

## World Perspectives Update

1. The world situation in 2026 continues to be characterized by a deepening crisis on multiple levels reflecting the structural inability of global capitalism to deliver solutions to any of humanities' problems and challenges. The world is confronted simultaneously with falling rates of GDP growth, sharpening inter-imperialist rivalries, multiple war-fronts of a proxy character, accelerating environmental breakdown and deepening social inequality and polarization. Rising inflation is back on the agenda as is global recession, if the war on Iran drags on. We see a new turn towards nationalism, militarization and a new arms race, with a massive surge in military expenditure for the first time since the end of the Cold War (though not yet to the same levels).
2. At the time of writing, the US-Israeli attack on Iran is ongoing. This is added to a list of developments that were almost inconceivable just a decade ago: the Russian invasion and the ongoing 4-year war in Ukraine, the abduction of Venezuela's head of state, the genocide in Gaza, US tariffs approaching those of the 1930s levels before Trump was forced to retreat (after the [Supreme Court's decision of February 2926](#)), and a lot more. In a recent statement, after the war in Iran started, the IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva summed it up well: *"My advice to policymakers in this new global environment is think of the unthinkable and prepare for it."*
3. As we've explained in previous material, a key contradiction shaping world developments is the relative decline of US imperialism, which, especially under Trump, uses its military strength in an effort to maintain its dominant position. The emergence of China as the major antagonist to USA's hegemony has intensified the scramble for spheres of influence and access to resources. This geopolitical conflict underscores almost all political developments globally, giving a particularly proxy character to all military confrontations of the time.

### Ruling class internationally worried

4. Trump's "methods" represent a departure from everything that Western imperialist diplomacy learned about the treatment of complex international problems, through the experience of great social convulsions, revolutions and wars, particularly the two world wars. The dismantling of the United Nations and a whole series of international agreements, combined with his ambitions to become the uncontrolled ruler of the planet, is causing alarm in the serious sections of the ruling class, internationally, in the rich allies of the US, and the US itself. If it was not for the possession of nuclear arms by the main antagonists, threatening with mutual destruction irrespective of who strikes first, we would certainly be seeing the entry into World War III.
5. Trump's open clash with the European powers is creating a new situation for Western imperialism, which, on a medium- and long-term basis, undermines the same hegemony of the US that Trump is trying to defend. The serious sections of international capital understand that Trump, if left unchecked, can drive the planet into another major economic recession, with his protectionist policies and trade wars and now with the war on Iran. The latter is not only

causing huge regional instability but also raising the prospect of another “oil crisis”, bringing to memory the 1973-74 one.

## Iran

6. The war on Iran is indicative, among other things, of political myopia on the part of Trump’s administration. It is as if the invasion of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) and the interventions in Syria and Libya after the “Arab Spring” of 2011, never happened. In all the above cases US and Western Imperialism failed to stabilize their control on the ground and had to flee, after having created internal war conditions and chaos with hundreds of thousands of dead in each case. The last act in the drama of those interventions was the emergence of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Why would anybody expect different results today?
7. The forces on the ground that put an end to ISIS’s advance, before ISIS’s final defeat, were the Kurds (in Cobane, Rojava – north Syria, 2015). But in January (2026), they were (once again) stabbed in the back by the US, which gave its full support to the military operation by al-Sharaa’s new Syrian regime that put an end to the extensive autonomy they enjoyed. Now Trump and Israel are trying to use the Kurds in Iran and Iraq as troops on the ground in their war on Iran.
8. **A change of regime in Iran cannot be seen as realistic and it cannot be achieved by simply bombing the country, without troops on the ground. But any serious, i.e., on a big scale, military intervention by US troops should be ruled out. Occupation of Iran, as whole, is impossible.** What would be possible is the sending of small forces to occupy this or that foothold (e.g., in the Hormuz strait, the Kharg island, etc). But without “regime change” this wouldn’t last.
9. Both between the US and most of the European powers and within the US establishment, there are clear divisions over the operation. Even sections of the MAGA camp have openly criticised the attack. MAGA journalist Tucker Carlson described the push toward war as “disgusting” and “evil”, while Republican former congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene attacked what she described as an “Israel-first” policy. Even sections of the military establishment have expressed deep concern. According to press reports, Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and one of Donald Trump’s top military advisers, warned that a war with Iran is not a good idea and *National Counterterrorism Center Director Joe Kent* resigned saying that Iran posed "no imminent threat" to the US. These tensions reflect broader divisions within the US ruling class.
10. The ghost of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars is still hanging over the US ruling class. US imperialism, carried away by its own “Pax Americana” doctrine, paid a heavy price for initiating and engaging in these wars and occupations. Those wars cost between \$2-3 trillion, and ended in pushing Iraq under Iran’s influence and the humiliating retreat of US forces in Afghanistan in 2021 and the return of the Taliban. Today, analysts calculate the cost of the present war to almost \$1 billion a day, without including the cost of sending forces on the ground and of the rising oil prices.
11. During the bombings that began on February 28, the US and Israel addressed the people of Iran en masse (through social media) calling upon them to overthrow the regime and even to get in touch directly with the US and Israeli secret services, the CIA and the Mossad. They did exactly the same thing during the 12-day bombing of Iran in June 2025. One wonders, where do they base this stupid optimism, that when they bomb a country its people can rise up in their favor? Wars, yes, can lead

