

Manifesto for the Revolutionary Liberation of



Black Africa

Published by
December 2017



***Manifesto for the Revolutionary Liberation of Black Africa
Economic Freedom and Political Power for the Workers and
Oppressed through Socialist Revolution!***

*Adopted by the 2nd Congress of the
Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)*

Lusaka (Zambia), November 2017

Published by the
Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)

Web: www.thecommunists.net

Email: rcit@thecommunists.net

Phone: +43 (0)650 406 83 14

The RCIT has sections and activists in Zambia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Tunisia, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and Austria.

© **Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)**

All rights reserved

Contents

Introduction	4
Foreign Exploiters – Out of Africa!	6
The Wealth to Those Who Create It! Economic Freedom Now!	10
Down with the Capitalist Dictatorships and Corrupt Pseudo-Democracies!	14
Organize the Workers and Oppressed for the Mass Struggle!	16
For a Government of Workers and Poor Peasants! For a Socialist Revolution!	17
For Pan-African Unity! For the United Socialist States of Africa!	18
For a United Front of Struggle! Overcome the Crisis of Leadership – Build a Revolutionary Party Nationally and Internationally!	20
Appendix	23

Introduction

For many years, the pitchmen of the ruling class told us that Africa has a bright future. In fact, these years were only shiny for the capitalists. We, the workers and oppressed in Africa, continue to suffer from the consequences of capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression.

Our continent is bleeding: climate change – caused by the reckless profit-driven economy of the capitalist corporations in the rich countries – increasingly destroys the fertile basis of our continent by leading to expanded erosion, desertification, deforestation, and most importantly drought and water shortages. As a result, 300 million Africans live in a water-stressed environment and this number is expected to increase dramatically in the next decade. Likewise, the World Bank estimates that, by 2030, the population living in dry lands is expected to grow by 58–74%.

Our raw materials and lands are plundered by American, European and Chinese corporations as well as white, Chinese and Indian settlers, while the African workers, youth and poor peasants continue to live in poverty!

Given the misery of life in Africa, it is not surprising that nearly a third of all people in sub-Saharan Africa seek to move abroad. While capitalism has introduced computer and mobiles, it has been incapable of leading Africa's people out of backwardness and poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than 750 million people, who live in dire poverty (earning less than US\$1 per day), rely on subsistence agriculture as their major source of food and income. In the mines and the oil and gas industries, the big corporations super-exploit our workers – among them many children – until exhaustion and death!

This situation will not and cannot improve as long as the big enterprises and land are in the hands of capitalists – a class which by its very nature can only feather their own nests at the cost of the overwhelming majority, the working class and the poor peasantry.

As capitalism has entered an historic period of decay since 2008, poverty, wars and climate catastrophes will inevitable increase until the working class and oppressed rise up and overthrow this system globally. Under conditions of declining capitalism, the ruling class around the globe is relentlessly accelerating its attacks on the workers and poor. The imperialist Great Powers of West and East (US, EU, Russia, China, Japan), whose mutual rivalry is steadily intensifying, are terrorizing the peoples of the semi-colonial world both militarily and economically by means of super-exploitation.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) declares that economic freedom and political power can *only* be achieved if a country's working class, in alliance with the poor peasantry, overthrows the ruling class, expels the foreign imperialists and opens the road towards socialism – first in its own country, then throughout Africa and finally internationally!

Confirming and building upon its programmatic manifestos of 2012 and 2016, as well as its *Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa* (2017), the RCIT issues this *Manifesto* to the militant fighters of the African working class, youth and oppressed. We call upon all revolutionaries to unite and organize for the international struggle for socialist revolution and the liberation of humanity!

Foreign Exploiters – Out of Africa!

Since the European colonial powers entered Africa centuries ago, they have plundered our continent and enslaved our peoples. In the past, they shipped millions of black Africans as slaves to North and South America. Today, the imperialist Great Powers and their monopolies repress and exploit our people under the guise of formal political independence of the African countries. This is why we characterize these formally independent capitalist states as “*semi-colonies*” or “*neo-colonies*.”

As a result, the strategic sectors of Africa’s economy, like mining, oil and finance, remain dominated by foreign capitalist monopolies. For example, as many as 101 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange have mineral operations in sub-Saharan Africa. These corporations control over US\$1 trillion worth of Africa’s resources with just five commodities – oil, gold, diamonds, coal and platinum. Furthermore, these foreign monopolies command vast swathes of Africa’s land area, their concessions covering a staggering 1.03 million square kilometres of the continent. More than 52% of all banks in sub-Saharan Africa are in foreign hands.

