

# **PEACE 4 THE PEOPLE**

## **NEWSLETTER OF ILPS COMMISSION 4**



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## **PERSPECTIVE FOR THE NEW YEAR (2021)**

**BUILD THE PEOPLES' GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR JUST PEACE!**

**UNITE AGAINST IMPERIALISM FOR THE JUST CAUSES OF THE PEOPLE!**

### **IMPERIALISM TODAY**

Upon closely examining many conflicts and the actions and policies of imperialism, we understand that the US is still the leading aggressor and one extending a multi-faceted strategy to defend and sustain the global system of exploitation, domination and plunder. Its modus operandi remains the same as it was when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization formed: to block and defeat any form of socialism. Its ideology and approach have expanded to target independent states and independence or democracy movements and nationalization and democratization policies and projects. It has been expanding the territories and waters beyond the North Atlantic by building bases and plowing the waters of all the seas. It has been forming new alliances and cooperative relations with reactionary and terrorist states on all continents and allowing some of them, such as Turkey and Israel, to act as proxy aggressors. As well as developing and testing more weaponry, it has been keeping active nuclear warheads on the ready. Furthermore, US-led imperialism has been weaponizing other means, from drone-cams and drone assaults to communications technologies including cyber warfare, from economic measures and deceptive messaging through news services and social media to negative diplomacy. As well, state and local politicians and police forces are under stronger influence.

Some describe the present international environment as experiencing a new "cold war." As mentioned above, however, the anti-communism agenda of the anti-Soviet and anti-China Cold War period has always been the chief motivator. This stance lies at the heart of the US imperialist beast today. It is true that rivalries between the US, China and the Russian Federation have been intensifying of late, particularly because it can no longer milk Chinese markets which it was feeding for decades and partly because the post-Communist Russia and China societies have flourished enough to assert more autonomy, authority and influence around the world (i.e., they've become imperialist themselves), and because of the crisis of overproduction and inflation. These major opponents counter the US strategy and military deployment. They both are developing their own military resources and are active in certain arenas (Russia Europe- Central Asia and West Asia; China-South China Sea). They tend to side with the states and even some popular movements under attack by the US imperialist camp, such as Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, Tigray (Ethiopia), Crimea (Ukraine), Iran and others. After studying the situation in Africa where the US and its friends have been increasing their active military presence and thereby countering China's economic incursions through many local trade deals, we can see the US-China rivalry playing out, as well as the realization of the US-led strategy of trying to knock down and conquer independent and progressive states and movements on that continent.

In sum, the triple threat of world war, nuclear war and fascism is very real. Conclusion: the people must stop imperialism.

## **REVIEW OF ILPS AND COMMISSION 4'S WORK**

Looking back, we recall how the work of all the ILPS progressed through this past year. It began with a response to the coalescing and renewing commitment of the international anti-imperialist (AI) movement as expressed by the anti-imperialist and Cuba solidarity conference in Havana in November of 2019, in which ILPS delegates participated, and the follow-up AI conference, which was the anti-imperialist and solidarity conference in Caracas around the end of January in 2020. Both these meetings called on the extending and broadening of a united anti-imperialist struggle worldwide in the face of the heightening crisis and imperialist onslaught. If we recall further, the US made an attack on Iran at the start of 2020 and the ILPS joined in the condemnation of it and opposition to a new war in West Asia ("Middle East"). The ILPS contributed greatly as the largest international, AI alliance in 2020. The ICG immediately called for a global anti-war action on January 25, around which ILPS organized rallied and organized. Commission 4 produced its own statement for this occasion. We then circulated our statement against coercive economic measures and mobilized for a day of global action against "sanctions" around March 15. With a view to mass education and reaffirmation of revolutionary organizing, the ILPS held a series of meetings to review Leninism and deepen its commitment to a Leninist approach to mass organizing against imperialism. At the same time the ILPS leading coordinators and regional chapters examined states' responses to and the impacts of the novel coronavirus pandemic, sharply criticizing the inadequacies in health care and social services and social inequality in the imperialist and reactionary states that have had the consequence of unnecessarily augmenting the death and suffering. All these forums culminated in the ILPS "anti-imperialist week" at the end of May. The analysis and unity of ILPS organizations, commissions and sectors were solidifying through these activities. The summer saw collective attention to wars of aggression, counter-revolution and weapons of mass destruction as ILPS, with Commission 4 leading with its statements and calls, rallied all ILPS and allied organizations to remember the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and take action for just peace around the anniversaries of the bombings in August, UN International Peace Day and Martial Law Day in September and Armistice Day in November. Our Commission followed and took part in Philippines, Palestine and Kurdistan solidarity months from September through November. Finally, ILPS organizations honoured and held events for International Human Rights Day, International Indigenous Peoples' Day, International Migrants Day and the UN's "Human Solidarity Day" in December, with encouragement from Commission 4.