to uprisings, but after they are nearing their end or are over and the working class and poor people have to live with the consequences of the death, destruction and misery that has been caused by their government's policies. However, when the invaders are dropping bombs, for the people to revolt in support of the invaders is nonsensical.

12. US and Israel's "appeals" therefore to the Iranian people to take up arms against the regime practically can only have a meaning if they are directed to the national minorities (around 40% of the population) and especially the Kurds. The majority of Kurdish parties are not willing to play this role, at least for the time being. **But if they do, misled once again by some false US promises, the outcome would be a massive slaughter in an internal war fought on nationalist and not class lines.** It could be fiercer and more devastating than anything we have seen before in the Middle East. In any case, even if this were to happen, it is still wishful thinking to expect that this would lead to the establishment of a pro-US regime – actually a more vicious, theocratic and authoritarian regime could take its position. Everything shows that the US is trapped in an impossible situation.

### Contrary to the US Israel has a plan

13. Contrary to the situation in which the US finds itself, with no real plan when it entered the war and no exit plan, the Netanyahu government does have a plan and knows what it is aiming at. Israel is expanding its territory and alliances (based on this war which actually began in October 2023): in Gaza, having occupied 53% of the enclave; in the West Bank, expanding the settlements; in Lebanon with the new offensive against Hezbollah and up to the Litany river; in Syria, consolidating the conquest of the Golan Heights and expanding the territories it holds, approaching the suburbs of the capital Damascus; in addition, in Syria it is building strong alliances with the Druze in southwestern Syria and the Kurds in eastern Syria. In December 2025 Israel became the first country to officially recognize Somaliland which has been claiming independence from Somalia since 1991. This is a move aimed at securing Israel's interests in the Red Sea through a stable partner, providing "strategic depth" to threats from Iran-aligned groups, especially the Houthis in Yemen. Meanwhile, the Assad regime in Syria has collapsed, dealing a blow to the so-called "axis of resistance" between Iran, Syria, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis and other pro-Iranian groups.
14. With the present attacks on Iran, Israel is attempting to weaken –since it has not succeeded to overthrow– the Iranian regime, its main rival in the region, to the greatest extent possible. Whatever the overall outcome, Israel will emerge with concrete gains, in terms of military and geographical expansion, from this adventure into which the planet is being thrown.

### US vs Iran – the vital need for a balanced position

15. We have always been severely critical and opposed to the reactionary, theocratic, capitalist regime of Iran. But in the case of an attack by US imperialism (and Israel) against a country that belongs to the third or fourth line in terms of industrial and economic development we do not keep "equal distances" – we prioritize the building of an anti-imperialist, anti-US, anti-Israel campaign, demanding an end to the war and the ejection of US (and NATO) bases out of the region, as our main and dominant position. US imperialism is the main enemy against the working class and the ex-colonial people on a global basis and a failure of the US to achieve its aims would be a reflection of the US's growing weakness (as we emphasized in our last year's resolution on world perspectives, on Trump). This is a concrete example of the US losing its hegemonic power, opening

new opportunities for the working class and the oppressed people. A clear victory for US imperialism would open the way to the next attack, e.g., against Cuba, in a similar way to which the successful abduction of Maduro in Venezuela opened the way for the attack on Iran.