It is therefore not surprising that the imperialist monopolies succeed in reaping massive profits out of Africa every year. A recently published study gives the following figures: “*While \$134 billion flows into the continent each year, predominantly in the form of loans, foreign investment and aid; \$192 billion is taken out, mainly in profits made by foreign companies, tax dodging and the costs of adapting to climate change. The result is that Africa suffers a net loss of \$58 billion a year.*” (Health Poverty Action Briefing, July 2014)

We see, therefore, that for centuries Africa has been plundered because of its wealth in minerals and as a source of cheap labour. As a result, today it is the poorest and most backward continent. In other words, we can say that “*Africa is poor because it is rich.*”

For these reasons, the RCIT supports the call for the old and new colonial powers to pay compensation for centuries of slavery, exploitation and oppression! We denounce the hypocrisy of the western Great Powers which deny African nations and Afro-Americans reparations and ask us to forget the past atrocities perpetuated against these peoples. What a contrast this is compared to the reparations which have been paid because of the horrible Nazi crimes against the Jewish people! Are African lives worth less?! After 1994, a sham *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* was created in the “new” South Africa as a healing mechanism. In fact white murderers were forgiven for their crimes.

Traditionally, our people had to suffer from the European imperialists and, since World War II, from North America as well. Today, new exploiters have arrived to grow rich from our blood, sweat and tears. This is the case with China, in particular, the new emerging imperialist Great Power and, to a lesser

degree, with Japan and India. China has become the biggest trading partner of Africa and one of its three largest foreign investors on the continent. About 10,000 Chinese corporations operate in Africa. They control about 12% of its total industrial production.

Various greedy politicians, camouflaging their goals with some pseudo-socialist phraseology (like the ANC and the Stalinist SACP in South Africa or Mugabe's ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe), try to sell us China as a better, benign Great Power. As a matter of fact, the Chinese monopolies are no better than their European and American rivals: they *all* are sucking us dry!

The RCIT calls for a joint struggle of the workers and popular mass organizations to expropriate the imperialist monopolies and to scrap all imperialist deals which impose on the African countries another form of slavery – economic slavery!

As a result of our economic dependence on the Great Powers and their monopolies, in our political life we are dominated by them too. True, they don't occupy our land directly as they did in the epoch of colonialism. Today, they control the African continent indirectly via the local ruling class. While occasional and temporary conflicts can occur between the imperialists and African capitalists, the latter are organically incapable of breaking with the imperialist system. This is because no national capitalist market can exist in isolation from the world market and the latter is dominated precisely by the imperialist monopolies. Capitalism in Africa exists, and can only exist, as an amalgamation of imperialist capital and indigenous African capital in which the latter is subordinate to the former.

In order to better control our continent, the Great Powers increasingly create military bases and intervene either directly or via local puppets: French and German troops have been stationed in Mali to put down the insurgency of the Tuareg people in Azawad; US and European troops repeatedly strike and kill in Somalia as well as Libya; France and the US operate military bases in several African countries as does China in Djibouti; and various Great Powers deploy warships offshore from both Somalia and Libya. Furthermore, the Great Powers increasingly deploy local African troops which formally operate as independent forces, but in reality are foot soldiers for imperialism (e.g., AMISOM in Somalia, the G5 Sahel Force). In fact, these examples are just a repetition of what took place during colonialism when France and Britain used African soldiers as cannon fodder to save their own skins.

The working class of the semi-colonies must resist the establishment of military bases under the US's AFRICOM. This is an attack on the sovereignty of African nations and a cover to re-colonise African states and protect capitalist interests of the Great Powers. Let's never forget that, at the height of Zimbabwe's land reclamation in 2008, Tony Blair threatened to invade Zimbabwe using the US airbase at Botswana.

The RCIT supports the resistance of the people in Somalia, Azawad and

other countries against occupation by imperialist troops and their local agents. Likewise, we call for lifting the sanctions against Zimbabwe which – under the pretext of being directed against the Mugabe regime – in reality are an attack on the people! These illegal economic sanctions are in fact punitive measures meant to stop other African peasants from following the Zimbabwean example of expropriating land from white settlers. The RCIT unconditionally supports land reform in Zimbabwe – but at the same time gives no *political* support to the Mugabe government. We also support the increasingly determined demand of the South Africans to take back their land from the white settlers without compensation.

Another legacy of old and new colonialism are the minorities of privileged settlers. Traditionally, various African countries experienced the transplantation of white settlers. More recently, Chinese settlers (and in some cases also settlers from India) have taken up residence on our continent. Usually, they become privileged minorities which assist the Great Powers in exploiting our people. We say openly: the settlers can only stay in our country *if* they accept the loss of all privileges and the nationalization of their wealth (which they accumulated by bleeding our labour and land), and live among us as equals.