Through all this accelerated and condensed work, Commission 4 partnered with other commissions in writing statements and holding webinars. In mid-August, we worked with Commissions 1, 7 and 3 as well as the International Women's Alliance to release a statement calling for justice for the WW2 victims of sexual slavery. We held our own webinar "Fighting for Just Peace", which was jointly hosted by Commission 1 and "Resist US-Led War" (the latter initiated by the ILPS in 2017) in October. We are planning another webinar on this theme soon. Commission 4 developed its knowledge and understanding throughout 2020 by creating statements (Jan. 25, March 15, August 6 and 14 and September 21) as well as attending the many online events planned by ILPS affiliates and their allies. The restrictions of the pandemic period gave rise to more frequent editions of our Commission's newsletter, "Peace 4 the People", which also served to educate and share with our comrades in the ILPS and among our allies. We believe our newsletter stands out as a communication channel within the ILPS that helps us all to grasp imperialist strategy, keep abreast of world events, and inform and boost the peoples' struggles against imperialism.

## **OUR MESSAGE FOR 2021**

Monopoly capitalism is desperate to save itself amid a downward spiraling crisis which is bound to end in failure. The people cannot simply wait for that to happen. Not only are more death, destruction and suffering in the crisis, but also reaction and fascism are on the rise. It is imperative that anti-fascist, democratic and progressive forces continue to organize, unite and coordinate solidarity for each other and consolidate a single anti-imperialist movement. All of ILPS will carry on in this effort, and Commission 4 will contribute as a leading voice for just peace against wars of aggression and counter-revolution and all weapons of mass destruction. Commissions within the ILPS will carry on their cooperation. The ILPS will keep up a program of solidarity months and focused webinars throughout 2021 and we invite all ILPS member organizations and anti-imperialist allies to join in. Commission 4 is looking for webinar participants and new members to work together particularly for just peace to expose and oppose the US-led imperialist strategy and imperialist domination and interference.

Commission 4 will continue to work with coalitions that share similar concerns and goals. They include formations such as Resist US-Led War, United National Anti-War Coalition in the US, the Anti-Imperialist Alliance of Ottawa, Canada, the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) in Australia, the Alliance for Global Justice, the Black Alliance for Peace, Stop AFRICOM and numerous solidarity organizations and campaigns. In this spirit, we look forward to the launch of the Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Fascist United Front to which the ILPS has been instrumental in constructing. The launch is tentatively planned for March 1<sup>st</sup>.

We wish all our Commission members and all our comrades and allies well and we are committed to do our part to realize the success of all the peoples' actions and movements against the imperialist onslaught and for real change.

## JANUARY ACTIVITIES

**January 1 – the anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and the ousting of Fulgencia Batista in 1959, a blow to US imperialism**

**Ongoing ICHRP initiative: Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Philippines (Investigate PH),** launched on December 17, 2020

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/227437118779942>

**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/Investigate\\_PH/status/1338797963586326528?s=20](https://twitter.com/Investigate_PH/status/1338797963586326528?s=20)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/p/CiOKi-pB0IJ/>

**Website:** [www.investigate.ph](http://www.investigate.ph)

**January 14-The International Women's Alliance presents a forum on cases of Filipina women who are human rights victims** (Part of a monthly series: Feb. 11 will address Kurdish political prisoners)