16. However, this position does not mean giving any support to the Iranian regime. Unfortunately, after the attack on Iran, big sections of the anti-capitalist Left have completely forgotten the crimes of the regime and the massacres of the past years and decades, against the repeated eruptions of the Iranian masses, in the name of anti-imperialism. Others have gone as far as claiming that there are simply no problems with the Iranian regime, all criticism about lack of rights is simply Western propaganda. This is a reflection of the way Stalinism has impacted on the thinking of the Left in the decades that followed the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union. Describing the situation as it truly is, is a duty of revolutionaries. Keeping a clear distance from and continuing to oppose the regime is absolutely necessary in order for revolutionary socialists to offer a perspective to the Iranian masses that have been fighting against the regime in the past years and decades. This is important both internationally as well as for the revolutionary cadre inside Iran.
17. The issue of the balance however is crucial. The thrust of our argumentation and campaign must be against the imperialist war and the role of US imperialism and Israel. But we should not go to the extent of avoiding to criticize the regime because it's opposed to the US/Israel intervention. In fact, if there were strong revolutionary forces inside Iran able to overthrow the regime in the conditions of the crisis created by the war, they would have a historical responsibility to do so – if they did not, this would amount to historical betrayal. This of course is a theoretical abstraction, because there is currently no critical mass of revolutionary forces on the ground. But it is imperative to raise this perspective as a necessary condition to train cadres for the revolutionary party of the future.

## Geopolitics

18. In the [3rd ISp Conference, in March 2025](#), we wrote:

*“Geopolitically, Trump is causing tectonic shifts of what has been considered as stable in recent decades. Most important of all is the huge rift that is being created between the US and the European powers. The European powers have been following “obediently”, more or less, the US in the policies that the latter decided since the end of World War II – serving of course at the same time their own imperialist interests. This alliance was one of the key factors that enabled the West in general and the United States in particular to dominate the planet, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Trump seems to be bringing this alliance to an abrupt (and shocking to its main protagonists) end.”*

19. For a period, the leading European powers responded to these pressures cautiously, seeking to preserve the transatlantic alliance despite growing tensions. However, the dispute over Greenland was a turning point and, soon after that, the war on Iran was another one. In the face of EU's resistance on the issue of Greenland, Trump backed down, at least for the moment, not pursuing a military take-over of Greenland.
20. More broadly, European powers have increasingly faced the consequences of policies shaped by US strategic priorities. The war in Ukraine is one example. Initially, countries such as France and Germany showed hesitation and explored the possibility of diplomatic compromises with Russia. Over time, however, they aligned with the US-led strategy. This shift has carried significant

economic costs for European capitalism. The rupture of energy relations with Russia deprived Europe of cheap natural gas, increasing energy costs and weakening industrial competitiveness. The financial and military burden of the war in Ukraine has also been substantial. European governments have provided massive military and financial support to Zelensky, while the United States has benefited economically through increased arms exports and the expansion of LNG (liquefied natural gas) sales to European markets. At the same time, European states were dragged into the trade war with China, again under pressure from the US. This limited European access to one of the fastest-growing markets in the world.

### “Rules-based order”

21. The presidency of Donald Trump has delivered repeated blows to what has been described as the international “rules-based order”. This concept refers to the network of institutions, treaties and norms that developed after WWII, under the gaze of the US and its allies. The aim of this framework was to create an international system that facilitated the global expansion of capitalism under the political and military dominance of Western imperialism and to contain the USSR-led bloc of countries. Central to this architecture were institutions such as the United Nations and a series of multilateral agreements intended to regulate conflicts between states, manage economic relations and legitimize the global role of US power. Trump’s administration is practically dissolving any concept of international coordination with other capitalists.
22. The most recent hit in that direction has been the creation of the so-called “Board of Peace”. In this “BoP” Trump will be the absolute ruler – he will decide and order, no decision can be made without his agreement, he and only he will decide the composition of his Board and any changes to it. Trump wants to effectively abolish the UN Security Council (essentially the UN itself) and replace it with his BoP, which will determine where there will be war and where peace, and which will bring down or install governments according to his decisions.
23. The capitalists did not discover diplomacy, international rules and organizations all of a sudden, because they had some kind of epiphany. For centuries, European colonialists operated on the basis of brute force, robbery, wars and genocide. They were led to diplomacy and international organizations by the repeated crises of their system, economic and social, by the wars they found themselves in and finally by the revolutions that these conditions gave birth to.
24. Marxists need to use every opportunity to uncover the hypocrisy of capitalism. In this case, not only to attack Trumpism, but also to expose the “rules-based order”, showing how it was used over and over to attack regimes that didn’t conform with Western imperialism’s interests. Marxists should not, in their fight against Trump’s unilateral, warmongering and chaotic decision making, uphold and defend the previous capitalist “order” usually termed “International Law”, as is done by Social Democracy, the reformist Left and even anticapitalist currents. It was under this “order” that the Iraq and Afghanistan wars were waged, that the global neoliberal onslaught against workers took place, etc. This “order” is now passed and gone, and this is rooted in the crisis of capitalism which is throwing the major capitalists/imperialists at each other’s throat. The task of Marxists is to provide the socialist alternative on a continental and global basis – a socialist order based on respect, democracy, equal rights and democratic planning of production for society’s needs as opposed to capitalist profits.

