conflict in Ukraine is the result of the sharpening of competition between the two warring camps, primarily focused on spheres of influence, market shares, raw materials, energy plans and transport routes; competition which can no longer be resolved by diplomatic-political means and fragile compromises.

On the one hand, there is the USA, Nato, and the EU which support the reactionary government of Kyiv, the paramilitary mechanisms, and the fascist groups in Ukraine and for years have been promoting their positions (Nato enlarge-

ment with Eastern European countries, missile defence shield, etc) aiming at the economic, political, and military encirclement of Russia.

On the other hand, there is capitalist Russia which is promoting its own plans for the capitalist unification of the former USSR countries and in the past years has proceeded to the annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation and the recent recognition of the "independence" of the so-called "People's Republics" in Donetsk and Luhansk.



## Communist Party of the Russian Federation

On February 24 President Putin took a decision on conducting a special operation in Ukraine. Its declared aim is demilitarisation and denazification of that country and protection of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics.

The government coup of 2014 in Ukraine was carried out with the support of the USA and the European Union. It brought to power extremely reactionary forces saturated with the poison of Bandera Nazism and Russophobia. The burning alive of people at the Odessa Trade Union House was a grim symbol of the anti-people intentions of those who had seized power. They embarked on a course of breaking ties with Russia and segregating the Russian population. The people of Crimea and Sebastopol responded by returning to their home harbour. The people of Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts chose the path of independence. The attempts of Bandera followers to "pacify" the DPR and LPR

claimed thousands of lives.

Nato's presence in Ukraine offered fundamentally new opportunities for launching a nuclear missile strike on our country. These hostile actions were backed by an unprecedented propaganda barrage on the people of Ukraine, our brothers and sisters. The West's preparation for a major war in Europe threatened death and destruction to the populations both of Russia and Ukraine.



### Communist Party of India (Marxist)

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its grave concern at the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It is unfortunate that Russia took military action against Ukraine. There should be an immediate cessation of armed hostilities and the establishment of peace.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States led Nato has been steadily expanding eastward, contrary to the assurance given to Russia. The efforts to get Ukraine to join Nato would pose a direct threat to Russia's security. Russia is also concerned about its security due to the threat posed by the presence of Nato forces and missiles at its borders in Eastern Europe. Hence the Russian demand for security guarantees, including Ukraine not joining Nato, is legitimate.



### Communist Party of India

In the past, Nato has shamelessly overseen some of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in history like the invasion of Yugoslavia or Iraq. They have no moral grounds or authority to question Russian aggression. On the other hand, Russian response to Nato's provocations has also been disproportionate. The full-blown attack has breached the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and is in complete violation of international law. After the disintegration of the USSR, capitalist oligarchies have come to control the state and the country has turned authoritarian. There is some indication

of Russia aspiring to become a regional hegemon and Putin wanting to restore a 'Greater Russia'. These aspirations can destabilize the region further but certainly, Nato is not the solution to this.



### Communist Party of Cuba

We call for a serious, constructive and realistic diplomatic solution to the current crisis in Europe, via peaceful means, ensuring the security and sovereignty of all, as well as regional and international peace, stability and security.

Cuba rejects hypocrisy and double standards. It should be recalled that in 1999 the United States and Nato launched a major attack on Yugoslavia, a European country that was fragmented with a high cost in human lives, in pursuit of geopolitical objectives, disregarding the UN Charter.



### Communist Party of Britain

Britain's Communists have reiterated their opposition to Russian president Putin's invasion of Ukraine and urged people to step up the campaign for a ceasefire and a peaceful settlement of the conflict. "The working class and peoples of Ukraine, Russia and elsewhere will not be the winners of this war", Carol Stavris told the Communist Party's executive committee at the weekend (12 March). The CP women's organiser highlighted the huge and lasting impact of the Russian offensive on hundreds of thousands of women and children fleeing Ukraine.

Ms Stavris warned that the Ukraine War is being used to boost fossil fuel industries, with fresh oil and gas drilling in the North Sea, an end to Britain's ban on fracking and a major increase in US exports of fracked oil and gas to Germany in place of Norstream imports from Russia. "The British and US governments show no signs of pushing for a peaceful settlement", she charged, pointing to recent government decisions to send

more arms to Ukraine and more troops to Poland.