While the imperialist powers are no longer able to ship slaves, they continue to exploit our people via migration. Given the misery on our continent, millions of Africans are forced to migrate to Europe and the US where they are exploited as cheap sources of labour (relative to the domestic workers) and are oppressed on a national basis (i.e., discriminated against in terms of citizenship rights; terrorized by the authorities and racists; religious discrimination of Muslims and other minorities, etc.). As result of this mass migration from Africa, the imperialists deprive our continent of their educated labourers. For example, more African scientists live in the US today than in Africa!

We know that the solution for Africa's misery is *not* migration but a socialist future, without capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression. At the same time we deplore the imperialist Fortress Europe, which bears key responsibility for our misery, and deny it the right to limit our freedom of movement! We demand free access to Europe! Likewise, we reject being used as cheap labour and demand equal wages and full citizenship rights in the wealthy countries!

Both in Africa, as well as internationally, the RCIT demands to:

* *Expel all the Great Powers (US, China, EU, etc.) from Africa!*

* *Expropriate all the imperialist banks and corporations without compensation! For the nationalization and centralization of all banks and the creation of one state bank operating on the basis of socialist guidelines!*

* *Cancel all debts to African countries! Down with the economic terrorist regime of the IMF and World Bank! No to all "free trade" treaties with the imperialist powers!*

* *Drive the Great Powers from African soil and territorial waters! Shut down all imperialist military bases!*

* *Defeat the military intervention of the Great Powers and their local stooges! Support*

the resistance against the imperialist occupiers in Mali and Somalia!

** Force the old and new colonial powers to pay compensation for centuries of slavery, exploitation and oppression!*

** Abolish all privileges for the settlers!*

** No sanctions against Zimbabwe or any other African countries!*

** Reject imperialist border controls! Open the borders! Raise the wages for migrants to the levels of domestic workers! Full equality of migrants! Stop the racial oppression of Black people in Europe, Latin America, US and other parts of the world! Stop the Islamophobic discrimination of Muslim migrants in Europe; No to all religious-based persecution of minorities!*

The Wealth to Those Who Create It! Economic Freedom Now!

In Africa – as everywhere else in this global capitalist bloodsucking system – the workers and poor peasants have to work hard to make the bosses rich. According to the UN's International Labour Organization, more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of all labourers in sub-Saharan Africa have to work in insecure employment conditions. About 80% are so-called "working poor," i.e., they are poor despite their having a job and must feed themselves and their families on an income of less than \$ 2 a day! Often they suffer super-exploitation beyond imagination. For example, an estimated 40% of artisanal (small-scale, subsistence, "freelance") miners in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), are children, who are forced to use their bare hands to extract materials, utilizing few tools and no machinery, with devastating consequences to their health! Likewise, many women and children have no choice but to work as street traders, domestic slave labourers (maids / servants/ cleaners / baby-sitters) for the upper exploiting classes. Inequality is continuing to increase. Today, for example, the richest 10% of Ghana's population account for one third of national consumption, while the poorest 10% consume only 1.7% of goods and services!

The central class leading the liberation struggle is the working class, currently constituting about 30% of the African labour force. Among them are more than 37 million women workers. *This* is the class which produces surplus value and, hence, the profits of the capitalist corporations. It is *this* class which can paralyze the capitalist economy. Miners in the DRC, for example, produce more than half of the world's supply of cobalt, without which mobile phones could not operate. When the heroic miners of Marikana in South Africa went on strike and paralyzed the South Africa platinum industry for weeks, the entire capitalist world watched nervously. The same takes places when oil workers in Nigeria go out on strike. It is the *working class* which develops a collective consciousness, free of any desire to become small property owners. It is the *working class* which will lead the struggle for a socialist future, one without classes, exploitation and oppression!

The most important sectors of the African working class are those employed in the strategically crucial raw material industries (oil, gas, mines, etc.) as well as other central sectors like telecommunications, transport and the public sector.

Given their precarious living conditions, the struggle of the working class for higher wages, decent jobs, safety in the work place, and permanent contracts instead of unprotected, informal and temporary ones – all such immediate demands play a crucial role in the coming struggles of the African working class.

However, as long as the capitalists control the means of production – the big enterprises and the mines – we will continue to be little more than wage slaves

on the receiving end of their despotism. Economic liberation is *only* possible if we take back what we have created and what must serve the interests of the people. This is why the working class must organize and fight against all exploiters – irrespective of whether they are foreign corporations, white, Chinese or Indian settlers, or black capitalists!