## Impact on trade war with China

25. **There are good reasons to predict that Trump's economic policies will also backfire.** The US economy has not taken off, no new jobs have been created, manufacturing has not returned to the US as Trump was promising – leaving aside the possibility of a new recession due to the war on Iran. Nor have Trump's policies brought any advantages to the US, in its competition to China.
26. Reducing China's large trade surplus has been a central goal of American policy. At the end of 2024, China's trade surplus approached 1 trillion dollars (to be exact \$992 billion), a historical record, despite facing a trade war from the US and its allies since 2017. At the end of 2025, after Trump's new aggressive actions, the trade surplus not only did not decrease but [increased to \\$1.2 trillion](#) (\$1.19 trillion to be precise) – a new historical record. For comparison, at the end of 2017 it was \$422.5 billion. In the first two months of 2026, the trade surplus reached another record level, while industrial production increased by more than 6%, much higher than predicted.
27. Growth of Chinese GDP was around 5% for 2025 and is estimated (by Western international bodies) at between 4.2% and 4.5% for 2026. It is significantly lower than in the previous decades, but it is still 2 to 3 times higher than the growth of the US and the EU. [For 2026, it is predicted](#) (by the IMF before the Iran war) that global GDP will increase by 3.1%. China will contribute 26.6% to this increase, India 17% (the two together 43.6%), the US 9.9% and Europe (EU with Britain) 9.5%. In other words, the West's tendency to lose ground in relation to both China and India is not arrested.
28. On the question of whether the US (and European) trade war against China has managed to cut it off from technological development, let's listen to the words of those who "know better". The CEO of Google Deep Mind (which has developed *Gemini*), and Nobel laureate [Demis Hassabis](#), recently stated that Chinese artificial intelligence models are closer to the capabilities of the US and the West *"than we might have thought a year or two ago. Maybe right now they are only a few months away"*. Along the same lines, Nvidia CEO (the company with the largest market capitalization on the planet, valued at this moment at \$4.6 trillion) Jensen Huang made statements such as: *"As I have been saying for a long time, [China is nanoseconds behind the US](#) in Artificial Intelligence", "we are very, very close... China is right behind us..."* and *"[China will beat the US in the AI race](#)"*.
29. If we look at the overall picture of the US-China confrontation, it is probably best summarized by the headlines in two of the most important capitalist media outlets in the US. *"China at the epicenter, amid American chaos"*, wrote [Bloomberg on January 15](#), while the [New York Times on January 31](#), wrote: *"US allies reach out to China, but on Beijing's terms"*.
30. All of the above, of course, do not negate the serious contradictions and problems inherent in the Chinese economy, which despite the very strong intervention of the state operates on the basis of the capitalist market. Nor does it negate the fact that Trump's trade war, although much milder than the war cries with which he started off in early 2025, has a negative effect on all capitalist countries and will certainly affect China as well, contributing to the reduction of its growth rates.

## US economy – not a success story

31. The economy is the key. Whatever blunders Trump and his staff may do on the international level, if the US economy advances, and provides some crumbs for working-class and poor households in the US, while the billionaires are becoming trillionaires, then he will have consolidated his position

for a while. And the European and NATO “allies” of the US, who behind the scenes are currently cursing Trump, will swallow the pill and the insults and adapt to the new reality. Trump, of course, presents whatever happens as a great victory achieved by his unique charisma, however, the facts and figures of the US economy tell a different story.

