



**WORLD PEACE COUNCIL
CONSEJO MUNDIAL DE LA PAZ
CONSEIL MONDIAL DE LA PAIX**

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Report of **Thanassis Pafilis** General Secretary WPC to the Secretariat Meeting,
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Dear comrades and friends

It is with satisfaction to welcome the members of the Secretariat and the numerous guests from Europe to our meeting. The high number of attendees proofs the growing role of the WPC more and more. Our Secretariat meeting follows the successfully held regional meetings of Middle East recently in Cairo and the European regional meeting yesterday here in Brussels while a Continental American meeting is in plan.

The meeting of the Secretariat today here in Brussels is of great importance since it takes place in the city where two imperialist organisms are situated, the European Union and NATO, two political-economical and military structures hostile to the peoples of Europe and the whole world, serving the interests and profits of the multinational corporations. The Lisbon treaty of the EU and the new strategical concept of NATO to be approved in Lisbon next month are the reactionary guidelines of the two imperialist mechanisms which work hand in hand despite whatever antagonisms and contradictions. The interimperialist rivalries are resulting in a harsh competition for the control of spheres of influence, natural resources and markets at the expenses of the working class and popular strata.

Our Meeting takes place in the midst of the Capitalist economic crisis with severe consequences for the working people and popular masses in each country, due to the anti-people and anti-labour measures the governments in the capitalist countries are taking in order to secure the interests of the capital and the monopolies. Unemployment is reaching record highs with additional millions of people getting marginalized and impoverished. New privileges are being given to big Capital and corporations while their profits are growing. In the year 2010 we observed the massive protests, strikes and mobilizations of working people and class trade unions world wide. The anti-imperialist peace movement in every country supports and takes active part in these struggles against the barbaric attack to workers rights, salaries and pensions, which had been achievements of decades. The EU, the IMF and the World Bank are serving together with the respective governments exactly this tendency of social cuts and increase of profits, against the will and interests of the vast majority in each country.

At the same time the military expenses are reaching the highest ever sums. More than \$1,46 trillion USD (SIPRI data) were spent in 2009 (half of them only by the USA), which constitute an increase of 50% within ten years. The war industry and military-industrial complex seems not to be "affected" by the crisis.

Since the last Secretariat Meeting in Kathmandu (February 2010) the situation in regards to peace and security in the world is continuing its negative course. The aggressiveness of imperialism and its mechanisms towards peoples and nations is growing and the capitalist crisis has contributed to this.

The Occupation and destruction of Iraq, the killing more than 110.000 of Iraqi people (along with 4.400 occupation troops), religious and ethnic wars for its division are the tragic results of the barbaric invasion and foreign occupation which continues despite the lies of the supposed "cease of military operations" by the USA. The 50.000 US troops, its allies and private armies are remaining in Iraq, despite the lies the US administration is stating. The WPC has stated clearly in its Assembly 2008 and the later EC and Secretariat meetings, that we condemn the military occupation of Iraq and demand the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign occupation forces expressing our solidarity to the Iraqi people and their right to resist their occupiers.

In the core of the imperialist plan for the "New Middle East" is Israel and its interests, the favourite of all US partners in the Middle East, a mixture of an authoritarian, semi-military police state which suppresses first of all its citizens and continues for 43 years the occupation of Palestinian lands and for more than 60 years the slowly genocide of the Palestinian people. Israel is the main beneficiary of this plan. The direct and indirect support of the USA to Israel (worth many billions USD), the privileged and arbitrary positions of the USA and the E.U. towards Israel are outrageous.

The suffering of the Palestinian people, especially in the Palestinian Gaza strip is unending. The Israeli occupation forces are trying to impose their hegemony through the humanitarian crisis and suffering of thousands of children and families in the besieged Gaza. At the same time Israel tries to split the territories of West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, taking advantage also of the divisions and contradictions inside the Palestinian political forces. The ongoing direct negotiations (under the auspices of the US State Department) between the two sides cannot reach results if Israel insists in the construction of new settlements in the West Bank and its Prime Minister states that a future independent State of Palestine will have to recognize Israel as a Jewish State, parallel to the presence of Israeli troops in the West Bank.

There cannot be a solution beyond the establishment of an Independent State of Palestine at the borders of 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital, alongside Israel. With the release of all political prisoners from Israeli jails and the right to return for the Palestinian refugees. We demand the complete withdrawal of all occupation forces from the Palestinian lands, the Lebanese Shebaa farms and the Syrian Golan heights. There cannot be peace with occupation. We express our solidarity with the peoples under Israeli occupation and our support to the struggle to end it.