This is why the RCIT says that any consistent strategy in the interest of the working class must strive to nationalize all big corporations, mines and banks under control of the workers! Only if the workers control state enterprises will we be able to ensure that no corrupt state manager or bureaucrat will misuse the means of production for the benefit of non-working class interests.

The most important ally of the working class is the poor peasantry – particularly in Africa – where agriculture still constitutes the largest economic sector, employing 48% of all the labour force. As, under capitalism, land can only be distributed extremely unequally, Africa has 33 million farms of less than 2 hectares in area, accounting for 80% of all farms. Landless households or those owning less than 0.1 hectare (1,000 square meters) constitute 25% of all rural agricultural households. At the same, huge swaths of African land are owned by white settlers – in South Africa a small minority of an estimated 50,000 white farmers owns around 90% of all commercial farmland in that country! Such figures reveal the authentic, capitalist nature of the government of the ANC and the Stalinist “Communist” Party which has been in power since 1994; a government that has forged an alliance with the old white ruling class instead of undertaking any serious land reform!

Furthermore, imperialist corporations are buying huge tracts of African land for specialized export production. Over the last 10 years, large-scale investment contracts in Africa have allocated 20 million hectares, more arable land the cultivated areas of South Africa and Zimbabwe combined!

Finally, there is also a significant layer of black capitalist land owners. In Kenya, three powerful political families are estimated to own more than 1 million acres (404,000 hectares) of rural land, while at least 4 million rural Kenyan citizens are entirely landless and at least 11 million own less than 1 hectare.

The RCIT calls for the nationalization of all large estates so that popular committees of poor peasants can decide how best to redistribute and utilize such land! Furthermore, the state must provide the poor peasants with interest-free loans. In our opinion, the most effective way to increase agricultural productivity is through the voluntary association of peasants into cooperatives.

An essential part of our program is the struggle for full equality for women. Today African women earn 30% less than men. They are exploited as cheap rural wage slaves in the agricultural sector. There are only few opportunities for public childcare (nurseries, kindergartens, etc). Furthermore, women suffer from violence and sexual oppression (rape, female genital mutilation, etc.). We say that, as women constitute half of our class, there can be no serious struggle for liberation without fighting for full equality for women. The RCIT therefore

calls for the creation of a *revolutionary women's movement!*

Africa is the world's youngest continent: 60% of sub-Saharan Africa's population is under 25 years of age! Like women, the young constitute a super-exploited sector of our class. 70% of working youth are statistically poor despite having a job. In South Africa, half of all youth are unemployed and 40% of those employed are informal workers. Access to education is pathetic, with the result that 29.6% of all sub-Saharan Africa young people are illiterate (2011). But, in countless struggles over the past years, the youth have proven that they are determined to take their futures into their own hands! There can be no doubt that the youth will play a vanguard role in the liberation struggle! For a *revolutionary youth movement!*

As a result of the ravishments of imperialism, Africa's health system is in a disastrous state. In sub-Saharan Africa, infectious diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS cause 69% of all deaths. While Africa bears one quarter of the world's disease, it has only 2% of the world's doctors. In Zambia, the doctor to patient ratio is 1:100,000! We call for a massive expansion of the health system financed by the raising of taxes on the rich.

Environmental pollution is a big threat to our health and our future. It caused the death of more than 9 million people worldwide in 2015, most of them living in the semi-colonial countries. In Black Africa even more people (approximately one million) die from air pollution than from malnutrition. Multinational corporations are the biggest polluters as 12.5% of worldwide industrial carbon pollution since the year 1854 is caused by *Chevron, ConocoPhillips, BP, ExxonMobil* and *Shell* alone. In addition climate change is also hitting the African continent and will have the worst consequences for our people in near future. While the imperialist countries will protect themselves from droughts, storms and other natural disasters, they will force us to die in humanitarian catastrophes like they did since now. The economic liberation of Black Africa is highly urgent in order to protect nature from the imperialist beast and to establish a sustainable and environmentally friendly production. We demand the closure of all polluting companies without reparation for the capitalists! However, the closed companies must be replaced by environmentally friendly companies to keep the jobs safe for all workers! Industry and agriculture must be based on renewable resources including renewable energy! Abolish the emissions trading system! It only serves the multinational corporations, but damages the national economies in Black Africa not to speak about the catastrophic consequences for the health of the people and the planet as such. Replace it with a 100% clear energy regulation for all!

Pathetic conditions of housing for most urban Africans is yet another expression of the poverty enforced on us by the imperialist predators. Half of the urban citizens in Nigeria live in slums; in Ethiopia and Congo the figure is three quarters! All in all, today 60-70% of urban African households reside in slums.