32. At the base of the American economy is a time bomb namely the budget deficit and national debt. Trump’s policies are far from providing any solution to these problems. Over the past decade, the annual budget deficit rose from \$585 billion in 2016 to about \$1.8 trillion by the end of 2025 (more than tripling in absolute terms). As a percentage of GDP, it has doubled, from ~3.1% in 2016 to ~6%. (The IMF and other international financial institutions insist on a maximum of 3% as necessary for stability. This figure is partly arbitrary and a result of the onslaught of neoliberalism, because the key question is whether the deficits are directed towards productive investment and social needs, but still it is quite indicative of the problems faced by the US economy).
33. Public debt has doubled in a decade – from \$19.5 trillion in 2016 to \$38.5 trillion today. This represents [around 124% of GDP](#). **For comparison, in the decades from 1940 to 2024 the average public debt was 66.38%**. What international capitalist organizations consider necessary (for economic stability) is that debt should not exceed 60% of GDP. The servicing of the American public debt has reached the unprecedented level of [1 trillion dollars per year](#). This corresponds to approximately 15% of budget expenditure, is on par with spending on health (15%) and exceeds spending on “defense” (13%).
34. The US has been running a trade deficit with the rest of the world since the 1970s. The tariffs imposed by Trump on imports from third countries were supposed to reduce (and even reverse) the deficit. **Instead, we had an increase in the deficit in the balance of trade with foreign countries from approximately \$903 billion in 2024 to \$936 billion by November 2025.**
35. He declared that by imposing tariffs he would bring back to the United States industries that left the country a long time ago, creating many well-paid jobs. Nothing of the kind has happened. On the contrary, there are job losses. As [Bloomberg reports for January 2026](#): *“US companies announced the largest number of job cuts for any January since the depths of the Great Recession in 2009... Companies last month announced 108,435 job cuts, a 118% increase from a year earlier”*.
36. To reduce debt and deficits smoothly in a capitalist economy, it is necessary to have high GDP growth rates. The US economy does not have high growth rates. **The OECD estimates that the economy grew in 2025 by only 2%. Before the war on Iran was launched it estimated that for 2026 it will grow by 1.7%.** Such rates are far from the “miracles” promised by Trump. Furthermore, this growth is based on two unstable factors: a) the large budget deficits that were mentioned above and b) the Artificial Intelligence bubble in which hundreds of billions of dollars are being invested (with no idea of what kind of return they will generate, drawing parallels with the [dotcom bubble of 2000](#), which lasted 2½ years, with Nasdaq losing 78% of its value and wiping out more than \$5 trillion in market values). The problem with deficits is that at some stage they force a “landing” of the economy (recession) while “bubbles” sooner or later burst – the two, as a rule, go together. Thus, the only way US capitalism can use to reduce deficits is through austerity policies. Trump has no intention of doing this because it is tantamount to his political suicide. But this can be forced on him. The contradictions of the US economy are leading one way or another to

recession. And it is very likely that Trump will pay the price. But that does not mean that Trumpism – a truly dangerous phenomenon – will end.

### It's not Fascism

37. There is a discussion about how to describe Trump and his regime, with many on the left speaking of fascism. As we've [developed in previous material](#), this is not the case. Fascism, among other things, means the complete destruction not only of all rights (democratic, trade union, social, etc.) but also of the organisations of the working class. We are very far from such a state of things. This can only come about as a result of great defeats of the US working class, in struggles that by far surpass whatever we have seen to this day.
38. **One may speak of fascist elements in Trump's administration but this is different from a fascist regime.** It is also wrong to speak of the fascisticization of US society, for at the same time as certain sections of society are moving to the right, others are moving to the left and getting radicalized – as shown by the victory of Zohran Mamdani in New York, without of course allowing for any illusions in Mamdani who is a reformist linked to the Democratic Party.

### European Convergence?

39. The European powers have been "*Stunned, sidelined and disunited*" to use [The Guardian's \(11.03.2026\)](#) words. Trump's repeated offensive remarks, the issue of Greenland, the tariff-war against the European powers, the war on Iran, are pushing the EU in the direction of struggling to present itself as an independent pole, in face of the competition from both China and the US. On this backdrop, the discussion about greater convergence on the financial, fiscal, defense, foreign policy and other levels, has been reinvigorated. But no real steps have been made.
40. Trump's rise has created further divisions inside the EU. There are open disagreements within the EU to the attack on Iran; between the heads of the two main EU institutions, the EU Commission (lead by Ursula von der Leyen – Germany) and the EU Council (led by Antonio Costa – Portugal); new clashes and a new divergence between France and Germany, the key pillars of the EU, etc.
41. The root of the inability of the EU to overcome its divisions and paralysis and to move in the direction of a federal formation, lies in the conflicting interests of the different ruling classes, despite the very extensive integration of its markets. **Fundamentally, European capitalism cannot overcome the nation state despite the limitations it imposes on it in the present epoch.** This does not mean that certain steps towards further convergence cannot be undertaken in some fields.