### Communist Party of Finland

Putin's statements on the invasion have been heavily nationalistic and militaristic. He has compared the current situation with the German invasion of the Soviet Union in a way that equates Nato with Nazi Germany. But the military threat that Russia faces in no way justifies this attack, and the responsibility lies with Putin and his supporters. Putin has also made statements justifying his actions as being an act against communism.

An international meeting must be convened immediately in Europe, independently of Nato and the United States, to prepare the ground for peace talks between Russia, Ukraine and Nato. What is needed now are peace initiatives and the involvement of credible countries that are not committed to superpower politics. Nato must also shoulder its responsibility for intensifying the confrontation and refrain from exacerbating the situation with its own actions. We do not want the confrontation between the imperialists to become any more bellicose and damaging than it already is.



### Communist Party of Turkey

The war that has been going on for a month in Ukraine, on the one hand, means destruction for all working people in the region; On the other hand, it offers Nato an opportunity on a golden platter to expand further, and Nato uses this opportunity to the fullest. While many European countries, especially the USA and England, are transferring weapons and equipment to Ukraine, a build-up that will increase Nato's presence in Eastern Europe, which has already turned into an arms warehouse in recent years, is paving the way for a terrible increase. Finally, new combat forces will be deployed to four more countries. More armament and more military investments are expected from Nato member states. ●

INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY

# Act against GBV, patriarchy, and its fertiliser – capitalism

*We must struggle against, and ultimately defeat, GBV and patriarchy, as we are struggling against Covid-19, writes Joyce Moloi-Moropa*



International Working Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated on March 8. This celebration dates back to around 1911, recognising the struggle for women's emancipation, equality and justice. It is not only recognised by women, but by every cadre who cares about human rights, who sees this day as an important part of women's struggles. It gives us a chance to reflect and take stock of all the battles fought across the globe against women's oppression.

As the South African Communist Party, we recognise that we are not an island of different countries, but a global community. The Coronavirus pandemic reminded us of that by spreading throughout the world so fast.

Our country achieved its democratic dispensation later than most on the African continent, and we learned from previous experiences and tried to take the process forward. We remained inspired by Cde Samora Machel, the leader of Frelimo and former president of Mozambique in his book: *Mozambique: sowing the seeds of revolution*, where he said that the "liberation of women is a fundamental necessity for revolution".

We are 26 years into our democracy, and it is all the more necessary to evaluate our own progress against other countries. We ask ourselves if we are achieving significant progress? Are we still on course? Or are we experiencing a situation where our gains get reversed? If so,

what is the cause? Does it feel like that internationally? If violence against women, sexual assault and femicide are on the rise day by day, why? And what is it that we are doing so wrong?

As the SACP, we have our outstanding programme, The South African road to socialism, which encompasses all our work.

Let's reflect on aspects of our programme of action. Let's summarise it as: Wise – Workers, International/Ideology, Society and the Economy.

Workers are a critical sector of society. Encompassing various countries, we

swept away by capitalism. We need to sharpen our ideological discourse. We advocate socialism. This is the only ideology that can liberate our people. Since socialism is the future, we need to ensure that we build it here and now!

We are respectfully observing and celebrating this International Women's Day while we sharpen our spears to revive our fight against patriarchy, gender violence, sexual assaults and femicide. It is always our intention as Party cadres, to remain in the forefront of struggle for our society. It is those communities who stay for days without water, electricity, food and proper medical care that we care for.

The economy is the backbone of every country's development and should prosper for its citizens to survive. Shrinking economies are a major problem. No communist should be ignorant about the economy. Party cadres should understand the economy and be able to analyse it and come up with economic solutions that can leverage our poor communities out of poverty.

The current offensive of violence against women is shocking. Yes, it may well be that it had been worse in the past and we did not know about most cases, and now most women are able to report them. Social media exposes the ills of gender violence, and we have statistics. Still, we shrink once we hear of so many horrific cases of gender-based vi-



**Carry the major burden: Margaret Mbotshana of Mkhonto Square, Nyanga.** Pic courtesy: Vincent Lali, Ground Up

must remain alert to government processes and not allow anti-socialist budgets that work against the working class and poor. Remember, women carry the major burden if government does not deliver economically or in other ways.