Africa's infrastructure also suffers from backwardness imposed by imperialism. Power production is pathetic: the 48 countries of sub-Saharan Africa (with a combined population of 800 million) generate roughly the same amount of power as Spain (with a population of 45 million)! Nigeria, Africa's largest oil producer and most populous country with more than 160 million people, produces only 4,000 megawatts of power (less than half of its total demand), a fact which costs the country approximately 4% in lost GDP annually. The people of Lusaka, Zambia's capital, experience water stoppages that last days at a time.

Similarly, the roads and the public transport systems are, in general, in a deplorable state: Only one third of Africans residing in rural areas live within 2 km of a paved road. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that a mere 11% of all African trade takes place within sub-Saharan Africa. It is estimated that it would cost more to ship a ton of wheat from Mombasa (in Kenya) to Kampala (in Uganda) than to ship the same consignment to Chicago! We must enforce a public employment program to vastly expand the infrastructure and housing in sub-Saharan Africa!

Both in Africa, as well as internationally, the RCIT calls for:

** Jobs for all and higher wages! For safe and secure job! For a public employment programs to expand infrastructure, housing, health care, etc., financed by massive taxing of the rich!*

** Nationalization of all big corporations, mines and banks under control of the workers!*

** Nationalization of large estates so that the poor peasants can decide how to best utilize the land!*

** Raising women's wages to the level of their class brothers! For a popular campaign to stop violence against women!*

** Jobs and education for all youth! Equal wages! Abolish child labour!*

** Free health system for all, financed by a massive taxing of the rich!*

** The right to decent food, housing and social protection for all!*

Down with the Capitalist Dictatorships and Corrupt Pseudo-Democracies!

While, officially, African countries are no longer colonies of the imperialist Great Powers, they lag very far behind any notion of true political independence. Rather, these regimes of formally independent republics all serve the interests of foreign monopolies and domestic capitalists. They certainly do not serve the African people, but collaborate with the imperialist Great Powers.

This situation is the result of the subsequent selling-out of the heroic liberation struggle of our parents and grandparents, who forced the colonial powers to leave our countries, and its betrayal by the new elite ruling class of African capitalists and careerist politicians.

As a result, not a single one of the fundamental tasks of the liberation struggle – authentic democracy, real national independence, land reform in the interests of the poor peasants, and social justice – were achieved. This will remain the case as long as the working class and the oppressed don't topple the capitalist class and seized power!

Given the economic misery and social inequality throughout Africa, it is hardly surprising that the small black capitalist elite and their imperialist patrons only manage to retain power by means of open dictatorships and corrupt parliamentary pseudo-democracies. The decades-long dictatorships of the Gnassingbé clan in Togo, of Mugabe in Zimbabwe, of Kabila (father and son) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, of Compaoré in Burkina Faso, are just examples. In other countries, the faces of ruling politicians change more often; however they are all thoroughly corrupt and serve their capitalist masters.

Every day, attacks on the most fundamental democratic rights take place in our countries. Police and military feel omnipotent and behave accordingly. Urban and rural poor regularly experience their common despotism. How often do we have to pay bribes when we need deal with the authorities?! Oppositional activists, active trade unionists or students, activists for the rights of poor peasants or women, and critical journalists must live in fear of persecution or worse. Likewise, minority ethnic and religious groups often face discrimination. The struggle for the defence of the most basic democratic rights is a key issue in our struggle for liberation!

However, no authentic democracy is possible so long as economic power remains in the hands of small elite of domestic and foreign capitalists. As long as this is the case, the elite will be able to bribe whoever is in power and prevail over the interests of the working class and poor.

The rulers use the constitution to exercise their power in the interests of the rich. In order to fight against this, the RCIT calls for the convening of a *Revolutionary Constituent Assembly* for each African nation. Such an assembly should be a bourgeois democratic body with delegates who are controllable by

those who elected them and who are open to recall by their constituents. The youth, who already possess the “right” to work, must also have the right to vote for such an assembly. The assembly’s role will be to debate and decide on a new constitution. It must not be controlled by the ruling class which would only manipulate it in its interests, but it should be convened and protected by workers’ and popular militias against any intimidation of reactionary forces.

** For the freedom of speech and assembly!*

** Defend the right to strike and demonstrate!*

** For the freedom of political and union organization, as well as the freedom to make use of all communication and information media!*

** No discrimination of ethnic or religious minorities!*

** For the right to elect and recall all public officeholders!*

** Access to human rights, including political rights for prisoners!*

** All state officials and their actions – especially police, army, intelligence, administration, legal, enterprise directors, etc. – must be monitored by workers’ and popular councils!*

** For a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly!*

Organize the Workers and Oppressed for the Mass Struggle!