### Arms Race and Militarism

42. One of the striking features of the current period is the rapid acceleration of arms spending. Military expenditure has increased dramatically in recent years, reflecting the sharpening of geopolitical rivalries. According to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), world military spending rose in a year by 9.4% in real terms to approximately \$2.7 trillion in 2024. **This marked the 10th consecutive year of rising military expenditure and represents an increase of roughly 37% since 2015.**
43. Governments within NATO have agreed to raise defense spending from 2% of GDP to between 3.5 and 5%. Trump has announced a 50% increase in military spending until 2027, taking the US

military budget to \$1,5 trillion. Russia's military expenditure more than doubled from 2021. China is now in the third year of a 7% annual rise in defense spending. The result is a massive transfer of resources toward the military sector. The revenues of the world's largest arms producers reached \$679 billion in 2024.

44. Mainstream media are trying to portray this shift as having some economic benefits by stimulating growth and employment. Military expenditure can create temporary demand in certain sectors of the economy; however, its overall economic impact is relatively limited compared to other forms of public investment. Estimates suggest that the fiscal multiplier of defense spending is around 0.5, meaning that every €100 spent generates roughly €50 in economic activity. By contrast, investment in areas such as infrastructure, education, health or renewable energy typically produce 2 to 4 times higher returns. Also, due to the high budget deficits and public debt, governments have to cut down on spending in other fields in order to provide the funds for arms – this means arms expenditure will have an even smaller impact on economic growth.
45. In all countries, most starkly in Europe, there is a conscious policy of militarization. Governments try to convince people they need to be prepared to go to war and fight for their country – a notion that was dormant due to the relative stability in the advanced capitalist countries after WWII. The German army is actively trying to recruit teenagers through social media posts, and school children in Italy are going for “educational visits” to military facilities. The Greek foreign minister said that Europeans must get used to the idea of coffins with the EU flag on them.
46. At the same time, technological developments are transforming the character of warfare. Artificial Intelligence is increasingly integrated into military operations, particularly in surveillance, targeting and battlefield coordination. The wars in Gaza and now in Iran have demonstrated the rapid expansion of these technologies. Only a few years ago, governments and technology companies were assuring the public that there would be no moral issues stemming from the use of AI in warfare as it will be tightly controlled. In reality, the integration of AI into military systems is developing far more rapidly, raising profound dangers regarding escalation and automation of lethal decisions. As experts explain, both in Gaza and Iran, AI models are making decisions on targets, despite there being a final “human approval”. They call it “a high-tech version of carpet bombing” (i.e. indiscriminate killing, which is considered a war crime).
47. Once technological systems are introduced and embedded in military planning, command structures and weapons platforms, it becomes extremely difficult for states to reverse or limit their use. Each step toward automation creates pressures for further adoption, as rival powers seek to avoid falling behind technologically. **The result is a dynamic in which decision-making becomes progressively delegated to algorithmic systems designed to process vast quantities of data and respond at speeds beyond human capacity.** In such conditions the time available for human judgment and restraint is drastically reduced, increasing the risk that military escalation occurs through automated responses. An example which demonstrates how catastrophic this may become, is the story of the '62 Cuban Missile Crisis. At the height of it, the Soviet submarine officer Vasily Arkhipov refused to authorize the launch of a nuclear torpedo despite intense pressure from other commanders who believed war with the US had already begun. His refusal helped prevent a nuclear confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union.

## Women and trans rights

48. [According to the United Nations](#), *“The world is retreating from gender equality, and the cost is being counted in lives, rights, and opportunities. Five years from the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) deadline in 2030, none of the gender equality targets are on track”*. Despite certain positive steps taken in the past decade to dismantle discriminatory laws (a result of feminist struggles internationally) women currently hold only 64% of the legal rights afforded to men. Violence remains pervasive with 1 in 8 women experiencing partner violence in the course of last year. Four million girls undergo the Female Genital Mutilation each year *“Eliminating FGM by 2030 would require accelerating progress to 27 times the pace of the past decade”*. Maternal mortality continues to take the lives of 800 women daily, due to pregnancy related complications.
49. The misogynist attitude of Trump’s administration is encouraging governments everywhere to aim to take back women’s rights, especially the issue of abortion, while trans people have seen a clear setback in their rights in the course of the last years. In the US alone, in 2025, 600 anti-transgender bills were introduced, targeting health care, sports and education.
50. **Capitalism will not allow any right, won through decades of struggle, to be consolidated – once in crisis it will take on its conservative, reactionary characteristics and attack any progressive measures taken in the preceding period.**