**January 15-23 Week of action to free Ahmad Sa'adat and all Palestinian prisoners,** an initiative of Samidoun Palestinian Prisoners Solidarity

**January 20 to March 21 ILPS-US "The People's Watch: Biden's First 100 Days" campaign,** which is based on its people's platform [[ILPS US People's Platform – United States \(wordpress.com\)](http://ILPS US People's Platform – United States (wordpress.com))]

**January 25 Global day of action to stop war in Yemen** -an initiative of Stopwar UK

[World Says No to War on Yemen – 25 Jan 2021 | Stop the War \(stopwar.org.uk\)](http://World Says No to War on Yemen – 25 Jan 2021 | Stop the War (stopwar.org.uk))

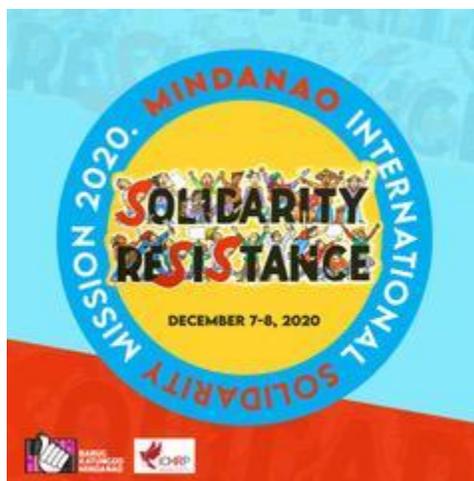
**World Social Forum January 23 to 31 (online), starting with the 24-hour Virtual Marcha** Register or propose your presentation <https://framaforms.org/contacto-inclusion-proceso-fsm2021v-1604754077> Offers of assistance, donations, etc. [forumvirtual@wsf2021.net](mailto:forumvirtual@wsf2021.net) Upload messages, videos for the "Marcha": <https://cozy.io/en/> Website: <https://www.viralopenspace.net/en/> Coordinator: [actionnetwork.org](http://actionnetwork.org), [international@fsm2016.org](mailto:international@fsm2016.org)

**NOTICE: The launch of the Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Fascist United Front is coming up (maybe March 1).**

**SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS IN DECEMBER**  
**Solidarity for Human Rights Everywhere!**

**The International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) and ILPS Commissions 3 and 10 played large roles in coordinating and facilitating several events in the week of the UN's international day for recalling and reaffirming the Declaration on Human Rights.** Also, the International Migrants' Alliance held activities on International Migrants Day, December 17. On December 10, the 72<sup>nd</sup> Human Rights Day, ILPS Commission 10 released a statement titled, "Reject the old normal! Recover better for the people and the planet!" Commission 3 (human rights) set up a webinar called #Setthemfree on December 3 with the call to release all political prisoners. December 3 is the International Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War. ICHRP chapters and locals held their own events, while ICHRP international kicked off its International Commission of Inquiry on Philippine Human Rights with the International Solidarity Mission over December 6/7 and December 7/8. Mindanao has been under Martial Law this year. Over 100 people representing numerous organizations joined in the Mission to hear witnesses and surviving victims give detailed accounts of the violations perpetuated by the Duterte Regime and its agents. It was followed by invitations to international activists to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> Mindanao Human Rights Summit on December 8/9. It is hoped that the ISM and MHRS reports will further influence the international community and garner more support for holding Duterte and his cronies to account for crimes against humanity and force his removal.

Both the ISM and MHRS examined multiple cases of human rights atrocities against the Lumad people, Bangsamoro and farmers in several provinces in Mindanao, the largest island of the Philippines archipelago. Their reports therefore articulated well. International observers were thus able to attest to the claims of systematic human rights abuses by the Duterte regime, which are intensifying. Both meetings called for national and international solidarity in building awareness and manifesting united condemnation against the Duterte government, the national army and police and their proxies.