Our society should be educated and empowered ideologically so as not to be

olence. This must stop! We need to find a way. The same way we fought the Corona virus, let's fight for women's dignity. I am glad that the SACP's Social Transformation Commission has been doing so much work. This work should extend to the provinces, districts and the branches of the SACP.

The poor health services have been exposed by the Covid scourge. Let's push for better health conditions for all.

As the SACP, we have long advocated

for National Health Insurance.

Our rural people have been burdened to care for most families who drifted from towns to the countryside after falling ill with HIV-Aids. The general state of health of poor communities leaves much to be desired. We cannot afford a health system that serves the rich and leaves out the poor.

The same way as we were emboldened to defeat the scourge of Covid, let us defeat patriarchy. Let us uproot pa-

triarchy from the world. We know that patriarchy is as stubborn as its identical twin, capitalism, as both happily co-exist and embrace one another. This calls for every conscious cadre globally to act for the emancipation of women and against violence against women and children. But also against capitalism, the fertiliser of patriarchy. ●

**Cde Moloi-Moropa is SACP National Treasurer and a former MP**

## IWWD's socialist and feminist roots



US garment worker Theresa Malkiel (right) got the first Woman's Day recognised by US socialists in 1909 to mark a garment worker's strike in 1908 (far left). German communist Clara Zetkin (centre) won endorsement from an international conference of working women a year later (1910) to make it an international working women's day. Zetkin was a close comrade of murdered German Communist Party leader Rosa Luxemburg (left).

International Women's Day (IWD), recognised by the United Nations, has solid working class and socialist roots. The first women's day was on 28 February 1909, in the USA to mark a march through New York a year earlier by 15 000 women workers – most of them garment workers – demanding shorter working hours, better pay, the right to vote and an end to child labour. Two months later, the Socialist Party of America accepted a proposal by the first woman elected to the party's national leadership, Theresa Malkiel – a socialist, feminist and anti-racist – that the last Sunday in February be recognised as National Woman's Day.

A year later, in 1910, German socialist and feminist activist and writer Clara Zetkin proposed to the International Working Women's Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, that the day be recognised as International Working Women's Day. Zetkin's proposal was unanimously accepted by the 100 delegates, representing 17 countries as a day on which working women globally would 'press for their demands'. Zetkin did not specify a day, but the first IWD was marked in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland on 19 March 1911.

Zetkin – Wild Clara to her comrades in the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) – was by then editor of SPD journal *Die Gleichheit* (Equality), the first woman elected to the SPD government body and a lifelong comrade of fellow SPD member Rosa Luxemburg.

Both were on the left of the centrist SPD: Luxemburg is quoted in her biography as joking that she and Zetkin should

have a joint epitaph on their graves: *Here lie the last two men of German Social Democracy.*

Zetkin and Luxemburg were among those who broke with the SPD over its support for World War I, forming what would become the Independent Social Democratic Party and the Spartacus League (much as their comrades in South Africa's International Socialist League broke with the Labour Party).

With the formation of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD), Zetkin served both on the central committee and as a KPD MP in the German parliament. She also served on the Communist International (CI) and headed its international secretariat for women. By then the date of IWWD had moved – to 8 March, to honour the tens of thousands of Russian women who went on strike in 1917 in the Russian capital to demand 'bread and peace'. Just a week later, with hundreds of thousands more joining the strike, including troops from the military garrison, Tsar Nicholas was forced to abdicate.

The UN recognised 8 March as IWWD in 1975.

As the SACP mark this day, let us never forget that it is a day for women of the working class, across the globe!

### Further reading

- *Lenin on the women's question*: [www.marxists.org/archive/zetkin/1920/lenin/zetkin.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/zetkin/1920/lenin/zetkin.htm)
- *Social Democracy and Woman Suffrage*. 1906, Translated by Jacques Bonhomme. London: 1906. [www.marxists.org/](http://www.marxists.org/)

INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY

# Together, we must break the bias – and break it now!

*More resolute action is needed to stamp out GBV and femicide and revamp the social and economic situation of women, says the PWMSA message to the SACP on International Working Women's Day, delivered by Zingiswa Losi*



We are happy to acknowledge the role of women especially working women and communist women in the history that led to this day becoming an International Women's Day. As the Progressive Women's Movement of South Africa (PWMSA), we take pride in the role played by women, especially working class women, in setting the agenda for the liberation movement.