## Environment

51. The annual meetings called by the UN (COP) to tackle the environmental crisis have become a farce. Trump’s refusal to even recognize that there is a problem makes things worse – the US does not even bother to take part in such meetings. But Trump only aggravates an already existing problem. Such meetings, including the Paris Agreement (2015) which set the target of making sure the 1.5°C rise in the planet’s temperature (compared to pre-industrial levels) is never reached, cannot take binding decisions. Most specialists agree now that the 1.5°C target has already been lost, and if no drastic measures are taken the planet is heading to a horrendous 2.5 – 2.8°C rise.
52. The last such meeting, COP30, was held last November in Belem, Brazil, at the mouth of the Amazon, supposedly to show respect to what is often described as the “lungs of the planet”. Nothing of the sort took place. Corporate power has not only been lobbying around the COP meetings, they are now “inside it”: more than 1,600 fossil fuel lobbyists were accredited to attend COP30 – their delegation was larger than that of any other country except the host, Brazil. The dominant agenda continued to rely on three pillars: carbon markets and pricing (meaning rich countries can continue to generate greenhouse gases by buying the “rights” of poorer nations), public–private partnerships for “green infrastructure”, and technologies like carbon capture and storage that allow continued fossil extraction with the promise of future “clean-up”. Lulas’ flagship initiative, formally launched in Belem with the support of the UN, the World Bank, etc, TFFF (Tropical Forests Forever Facility) aims to reward tropical forest countries that keep trees standing. That is, instead of taking decisive measures to protect the rain forests and to *properly and rationally* invest in Renewables, they provide incentives so that private capital can decide what is more profitable to do. **No serious steps are taken in the direction of Renewables; on the contrary there is a new surge for fossil fuels to meet the extreme demands of AI in energy.** Nuclear power is back on the agenda in the form of smaller plants; it’s now described as “green”.

## Poverty and Inequality

53. The reality for billions of working people remains one of insecurity, poverty and displacement. According to the latest figures, roughly one in ten people globally –around 800 million– still live in extreme poverty (i.e., in conditions of mal-nutrition) while nearly half the population of the planet (46%) live with less than 8.3 USD per day. At the same time wealth concentration has reached unprecedented levels: **the richest 1% own more wealth than the bottom 95% of the world's population put together**. Wars, environmental disasters and economic meltdowns are pushing millions to move across borders or within countries. Economic growth by far benefits capital, to an unprecedented degree, while working people face falling real wages, precarious employment, increasing insecurity and rising living costs.

## Consciousness

54. Poverty, job insecurity, inequality, attack on democratic and other rights, gender rights, environment, are all key issues that have a major impact on consciousness. This is expressed politically through a deep crisis of traditional capitalist parties and institutions. In many countries the vacuum has allowed the Far Right to gain ground. At the same time where forces exist to present a left-wing alternative, the Left can make gains, as the recent Mamdani victory in NY illustrates. These contradictory tendencies reflect the same underlying reality: the political system created during the previous period of capitalist stability is increasingly unable to cope, and people are looking for a way out. However, **the general picture is one of a continuing retreat of the forces of the Left and working-class organisations and a rise of the Far Right**.

55. This, obviously, has an impact on society as mass layers that are suffering under the present conditions, feel desperate but also paralyzed in their search for a way out. The 2025 WHO Mental Health Report found that mental health conditions have reached a "historic high", as *"over one billion people live with a mental health condition, yet most do not receive adequate care."* These are not simply individual problems but social symptoms of a system that only offers insecurity and alienation. This is also reflected in cultural trends. There is a distinctive rise in the "dystopian" genre in arts, as it corresponds to real anxieties about the direction of society.