Here is a summary of the MHRS report, drawn up and presented by Attorney Dexter M. Lopez to the online plenary. Since Martial Law was declared in Mindanao, 75% of the AFP forces have been unleashed there and they are supported by private paramilitary. They are defending the sell-out of resources and the corporations including multinationals operating there. The Duterte state strategy is known as the "Whole-of-State against the Whole-of-Nation," framed as action in defense of the Philippines nation. It has been instigated by the ruling class and imperialism. However, it defies common norms and laws rooted in human rights and democracy. Propaganda about terrorists and insurgents has been manufactured, with some huge, fake surrenders staged to give an impression. Red-tagging campaigns against politically center and left factions are accompanied by orders of battle against the people. Lately, this strategy tries to monopolize the social and political discourse, characterizing political discussions as subversive using the justice system, government and the military. Military officers hold many civilian positions, in fact. Smear campaigns and hacking of social media, even amid objections by Facebook and Twitter. The Anti-Terror Law which is due to be on the table in 2022 must be opposed by all democratic and peace-loving forces. Junk the ATL! Build solidarity against the ATL and for agrarian reform and education! Atty. Lopez also recommends developing a campaign to create a separate Constitutional Court, as has been accomplished in South Asia and other countries.

**ICHRP-Canada carried out 10 days of Philippines solidarity from December 1 to 10.** There were film screenings, discussions, a social media presence and a street action. A national online forum highlighted a case of a Canadian company, Oceangold, and its complicity in human rights violations in the Cordillera region, then considered a national strategy to galvanize opposition that would result in action against the Duterte regime. First there was a viewing a video about Oceangold's activity which is enabled by the Philippines government and defended by the police and army, followed by a speaker representing the affected communities. Finally, the national chair of ICHRP Canada, Patricia Lisson, explained the drive to circulate a parliamentary e-petition and gather more signatures to empower a vote on regulating global mining companies so that they would be held accountable and restrained. This petition has earned the commitment of a social democratic Member of Parliament who is actively promoting it.

**On December 11, the Council of Global Union-Philippines Affiliates issued a statement against the raids and arrests against union leaders.** They called for the release of Dennise Velasco of Defend Jobs Philippines, Romina Astudillo, Deputy Secretary-General of Kilusang Mayo Uno-Metro Manila, Mark Ryan Cruz, Regional Executive Committee of KMU-Metro Manila, Jaymie Gregorio Jr. of KMU-Metro Manila, Joel Demate of Solidarity of Labor Rights and Welfare (SOLAR), Rodrigo Esparago of Sandigang Manggagawa sa Quezon City (SMQC) and journalist Lady Ann Salem, Communication officer of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television, and editor for online news site Manila Today. Two of these people were recently elected as Kilusang Mayo Uno officers at a recent congress. It is particularly outrageous that these raids, justified by false charges regarding possession of weapons, occurred on International Human Rights Day, December 10. Hence the reference, "HRD7." Two others had been detained on December 8. The CGU is demanding the charges be dropped and all these union organizers be released.

**Samidoun Palestinian Prisoners Solidarity Network collaborated with a few organizations to hold three events on December 10, 11 and 12. The International Women's Alliance partnered with Samidoun to have a discussion of women prisoners in Israeli jails on the first day.** IWA-Europe launched its campaign of "Women on the Front Lines of Resistance: Free Political Prisoners" this way. Speakers underscored the role of Palestinian women in combat since the start of the occupation. Women have also been involved in civilian struggle as refugees outside the country or as citizens working for the education of children, the release of political prisoners and other causes. Under the current practice of "administrative detention", the number of political prisoners is on the rise. Many are arbitrarily detained indefinitely without charges, without due process, without rights. Conditions are worsening owing to the pandemic and the deliberate withholding of cleaning supplies and PPE's as overcrowding grows. There are students detained who are denied education and mothers detained who are denied communication and visits with children. There are children detained, but parents are only allowed to visit every two months. The prisoners are subject to forms of torture, not only solidarity confinement and deprivation, but by other diabolical methods such as prolonged military transport and apprehension in the dark of night. In total, 8,000 to 10,000 women have been imprisoned over the years. The EU, US and Canada support Israeli Zionist policies. The situation is dire and requires vehement international solidarity. There are many campaigns such as Samidoun's "Women on the Front Lines of Resistance" to support and liberate female prisoners, Boycott and Divestment in Solidarity, the arms embargo, and Stop the Jewish National Fund. The forum on December 11 addressed the student movement while the one on December 12 discussed the Palestinian women's movement as a whole.

