

Dear comrades,

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the Communist Party of Greece for inviting us to participate in this event. We have long wished to participate more actively in the development of the international communist movement and strive to develop contacts and exchange with all the parties present.

Comrades,

as in 1917, we find ourselves once again in times of imperialist war in 2025, even if the confrontation between the major powers of imperialism has not yet taken the form of open war. The war in Ukraine is an inter-imperialist war in which the capitalists and bourgeois governments on both sides are waging war for raw materials, markets and transport routes, sending the working class into the slaughterhouse to fight for them. In 1917, the proletarian revolution ended the First World War in Russia. The peoples of the Soviet Union made enormous sacrifices to build socialism in their country and defend it against its enemies, but by this, they showed that a different world is possible, that humanity is not doomed to endure exploitation, hunger, poverty and war for all time. Unlike capitalism, socialism does not need war; it only wages war in defence.

In 1989 and 1990, it was ultimately not the peoples of the Soviet Union, but the counter-revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party that destroyed socialism. The destruction of socialism led us back to a world ruled solely by imperialism; it paved the way for the next wars, which broke out immediately afterwards: in the Caucasus and Transnistria, in Yugoslavia, today in Ukraine and potentially in other countries as well. The war in Ukraine urgently demonstrates the need to build strong communist parties with revolutionary programmes in the countries involved, in Russia as well as in Ukraine. But of course also in Germany, which is one of the main warmongers, as in all other countries involved. As the year 1914 already had proven historically, our present time again shows that proletarian internationalism is a vital necessity for the working class and that any deviation from it drives our class into subordination to one bourgeoisie or another and ends in committing crimes against the workers of other countries.

That is why building relations with communists in the belligerent states such as our comrades in Russia, Ukraine and Palestine, has been and remains a high priority for us. We have therefore organised a campaign in recent years to support communists in Russia and Ukraine and have supported the Palestinian Communist Party's campaign to collect donations for the people of Gaza. For us as a Communist Party, internationalism is also an important element of party building itself, because without constant exchange, mutual correction, criticism and self-criticism within the communist movement, a communist party cannot advance forward.

In Germany, as in many countries, the working class today faces a barbarian, all-out onslaught of the bourgeoisie against all its achievements of past struggles, against wages, against pensions, against social security, against democratic rights, all in preparation for the great imperialist war with Russia. This situation demands that we give the utmost attention to organising and supporting popular resistance against war preparations, militarisation, conscription, arms deliveries and all forms of involvement of our country in the war. In this struggle, in Germany, we face the entire bourgeoisie as our adversary, because the warmongering of German imperialism is supported by an all-party front of bourgeois parties, with the liberal forces often acting as the most dangerous warmongers, while the far-right and the reformist so-called Left in different ways both serve to disarm popular and workers' resistance.

First of all, of course, the rise of the extreme right in the form of the AfD and various neo-Nazi groups is a serious cause for concern. Since the AfD is now the leading party in most

polls, the participation of the AfD in a government at state or federal level is only a matter of time. It would mean a further intensification of the bourgeoisie's general offensive against the rights of the working class, attacks on migrants and brutal oppression of all resistance. The fact that the AfD, an extremely reactionary and anti-worker party that most brazenly seeks to advance the capitalists' plunder of the working class, is the party with the highest share of the working-class vote shows the low level of class consciousness in Germany. The reason for this is not only the brutalisation and chauvinism that the capitalist system always produces. Class consciousness is low, of course, partly also because the communist movement is still in tatters and is prevented by revisionist influences from fulfilling its role towards the working class. But a special responsibility also lies with social democracy: the trade union leaderships, which have always worked loyally with capital to contain and prevent class struggle; and the leaderships of the social democratic parties, which everywhere disappoint the expectations of the people and allow the extreme right to position itself as a force of opposition.