The workers and oppressed in black Africa possess a proud tradition of struggle for liberation! Again and again, they have demonstrated that they are willing to make the utmost sacrifices to achieve freedom and justice. Like their Arab brothers and sisters who rose up in 2011 against the reactionary dictatorships, so have black African workers and oppressed. We have seen mass strikes in Nigeria and South Africa; democratic uprisings against reactionary regimes in Burundi, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Togo and Ethiopia, among other African states; an ongoing armed guerrilla struggle in Somalia against a foreign occupation force trying to pacify the country in the interests of the imperialist powers, to name just a few examples.

However, it is a crucial lesson of the past that serious improvements of our living conditions, to say nothing of our liberation from the capitalist yoke, cannot be achieved by looking for help from the Great Powers or the United Nations. To do so would replace one pack of politicians by another, whether this were done via parliamentary elections or by seizing power by an elite-led guerrilla struggle.

We can achieve freedom *only* if the workers and popular masses enter the political arena as an organized, fighting force. For this reason, our demands and goals are *not* a list of appeals which we call upon the capitalist state to implement, like reformist and populist bureaucrats regularly do; focusing on behind-closed-doors negotiations, elections and parliamentary manoeuvres. Rather, our action program is a militant one which focuses on the leading of an uncompromising class struggle to advance the self-organization of the workers and oppressed.

We therefore repeat the conclusion as we stated in the *Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation* adopted at our last Congress in 2016:

“It is for this reason that revolutionaries call upon the working class and the oppressed to fight for their interests using all forms of mass struggle dictated by concrete circumstances – beginning with *mass demonstrations, strikes and general strikes, occupations, up to armed insurrections and civil wars*. Similarly, in all struggles revolutionaries call for the formation of *action committees* of workers, youth and the popular masses in workplaces, neighbourhoods, villages, schools and universities. Furthermore, revolutionaries call for the formation of *self-defence units* in order to defend strikers, demonstrators, migrants and refugees against the violence perpetrated by police and fascists. In situations of acute class struggles, such bodies can be expanded so that action committees can become *councils* (like the soviets in Russia in 1917) backing and backed by *armed workers’ and popular militias*.”

For a Government of Workers and Poor Peasants! For a Socialist Revolution!

Naturally, any defensive struggle for democratic rights and any successful strike for higher wages can only achieve temporary victories since, as it decays, capitalism is aiming to strangle and abolish bourgeois democracy and impoverish the workers and peasants so that it can squeeze out profits by any means necessary. This is true in *all* capitalist countries around the world, and even more so in Africa given the massive economic and political antagonisms within these societies.

However, even such temporary achievements cannot be won by appealing to the corrupt governments or by hoping to reform the omnipotent capitalist state machinery. Even the best-intentioned revolutionary politicians will either be corrupted by this machinery or, as we saw with the tragic fate of Patrice Lumumba, Thomas Sankara, Kwame Nkrumah, they will be eliminated. This is why a revolutionary party with a number of leading comrades is crucial for the future of the liberation struggle. Such a party can both correct wrong tendencies of a single comrade as well as continue the revolutionary tradition even if leading comrades have been arrested or murdered.

The only lasting solution, the only road to achieve economic and political freedom, is a socialist revolution. Such a revolution cannot be achieved via parliamentary elections or via a coup of a sector of the military, but only by a popular uprising based on councils and armed militias of the workers and the poor peasants. A resulting government of workers and poor peasants would go further than past revolutions: it should nationalize the land and give it to the poor peasantry; nationalize the large enterprises under workers' control; expel the imperialist powers and expropriate the bourgeoisie without compensation; abolish the western and neo-colonial education and introduce a new, a socialist educational system. In other words, in order to liberate the African people, we need to combine the democratic revolution with a socialist one.

Our socialism has nothing in common with the bureaucratic caricature which began in the USSR after Stalin took power in 1923/24. Our socialism will be revolutionary and not bureaucratic; it will be internationalist and not nation-centred. It will be socialism in the spirit of the October Revolution 1917 led by Lenin and Trotsky!

For Pan-African Unity! For the United Socialist States of Africa!

The revolution cannot succeed if it remains isolated to a single country. This basic truth, emphasized by Lenin and Trotsky, has been vindicated by the developments of various African countries when their leader, after achieving political independence, focused only on their own country and not on internationalizing the struggle for liberation. It is particularly important to keep this truth in mind during the present epoch when the forces of production have become more internationalized than ever.