But we are saddened that in our era, women seem to have moved backward. This can partly be placed at our own doorstep as women, because we became triumphalist when our issues were taken on board in the negotiations process and in the early days of our democracy through the establishment of the Office of the Status of Women (now the Women's Ministry), the National Gender Policy Framework, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) and appointment

of gender focal persons. We focussed on that, but we did not do well.

When the CGE made an evaluation of the National Gender Machinery and the gender focal people who have been overloaded, underpaid, juniorised and set up for failure, there was no response from the Alliance or the women's movement more broadly. Most of the blame lies with patriarchy, which is growing and mutating: now using women as its gatekeepers, where we attack each other rather than fight to advance our position as women to get more woman leaders and transform our society in more meaningful ways, in Marxist-Leninist ways, in feminist ways, built on inclusion and solidarity.

#### **Covid inflamed GBV**

Covid-19 and the response to it with lockdowns has eroded all the post-'94 gains. An even higher majority of our people live in abject poverty, especially women

and children. Women, in particular, were harder hit by job losses, and I estimate that two out of three jobs lost were lost by women. This situation was exacerbated by the July 2021 protests. Such looting could not have happened in an economy where its benefits are shared fairly with all role players.

How will we be able to break down the bias against women in general and women leaders in particular if we allow patriarchal attacks on women leaders to go unchallenged by communists and working class organisations? How can we break the bias if we are flailing in the face of vicious and horrendous gender-based violence? The violence of capitalism has allowed misogyny and GBV to grow to such high levels. Clearly the response to Covid has opened up more space for the violation and killing of women.

As the PWMSA, we have seen the admirable role played by women during this pandemic, both as part of the organised working class – joined by men in the health care sector – in society, and in our homes, risking their own lives to care for those who contracted Covid-19. But after all this, women are still not recognised for the life-saving reproductive and unpaid work they do in our society.

We have to find ways of addressing the issue of unpaid care work as the organised working class, considering how lucrative the health industry is. We believe that the SACP and PWMSA must look at this deeply to create transformative, just and fair recommendations on the situation of women. We need to resolve the unfair burden of reproductive labour on women. We need to resolve the issue of



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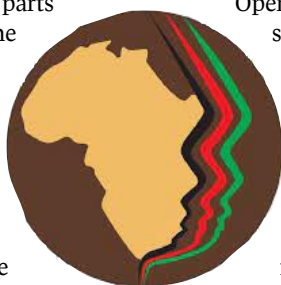


**Break the bias: International Women's Day 2022 mural in Belfast, Ireland, by anti-war NPO Children in Crossfire**

GBV and femicide. We need to eradicate sexual harassment from society.

**Crisis contexts and need for radical change**

Since the beginning of the year, we have been dealing with the climate crisis in the floods that hit parts of Gauteng, KZN and the Eastern Cape, and as winter is coming we need to be prepared for floods and fires in the Western Cape. Amid all that, we find that women are still poorly involved and largely marginalised in climate change discussions. This is true of local, national, sub-regional, continental and global discussions and



has implications for how comprehensive and helpful adaptation and mitigation measures will be.

We must also look at the tensions brought about by the difficult economic conditions that have been hijacked by Operation Dudula. We cannot resort to knee-jerk responses. We need to discuss the issue of migration nationally, regionally and continentally. Everyone needs to be heard. We need to start looking at the factors that cause migration. If we don't, we may also find ourselves, when in foreign lands, being called migrants or refugees, which is one reason why we need to have a principled and sustain-

able approach to the migration question. It would be best to develop a continental, regional and national position on migration, cognisant of our histories, our geopolitics and of our ubuntu praxis.

We hope that as partners in breaking the bias against women, we can look at emerging ideas about building a solidarity economy based on socialist and feminist ideas that move away from greed, monopoly and patriarchy toward inclusivity, redistribution and sharing and be able to sell the idea of a solidarity economy to everyone.

As the PWMSA, we are honoured to present a message of support today and we hope to gain support as well as we intensify our preparations for our elective meeting in November. We note that this is the year of Congresses for the whole Alliance. How does the SACP plan to advance and improve the situation of women? We have heard beautiful words; we now demand action and material change, not just for a few women in the leadership but for all of us in urban and rural areas.

*Cde Losi is Co-Convenor of the PWMSA, the first woman President of Cosatu and an SACP Central Committee member*

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