## Class Struggle

56. **Despite the lack of a left political perspective, workers and youth continue to fight**. Over the past months we have seen significant working-class mobilizations, mainly aimed against rising costs of living due to inflation. In a number of European countries, like Portugal, Spain, Italy and Belgium, we had important strikes in the transport sector, especially affecting airports and trains, but also in Education and Health. In Belgium rail workers went on a 72-hour strike in March 2026, cancelling connections between London, Paris and Brussels – following strikes and demos in the autumn and winter against pension reform and austerity. In Italy, in addition, we had the inspiring [general strike against the genocide in Palestine](#) and in defense of the Global Sumud Flotilla to Gaza. Outside the "industrially developed" countries, important strikes and mobilizations have also taken place in ex-colonial countries (termed "global south") like Nigeria, Iran, Mexico, etc.

57. A characteristic of the recent period has been the rise of Gen Z (the new generation of teenagers and youth in their 20s). **Today's youth are growing up under conditions of permanent crisis** – economic insecurity, climate breakdown, war, suppression of gender rights, general suppression of

democratic and other rights. This is producing a radicalization among big sections of Gen Z, expressed in uprisings, protests and mass mobilisations. Protests led by young people have erupted in a number of countries over economic conditions and political repression, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Madagascar, Kenya, Peru, Morocco and others. These outbursts do not constitute a coherent political movement but demonstrate a growing rejection of the existing system and openness to radical alternatives. The fact that these movements do not have a strong political backbone or stable forms of organisation mean that they often die down very quickly. This is a reflection of the lack of a political alternative from the Left.

58. One of the most important countries where important strikes and mobilizations have taken place has been the US. This is particularly important, indicating that **the rise of a far-right candidate like Trump to power does not necessarily lead to grave defeats for the mass movement, but on the contrary, it can create the conditions for a more determined fight back**. A very important struggle took place in the health sector in New York where nurses went on strike for 46 days; the Boeing strike which lasted 102 days was followed by workers internationally; there was an important “rolling” strike at Starbucks etc. But what stood out was the determined response of workers and youth in Minnesota, after the murders of Rene Goode and Alex Pretti by ICE agents, which took the form of a partial general strike that forced Trump and ICE to retreat. It’s very important that **the issue of a general national strike against Trump is now being raised and discussed** by workers in a number of federal states. The “No Kings” days, organized on a number of occasions since Trump’s inauguration have been massive – in the most recent one, March 28, under the slogans “*No Kings, No ICE, No War*” it’s estimated that around 8 million took part, in 3,000 rallies across the country.

### No revival of New Left

59. Despite these advances in class struggle and in consciousness internationally, this has not been reflected in the rise of new left parties that can offer a way forward. The two most recent developments in Britain, with the creation of *Your Party*, and in the US with the successes of DSA (Democratic Socialists of America) have not lived up to expectations. Especially in Britain, although 800,000 people expressed interest in *Your Party* after the announcement of its creation, only a few tens of thousands have joined in the end. The reason for this is linked to the shortcomings of the leadership, split between two factions and undermining each other in public, with a top-down approach by the Corbyn majority and an unclear political programme. The DSA in the US has reached 100,000 members, and has elected hundreds of officials, including a number in Congress, but it does not show a real dynamic, mainly because it offers no directions to build the mass movements, is linked to the Democratic Party establishment and it has a top-down structure. PSOL, on the other hand, in Brazil, is facing another major crisis, as its right wing is splitting off to join with Lula’s governing party.

### Marxism

60. For revolutionary socialists the central task is to connect these developing struggles and the ones to come into a conscious movement aiming at challenging capitalism and laying the basis for workers’ power and a socialist society. The building of mass revolutionary Left parties is the necessary tool for this perspective to be realized. The revolutionary Left has failed to provide a perspective, despite the massive crisis of the capitalist system. As a general rule it is multi-

fractured, and incapable of influencing developments. Some major defeats of the working class internationally, provide the background to this negative picture – primarily the capitalist restoration in the ex-Stalinist states of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the inability of the working class to fight off the attacks that followed the 2007-8-9 recession. But there are also subjective factors: sectarian traits, opportunist traits, the perception that predominates in most of the present international Trotskyist groups that them and only them possess the knowledge of how to lead the working class to power, etc. Internationalist Standpoint is fighting to overcome such deficiencies, to build a sizeable international revolutionary organisation rooted in the working class and youth, and at the same time assist in the building of mass workers' organisations of struggle, while being open to discussion and collaboration with groups that come from different backgrounds and with which there may be differences in analysis. The future mass revolutionary organisations of the working class will be built through the amalgamation of different revolutionary currents and not through the linear growth of anyone of the present revolutionary groups.