Despite the rhetorical commitment to Pan-African unity by numerous politicians during the past decade, the lack of any real desire to follow these words with deeds is demonstrated by how little trade actually takes place *between* African countries and how precious few rails and roads connect these states.

Africa will not and cannot be liberated if every country operates only for itself. The task of the socialist revolution in each and every country is to strive to support the struggle of the workers and oppressed in *all* other countries – inside *and* outside Africa. The revolution must strive to expand to other countries and to succeed in creating true Pan-African Unity.

Naturally, Pan-African unity must not be created bureaucratically, from above, but voluntarily from below. This means that we do not accept the official borders between the states African states which are often an artificial legacy of the colonial powers. The imperialist policy of divide and conquer, as well as the reactionary policy of bourgeois African leaders looking for factional support along tribal lines, has been a huge obstacle for the formation of modern nations (e.g., the tensions between Hutu and the Tutsi in Rwanda, between the Xhosa and the Zulu in South Africa, or between the Shona and Ndebele in Zimbabwe). Our goal is to *unite* the African peoples by first taking into account the huge diversity among its nations and ethnic groups (e.g., between 1,200 and 3,000 languages are spoken on the continent). We strive for maximum unity throughout the entire continent combined with a respect for the rights of *all* ethnic minorities (except, of course, those of privileged settlers). Our vision of Pan-African unity is characterized by its voluntary and federal character, as well as by an honouring of local self-government.

Furthermore, we support the Arab workers and poor peasants who are also fighting against reactionary dictatorships and imperialist aggression (e.g., in Syria against Assad, ISIL/Daesh, Russia and the US; in Egypt against General al-Sisi's regime, in Yemen against the Saudi aggression, in Palestine against the Zionist state, etc.). Our goal is to achieve unity with the Arab people on the basis of equality and without any discrimination.

Africa cannot be united on the basis of capitalism. Such a capitalist unity – if

at all possible – would inevitably lead to the discrimination and oppression of significant sectors of the oppressed peoples. Revolutionaries fight for the unification of Africa on the basis of a socialist program leading to the overthrow of the capitalist class and the creation of a federation of workers' and poor peasants' republics. In short, our goal is the creation of the *United Socialist States of Africa!*

One of the first tasks of the *United Socialist States of Africa* would be an economic plan for massively expanding the infrastructure in Africa. Any integration of the continent will be illusionary as long as it is not united by rail and roads! Down with the territorial borders drawn by the colonial, imperialist powers!

For a United Front of Struggle! Overcome the Crisis of Leadership – Build a Revolutionary Party Nationally and Internationally!

Again and again, the African workers, youth and oppressed have demonstrated the utmost of heroism in their struggle against exploitation and oppression. But they suffer – like their brothers and sisters on all other continents – from the terrible crisis of leadership.

Just look what has become of those who took power in order to liberate our countries! They have become dictators grabbing wealth and privileges for themselves and their clan! They have become lackeys of old and/or new imperialist powers like the US, EU or China! This is the real nature of the ANC leadership in South Africa, of Mugabe in Zimbabwe, of Kabila in DRC, of Gaddafi in Libya, etc.

The so-called “Marxists” like the *South African Communist Party* are a similar example of a leadership which has betrayed the working class and acts as an administrator for the capitalist class, with ministers sitting inside government since 1994, and as servants of Chinese imperialism. We will never forget when this government attacked the heroic miners of Marikana in August 2012 and encouraged the police to smash this workers’ uprising!

Compared with these old traitors, new forces like Julius Malemas’ *Economic Freedom Fighters* (EFF) in South Africa look like fresh and healthy alternatives. True, the EFF rallies thousands of dedicated fighters for a just cause who can, in fact, play an important role in the liberation struggle. But, unfortunately, the EFF leadership is following a petty-bourgeois populist program which is orientated to becoming part of the capitalist parliamentary game. In order to get posts, the EFF leaders, who are fighting white monopoly capital in words, are actually collaborating with the *Democratic Alliance*, i.e., the traditional party of white monopoly capital! Similarly, while the EFF’s program talks about socialism, it calls for support for black business, which is an enemy of black labour!

Among the worst examples of misleadership are *Boko Haram* in Nigeria and *ISIL/Daesh* in general. While pretending to be radical opponents of the ruling class, they in fact direct their struggle not against the oppressors but against innocent civilians. They are a cancer which must be eliminated by all authentic liberation forces.

This does not mean that we advocate sectarian abstinence from popular struggles which take place under wrong leaderships. This would be doctrinaire nonsense. The RCIT calls for a *united front* of struggle composed of all mass organizations of the workers and oppressed. However, revolutionaries will reserve the right to criticise the petty-bourgeois misleadership when they fail in the struggle.