Also the Left Party, which represents a variant of social democracy, plays a very negative role by essentially supporting the preparations for war while at the same time disorienting and weakening the anti-war movement with an impotent pacifism devoid of any class perspective. In general, the resurgence of social democracy in the form of the Left Party, which currently stands at around 12% in the polls, poses a new challenge in the class struggle in Germany. Just a year ago, this party was declared dead, but due to various factors, it has managed to become a relevant political factor again and has recently doubled its membership. However, the strengthening of this party is no help in the struggle for workers' rights, against the politics of war and genocide, against advancing authoritarianism. On the contrary, experience shows that the Left Party either leads struggles into a dead end or attacks and denounces them in alliance with the other bourgeois parties. At a time when a significant section of the population, especially young people, is moving to the left and becoming more open to criticism of capitalism and even more open to communism, the Left Party absorbs a large part of this potential and defuses it – thereby offering an invaluable service to the ruling class. That is why the daily struggle against the Left Party and other variants of opportunism is an obligation for us – a struggle that we direct against the apparatus and leadership of the party, but not against the masses of its members, to whom we extend our hand and strive for a common struggle against all the reactionary policies of the bourgeoisie.

If we understand the harmful role of all bourgeois forces and their participation in the preparations for war, then it necessarily follows that 'broad alliances' with all kinds of liberal or so-called progressive forces are out of the question. Not only history, but also the present clearly shows that the idea of a popular front or united front from above with social democratic and other bourgeois parties against fascism is an illusion. It is not possible to fight fascism in alliance with the reactionaries who are preparing fascism by stirring up racism and arming for war. That is how it has been historically, and that is how it is today.

So what must our response be, comrades? If Germany becomes directly involved in a war, our strategic goal will not change. Regardless of the balance of power, even in our current situation of extreme weakness, our goal can only be to strengthen the working class's struggle against capital, to preserve the independence of the labour movement and the Communist Party, and to strive to become the vanguard in the class struggle until we are able to overthrow our own bourgeoisie.

To this end, the focus of political work must be on the long-term rooting of the Communist Party in the workplaces – a huge task given the complicated situation in class struggle. We also do not want to hide that we lack experience and do not always have the appropriate answers right away. This is also due to the fact that we have decades of opportunism behind us, which

have resulted in a lack of entire generations of experienced communists in Germany who should be leading this struggle.

The working class in Germany, on the other hand, itself has lacked experience of struggle for decades and is hampered by very restrictive trade union laws; it has often been successfully divided by the ideological mechanisms of the bourgeoisie, pitted against each other and led into dead ends. Militant class-oriented trade unions would be direly needed to counter the offensive of capital with the organised resistance of the proletariat, but the existing trade unions are committed to class collaboration. The struggle in these trade unions is necessary and the potential for a collective struggle of the working class exists, but the few class-oriented forces within the unions must usually fight not only against capital, but also against opportunistic and sold-out leaders in the trade unions and workers' councils.

At the same time, developing the struggle in workplaces must not be limited to issues directly concerning collective bargaining, but must be understood as a political struggle, linked above all to the struggle against war. Communists and other class-oriented forces within the workplaces must raise issues of general political importance. At the same time, resistance against conscription, militarisation, layoffs and cuts in wages and welfare must also be developed in schools, universities and neighbourhoods by appropriate means.

All important issues affecting the working class today are linked to the question of war, because war is the crystallisation point of imperialist contradictions and, from the perspective of the ruling class, requires the mobilisation of all resources for the goal of military victory. We therefore consider it absolutely necessary to treat the question of war as the central issue of today's class struggle.

Capitalism is increasingly revealing not only its ugly face, but also its hopelessness. The Red October of 1917 has shown us that changing the world for the better is a real possibility. But it has also shown us, together with the experience of failed revolutions in Germany and elsewhere, that the opportunity for revolution is only gifted to us on rare occasions. Those opportunities can only be seized, when Communist Parties develop a correct revolutionary strategy and tactics and gain the trust of the largest part of the working class. This is what we must do.

Stormy times lie ahead, comrades, but also times of great opportunity for our movement.

To conclude with the words of the great Marxist playwright Bertolt Brecht:

“He who has understood his situation, how could he ever be stopped? And ‘never’ becomes: ‘today’!”