**The Anti-Imperialist Alliance in Canada** re-examined the atrocious situation of extreme poverty, lack of democracy and human rights violations in Haiti and Canada’s role in keeping the people down and democracy at bay. On **December 13**, they held a virtual forum titled **“Imperialist Attacks on Haiti and Haitians’ Resistance: Canada’s Imperialist Adventures in Haiti.”** It features writer and activist Jean Saint Vil, writer and policy critic Yves Engler and Haitian-born, health and crisis center community organizer Jennie Laure-Sully. Vil asserted that what imperialists deem the “Haitian problem” is the struggle for democracy and national independence, which is the solution for the people of Haiti. He described President Jovenel Moise as a “foreign installed puppet” who represents not only imperialist interests and policies, but Haitian gang leaders, too. Yves Engler discussed Canada’s role as an example of foreign domination and control of Haiti. Britain had an interest in exploiting French colonialism through trade in Maritimes cod and launched its navy from Halifax to fight the Haitian revolution. By 1919, the Royal Bank of Canada was established in Haiti, and other Canadian banks soon followed. The Canadian state has joined in facilitating coups and supporting dictators while assisting in the ousting of Arastide and other democrats. It sent its military after the earthquake with the intention of preventing an uprising at that time, in lieu of delivering aid. Also, it played a part in the election fraud to keep Préval away and ensure that the Rightist Martelli took power. The democratic movement growing, the mainstream media has failed to report that the Haitian people’s general strikes and protests against police brutality have been larger than those in Hong Kong. Canada has been training and funding police to repress dissenters (12.5 million CD in the name of a feminist program, recently). Sully continued to explain that the democratic movement is currently being corrupted through new, foreign-financed NGOs. Since 2019, however, a revolt has been under way. The Canadian people, among many others, express solidarity and support the anti-imperialist and democratic-national

## NATIONAL ELECTIONS UPDATES

**Venezuela held elections for its National Assembly on December 6, 2020.** Some 400 official observers from many countries declared the process free, fair and democratic. The total number of voters declined from previous years to around 4.2 million (contrasted with some eight million in 2015). Perhaps it was the ongoing harsh conditions suffered due to the economic embargo and pandemic that resulted in many voters abstaining. However, even critics of the Maduro government decided to support the Bolivarian project and refuse reaction and foreign domination. Contrary to the irresponsible lies spread in the mainstream international media that wanted readers to believe there was a huge boycott against the election process, nearly all the 98 opposition parties fielded candidates. There were 14,000 candidates from 107 organizations vying for 277 seats. (The number of NA seats was raised this time around.) The US-Guaidó plot to realize a boycott by parties and voting citizens did not happen. Rather, the citizens who voted defied the US’ call for a boycott and by and large signaled their continued support for Chavista governance. As of December 8, the National Electoral Council (CNE) of Venezuela officially reported that the Chavistas of the PSUV/GPP coalition had gained 91 per cent of seats in the National Assembly or 253 of the 277 seats contested. (Other parties: 11 seats for Democratic

Action (AD), three for Avanzada Progresista (AP), three for El Cambio, two for Primero Venezuela, one for Copei and one for the Communist Party (PCV.) The Chavistas won 69.43 per cent of the votes cast. Participation or voter turn-out was 30.50 per cent. That means Nicolas Maduro stays in the office of the President of the Republic. The election system was proportional representation and national and regional votes were held separately, though simultaneously. Indigenous votes, cast in a separate election in 4,000 communities on December 9, were made directly by each voter for the first time ever rather than by delegates, for National Assembly seats. As Guaidó and his party boycotted the election, Guaidó was not a candidate and, therefore, no longer occupies a parliamentary seat. It is estimated that much of the millions of dollars of Citgo revenues (an oil company in the US that belongs to the main Venezuelan oil firm) withheld from Venezuela has been paying for his mischief. Note: The five Citgo executives, Venezuelan citizens, who signed over Citgo to the US were convicted of corruption and sentenced to jail time on December 8. We also note that December 10 marked the anniversary of the death of Simon Bolivar. SOURCES: Telesur English. *The Canada Files* article by A. August on December 12, and a webinar by the Alliance for Global Justice on December 8.