Allow me at this point to express also our solidarity with the peace loving forces inside Israel, which are struggling side by side with the Palestinians against the occupation and against all injustice Arab citizens are facing on daily basis inside Israel. They are the best and first allies of the Palestinians, facing the cruel oppressive regime in their daily life. The massive demonstrations inside Israel and the humanitarian aid for the Palestinians are to be appreciated.

We reiterate our position for the end of occupation of part of Cyprus and a solution based on a Bi-zonal, Bi-Communal Federation, with a single international entity, a single citizenship and sovereignty. We support the direct negotiations between the two communities and reject any foreign imperialist interference on the island.

We express our firm position against the separation of the Serbian province of Kosovo and the creation of an EU-NATO protectorate in the region as result of the imperialist aggressions in 1999 and oppose the incorporation of Serbia in the imperialist organisms.

The systematic campaign against Iran organized by Israel, USA and its European allies on the nuclear issue creates tension and is preparing the public opinion in their countries for a new aggression. The WPC is opposed to the imposition of economic sanctions by the UN Security Council against Iran and any further punitive sanctions by the E.U. and supports the right for the peaceful use of Nuclear Energy for its country. We express our solidarity with the peace loving forces in Iran in their complex struggle for peace, democracy and social justice. We firmly reject every threat against Iran and support the Iranian people to find solutions for the internal problems faced by the country on the basis of preserving the sovereignty and independence of Iran and without any external interference, denouncing any plan for a military attack on Iran under whatever pretext. In this context we express our serious concern and opposition to the agreement of the governments of Greece and Israel to allow the latter to use the Greek airspace for military exercise as a step of preparation for a possible attack against Iran.

Despite the efforts of the Peace Nobel winner US President Obama to reshuffle his image towards the Arab and Muslim world, we are aware of the clear imperialist drive of his administration and his allies. In Afghanistan the invasion and war has resulted in many thousands of civilian deaths and more than 2.000 occupation troops, while the opium production has reached the highest level, when 90% of the world production comes from that region.

The WPC underlined this year once again its principle positions for the universal and complete nuclear disarmament and organized together with the IADL in Paris an international event dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the Stockholm Appeal (June 2010), a mass project of the WPC with clear demands valid till today. Through our President we made our positions known to a broad event organized around the NPT review conference in May 2010 in New York and at the World Conference against Atomic & Hydrogen Bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August 2010).

The imperialists have plans also in Africa, a continent with hunger, diseases and misery as a result of colonial plunder in the past and imperialist interventions and exploitation today, hand in hand with several corrupted and submissive governments. Africa is a wanted new and virgin market for the Multinational corporations and their products, so are as well the natural resources of its soil. The whatsoever “development” imperialism is aiming at in Africa will lead to the relative improvement of livelihood of one part only of population in each country in order to become the consumers of the imported products. Imperialism does not care about the masses of people suffering from illiteracy, hunger and starvation. We condemn the creation of the US African Command (AFRICOM) and the plans to install it in Africa itself, as an instrument of imperialist domination and interference in domestic affairs of African States and a watch-dog of USA in the region.

We express our solidarity with the people of Sudan, in their desire and struggle for Democracy and Social justice and the preservation of the territorial integrity of their country against the imperialist plans to separate and divide it.

We would like to express our solidarity with the people of Western Sahara, the only country in Africa which is still under occupation and demand the right for the Saharawi people to decide freely in a referendum about their future.

Dear comrades and friends

The recent attempt of Coup d’ Etat in Ecuador against the elected President Rafael Correa showed the brutal face of imperialism and the domestic oligarchy which has never given up their plans to interfere and overthrow popular regimes in Latin America, like they have done it before in Honduras, Venezuela and in numerous cases before. The WPC salutes the peoples and anti-imperialist forces in

Latin America which are struggling for the right to determine their future free from imperialist interference so that the peoples will become the masters of their own.

We express our solidarity with the Socialist Cuba in defending the achievements of its revolution and demand the lifting of the economical blockade imposed by the USA. From Brussels we reject the “Common Position” of the EU against Cuba, expressing the majority of our peoples in Europe. We demand the unconditional release of the Cuban Five political prisoners which are for more than 12 years unjustly held in the USA as an act of political revenge against Cuba. The WPC shall undertake a campaign for the matter of the “Cuban Five” in the coming period.

