

We salute the struggle of the workers and peoples of Iran

November 5, 2022

In Iran, the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in police custody, believed to be beaten following her arrest by the “Morality Police” on the grounds that her hair was visible, brought the Iranian people to the streets, starting with women. The demonstrations, which started with demands against the Morality Police and the compulsory headscarf, have been going on continuously since 16 September and tend to turn into a rebellion against the regime. The mass character of the demonstrations all over Iran show the extent to which the people of Iran hate the regime of the Islamic Republic and all its oppressive organs.

Amini was a Kurdish woman, and the protests were initially centred in Kurdish provinces, soon spreading to all major cities such as Tehran, Mashhad, Isfahan and Tabriz, involving all the peoples of Iran – Persian, Baluch, Azerbaijani, Kurdish etc.

The reactions did not stop at street protests. Students and teachers are organising boycotts and participating in demonstrations. In October, especially petrochemical and oil refinery workers in Bushehr and food workers in Tabriz took part in the actions that were gaining an anti-regime aspect with strikes, and the reactions became widespread. While the workers’ councils in gas, iron and steel and tyre factories took strike action and Haft Tapeh sugar factory workers joined them and called for a “general strike”, truck drivers are not transporting commodities, small businesses and shopkeepers have closed shutters in many provinces.

“Down with the dictator” is the main slogan of the demonstrations that are going on every day. Alongside this, the initial chant “Women, Life, Freedom”, together with “Death to the dictator” and “Death to the oppressor – be it the shah or a religious leader” are repeated by the masses. The slogan “The oil worker is our guide” shouted by the students is promising for the unity of the struggle, which is still developing mainly in a spontaneous character, while especially the workers and students have begun to organise in their own councils.

Councils of workers, university students, teachers, shopkeepers and neighbourhoods are getting stronger day by day and the demonstrations are turning more and more into a mass movement. Students in dozens of universities continue their protests. The brutal attacks on boycotting students by security forces besieging Sharif and Tabriz Universities could not break their determination. University student councils continue with their decision to boycott classes.

The number of workers arrested for going on strike in oil factories alone is reported to exceed 100, yet the number of factories going on strike is increasing day by day.

The rebellion in Iran today is the product of the economic and repressive policies of the capitalist regime of the Islamic Republic. The bases which the peoples movement rise on are the crippled capitalist economy, neoliberal reforms of more than three decades, massive privatisations, social

gap, corruption, poverty, high unemployment, high food prices, and others which sharply reduced the living standard of the working people. And of course, the Western sanctions against Iran is another main element, which have significantly worsened the economic condition of the country.

The Iranian regime, the enemy of the workers and labouring people, is trying to suppress the popular movement with violence. During the protests in 193 provinces, more than 200 people, including 30 children, were killed, according to a human rights group. In Tehran's Evin Prison, where political prisoners are held along with young people arrested during protests or home and dormitory raids, at least 8 prisoners died in a fire. The security forces have been raiding schools and arresting young students, and in the city of Ardabil, 16-year-old Asra Panahi, a high school student, was killed simply for not singing a pro-regime anthem.

The dictatorial Supreme Leader Khamenei described the demonstrations as “a project of the US and the Zionist regime” and claimed that they were instigated by “some Iranian traitors abroad who are paid by them”. There is no doubt, the imperialists and their collaborators try to influence the peoples and their movement, in accordance with their interests in Iran as in everywhere else. However, the working people, full of anger against the reactionary regime, do not support the remnants of the old Shah regime and any reactionary groups like them. The efforts of the Western imperialists and their collaborators to direct the demonstrations have not yielded any results. In any case, we are against all imperialists, and especially Western imperialists, led by the US, and condemn any imperialist aggression against Iran. We also oppose anybody and any organisation calling for tightening economic sanctions or Western military intervention against Iran based on the model of Iraq or Libya.

With the 1999 student revolt, the 2009 election protests, the 2017 and 2019 demonstrations, and the most recent demonstrations today, the Iranian people show that they are determined to make the reactionary regime pay for the exploitation, oppression and persecution it has been inflicting on them for decades.

They are also determined that only they themselves will make the regime pay this price, not the imperialists or their collaborators.

We salute and support the struggle of the peoples of Iran for freedom against the reactionary regime with a mask of anti-imperialism.

Long live the working class and peoples of Iran!

Long live the peoples' movement in Iran!

International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations (ICMLPO)

Coordinating Committee