



The Bullet

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The Venezuelan Call for New International Organization of the Left

Socialist Project

The call by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez for discussion of the formation of a 'Fifth International' has generated a lot of debate amongst the left around the world. As an addendum to the 'Caracas Commitment' of November 2009, a resolution was passed to form a preparatory committee to convene a global conference of left parties in Caracas in April 2010 to discuss the formation of a new international.

The call has raised a lot of issues with respect to the form such an organization might take at this time, its political nature, its mechanisms of association and its programme. The discussion has ranged widely: outright scepticism and even hostility; demands for a programme that is much clearer and sharper in political commitments; suggestions for an open process much like the World Social Forum with a somewhat stronger agenda-setting role; and visions of a more permanent international 'front' capable of advancing global social justice and anti-imperialist struggles. *The Bullet* here produces a statement by the Socialist Project on the dialogue about a new international organization of the left.

On November 20, 2009, at a meeting of more than fifty left organizations from thirty-one countries in Caracas, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez called for formation of an international association of left parties and social movements to confront the challenge posed by capitalism's global crisis.

Chávez called for a conference that would be not "just one more meeting" but a "socialist encounter" of the "genuine left, willing to fight against imperialism and capitalism."

Many socialists and anti-imperialist activists throughout the world have responded positively to the appeal and recognize it as a significant response to the recent escalation of imperialist wars and interventions around the world, notably in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Latin America. They also have pointed out that

the Caracas appeal also comes as the global working classes – and the planetary ecology – suffer the consequences of the worst economic crises since the 1930s.

This initiative quickly won the support of major Latin American left parties, including the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) of Bolivia, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua, and Alianza Pais of Ecuador.



Socialist Project greets this initiative for more effective international unity of anti-capitalist and liberation forces, and pledges our solidarity and collaboration in efforts to achieve this goal. It is in the spirit of our founding statement that “our political commitments are necessarily internationalist.” We view this project as reflecting the unifying spirit of Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution, which has brought together forces from diverse political origins, with diverse ideological viewpoints, and diverse proposals into a common movement striving to serve the interests of the popular movement.

The initial supporters of the Caracas call for an international organization of left parties reflect a similar diversity and a similar striving for unity in action. Such an effort was demonstrated recently in the international campaign against the coup in Honduras.

In Canada, too, we witness a growing process of trying to build unity in diversity among left and working-class forces. We encourage socialist activists in Canada to engage in this spirit with the project launched at the November 2009 conference in Caracas as part of the pressing struggle for a “socialism of the 21st century.” •

Further Reading:

- “Commitment of Caracas” at www.psuv.org.ve or at links.org.au/node/1375.
- Kiraz Janicke, “Venezuela: Chavez Calls for new organization of left parties” at links.org.au/node/1372.
- Luis Bilbao, “Fifth Socialist International: Time for Definitions” at links.org.au/node/1491.
- “Proposal for a Participatory Socialist International” by ZNET at www.zcommunications.org/newinternational.htm.

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