For the same reason it is necessary to work within the mass organizations even if they are led by bureaucratic leaderships instead of creating new trade unions or peasant organizations which, however, remain isolated from the masses. Revolutionaries should work inside such organizations but build their own fractions. They support efforts to build rank and file opposition movements inside trade unions and similar organizations in order to challenge and finally replace the corrupt and privileged bureaucracy at the top.

However, the most important task of Marxists is the creation of *revolutionary parties* throughout all African countries as part of the struggle to build a *revolutionary world party*. Such a party should be based on a revolutionary program in the tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Likewise it will build upon and be inspired by the spirit of self-sacrifice and dedication of the heroes of the struggle for Africa's freedom like Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, and Thomas Sankara! It will have the task of organizing the working class for the struggle for power, i.e., to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to build a workers' and peasant republic.

There is no *national* road to the building of a world party, only an *internationalist* one. Hence, a true revolutionary party, as well as pre-party organization, must *from the beginning exist* as an *international formation*. Without an international organization, national centeredness and finally nationalist deviations are unavoidable.

In most African countries, there is not only *no* revolutionary workers' party but not even a reformist, i.e., a bourgeois, workers' party. In those cases where such a party does exist (e.g., the South African CP) it has become so degenerated that it repels the workers' vanguard, as we witnessed in the post-Marikana period. In such situations – when the working class has no independent party, but at the same time does not yet understand the necessity of creating a revolutionary party – revolutionaries call for the formation of a new *Workers' Party* (or “Labour Party”), founded by the workers' vanguard and mass organizations. This party should advocate an action program outlining the road to the working class's taking power into its own hands as well as inner-party democracy to avoid bureaucratic degeneration. Otherwise there is a real danger that such a party will degenerate into a reformist force (as was the fate of the Zimbabwean MDC in the early 2000s, for example).

The RCIT is fully aware that the creation of revolutionary parties – nationally and internationally – is not a simple task, given the weakness of revolutionaries in numbers and their insufficient roots in the working class. But great accomplishments in the history of humanity are never gifts from heaven, but rather are achieved by hard and systematic work. Forming an organized international unit of determined revolutionary workers and oppressed, based on a common program and a joint understanding of their practical and organizational methods, is the most important prerequisite to the building of such a new, revolutionary International. It will be instrumental in the winning

over of additional, broader sectors of the workers' vanguard at a later stage. This is the project that the RCIT is dedicated to. We call African revolutionaries to join us in advancing this struggle!

We want to unite with all who can identify with the program presented here and who are willing to seriously dedicate their lives to the liberation struggle of the working class and oppressed. We have no time to loose. We have everything to win. Our struggle against the ruling class will neither be easy nor short-term. It will take years and it will demand great sacrifices from us all. But can there be a higher purpose for one's life than dedicating it to the struggle for universal emancipation; to save the future of humanity?!

We call African revolutionaries to unite around this Manifesto and its five pillars:

** Foreign Exploiters – Out of Africa! Expel All Great Powers (US, China, EU, etc.) from Africa!*

** The Wealth to Those Who Create It! Economic Freedom Now! Nationalization of All Big Corporations and Banks under Control of the Workers! Nationalization of Large Estates so that the Poor Peasants Can Decide How Best to Use These Lands! Down with all forms of pollution of the environment and the people by imperialist corporations! Protect the health and the future of the people!*

** Down with the Capitalist Dictatorships and Corrupt Pseudo-Democracies! For a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly!*

** For a Government of the Workers and Poor Peasants! For a Socialist Revolution!*

** For Pan-African Unity! For the United Socialist States of Africa!*

No future without socialism! No socialism without a revolution! No revolution without a revolutionary party!

Long Live the Revolution! Aluta Continua!

Appendix

We encourage organizations and activists who share the general outlook of this Manifesto to contact us so that we can discuss joint work for the liberation of the workers and oppressed: rcit@thecommunists.net

The RCIT is an international revolutionary organization which unites sections and activists in 13 countries on the basis of a joint program and the organizational principles of democratic centralism (Zambia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Tunisia, Israel/Occupied Palestine, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and Austria).

For a more extensive overview of RCIT viewpoints, we refer those who are interested to our website www.thecommunists.net. We want to draw particular attention to our programmatic documents:

RCIT: Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa, April 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/africa-theses/>

RCIT: Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation. The Tasks of the Liberation Struggle against Decaying Capitalism (adopted by the 1st Congress of the RCIT in October 2016, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit-program-2016/>)

RCIT: The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto, April 2012, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit-manifesto/>