We support fully the campaign against the deployment of new US Military Bases in the region which is aiming at new threats and militarization of the relations in the region with Colombia and its government being in the core of the imperialist plans as “another Israel” of Latin America. In this context we denounce the efforts of the Colombian General Prosecutor to sanction Senator Piedad Cordoba for her political actions in finding political solutions in the armed conflict in Colombia.

The situation in Pakistan with the ongoing US bombardment on the one hand and the disastrous floods on the other hand, has created one of the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world. We express our full hearted solidarity with the suffering people of Pakistan which is becoming a multiple victim of imperialism, its reactionary regime and of religious fundamentalist forces in the country.

Dear comrades and friends

The WPC has initiated last year a campaign against NATO, this aggressive war machinery, which is acting world wide. The WPC stood firm against NATO from the very first moment of its founding. We are continuing our struggle today while NATO is heading towards its Lisbon summit where it will approve its new strategic concept. It will allow and enable NATO to act worldwide as a “World Sheriff”, wherever the interests and profits of the Multinational capital are at stake. The expertise report which serves as a basis for the next summit was prepared by a group of personalities headed by the famous Madame Madeline Albright. NATO was never a defence organism, neither was it only a European or North Atlantic matter. The overthrow of international correlation of forces in 1991 made NATO an even more aggressive and reactionary war machine, an armed tool of Imperialism. It is cynical to observe that NATO and its leading governments tried to incorporate it also to the UN system, as civilian and humanitarian force.

NATO is adjusting its structures and concept to the aims of imperialism and to the “prompt global strike” strategy of the USA, to the Missile Defence Shield, which is shifting towards the Balkans. It is using new pretexts (piracy, cyber threats, climate change, the need for energy security, natural disasters etc) along with the “war on terror” in order to appear as “humanitarian” force. In reality NATO is doing a make-up of its bloody and reactionary image expanding through special cooperation worldwide its radius of murderous actions.

These cooperation structures are:

- PARTNERSHIP for Peace (PPP)
- EURO-ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL – (EAPC)
- MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUE (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia)
- ISTANBUL COOPERATION INITIATIVE - ICI (Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and UAE).
- NATO - UKRAINE COMMISSION
- NATO - GEORGIA COUNCIL
- COOPERATION WITH CONTACT COUNTRIES (Australia, Japan, Argentina, South Korea and New Zealand).

- NATO - RUSSIA COUNCIL - NRC

The WPC has issued together with the CPPC an International Appeal against NATO (which has been endorsed by 35 Organizations so far) and we fully support the actions and events prepared by the CPPC and 104 more Portuguese Organisations for 19-20 November in Lisbon. We demand the dissolution of NATO as enemy of the peoples and of peace and call upon all of you to mobilize and take active part in the Demonstration of 20th November in Lisbon.

The WPC Secretariat and EC has evaluated in previous meetings the developments around the actions against NATO in Strasbourg (April 2009) and the implications of other forces and international structures concluding that: *"the WPC's approach to the issue was brought out more clearly in juxtaposition to other forces that consciously attempt to cover up or to distort different sides of the issue, harboring amongst others delusions about the new US administration, and mainly, they do not acknowledge the 60 years as a unified totality but with slogans of the type "60 years are enough" leave a clear implication that in the past the presence of NATO could be justified."*

Today we are witnessing one more effort to dilute the real and historical content and character of NATO by forces sponsored and supported by the International Peace Bureau and other forces, persons who tried immediately after Strasbourg to prepare the ground of exclusive actions in Lisbon without the CPPC and the WPC as they tried in other occasions before. We rejected those and actions and their hostile behavior towards the WPC on Portuguese and international level. Our approach is of anti-imperialist unity, aiming in the broad massive awakening and struggle against NATO, the member states governments and their decisions and actions. We do not believe in any kind of transformation of NATO, neither do we have any illusions about the role of the EU as counterweight to NATO or the USA.

We are very confident that the massive popular anti-NATO actions of the CPPC and the WPC in Lisbon will be the best respond to all kind of political games. NATO and its summit in Portugal will mark a further important step forward in the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples.

Dear comrades and friends

The WPC is growing stronger in every region becoming a reference point for dozens of organisations and movements again. Our regional meetings and campaigns, our constitutional meetings in all parts of the world and the high number of attending Organisations, but first of all our firm and clear anti-imperialist positions on the side of the struggling peoples, are the solid fundament for our success. After consultations we propose to call for our next Executive Committee meeting next April/May 2011 on the island of the Revolution, to be hosted by our Cuban friends from the Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples (MOVPAZ).