The swing back toward the left in the Americas is encouraging. The outcome of the Venezuela elections is reverberating throughout the Caribbean and Central and South America. After the Chilean people forced constitutional change, Peruvians are confronting their shameless, corrupt, rightist government and clamouring for a rewritten constitution. It is hoped that democratic movement in Ecuador will gain more momentum. **The national election in Ecuador is scheduled for February 7, 2021.** After Ecuador's National Electoral Council (CNE) sorted out and settled a dispute over the certification of 17 candidates, there will be no more appeals accepted. Three hundred candidates will be on the National Assembly ballot. The Union for Hope (UNES) is a democratic and progressive alliance of socialists, trade unions and sectoral organizations which is led by former President Rafael Correa. Correa raised objections to the last national elections, which he lost, but is not a Presidential candidate this time around. (Sources: Peoplesdispatch.org and Telesur English, December 2020)



The ILPS is the International League of Peoples' Struggles, an anti-imperialist alliance. [www.ilps.info](http://www.ilps.info)  
*Commission 4 is concerned with wars of aggression and counter-revolution and nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction.*

<https://peace450.wixsite.org/website>

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**2021**

**RENEW AND REINVIGORATE OUR COMMITMENT TO BUILDING A  
UNITED ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT!**

**Together we are wiser and stronger.**

**Organize and mobilize to stop US aggression and militarization, banish weapons of mass destruction, and stop aggressive interventions, economic coercion and interference!**

**THE  
BLACK ALLIANCE  
FOR PEACE**

*A People(s)-Centered Human Rights Project Against War, Repression and Imperialism*

**People(s)-Centered Human Rights: Reasserting the Black Radical Human Rights Tradition**

(Received on December 14, 2020) The global economic crisis of neoliberal capitalism—exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic—has exposed the ethical, moral and political contradictions of the liberal interpretation of human rights that contends these rights can be viewed separately from the political economy, global structures and power relationships. Operating from the false premise that human rights are objective and politically neutral, neoliberals began weaponizing the framework in the 1990s as an instrument that rationalized naked imperialist interventions. Humanitarian interventionism and the “responsibility to protect” became the contemporary white-supremacist expression of the “white man’s burden” that involved “saving” natives in the global South from their autocratic rulers.

It had escaped most people that the rulers to be deposed usually were in nations that attempted to resist U.S. domination with the help of European allies. From Cuba, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Iran to North Korea and Venezuela, subversion, direct military interventions, proxy wars, and sanctions were all deployed to “save” the people from their oppressive rulers. It did not matter that hundreds of thousands would die in the process, even being denied medicine amid COVID-19. The white West had determined in capitals thousands of miles away that these losses were acceptable collateral damage to preserve “democracy” and “human rights.”

This cynical ideological manipulation of human rights is the reason why so many around the world have turned away from using the liberal framework. Yet, from W.E.B. Dubois and Claudia Jones through to Malcolm X, the Black Panthers and the Mississippi Workers’ Center for Human Rights, African Americans still frame the struggle being waged using the vocabulary of human rights. Are African Americans mistaken or are we operating from a different framework?

The African American radical human-rights tradition systematized by BAP National Organizer Ajamu Baraka as the “People(s)-Centered Human Rights (PCHRs)” framework is strikingly different from the liberal, individualistic, state-centric and legalistic framework of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. This contrast was the topic of analysis and discussion during a number of webinars—including one BAP hosted—held in commemoration of Human Rights Day (December 10). The assumption of the PCHRs framework is simple and clear: Only when human rights are “de-colonized” and the oppressed determine what human rights look like for them will human rights be relevant for the oppressed.