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Communist Party of Israel

The Popular Uprising

The Arab peoples' historical breakthrough

Decisions of the 13th session of the Central Committee
February 19, 2011

The Central Committee of CPI salutes the mass popular movement for democracy and a dignified existence, which marks a breakthrough in the history of the Arab people. For the first time in 60 years, the masses have risen up and banished the pro-American tyrants, who trampled human rights, privatized governmental corporations, and created widespread unemployment and economic distress, while they themselves, along with a narrow stratum of capitalists and financiers, became rich. The banishing of the disgraced President Ben Ali from Tunisia, and of President Hosni Mubarak from Egypt have set into motion a broadening social and political campaign, which is spreading into other countries of the region.

The triumph of the popular political protests has been achieved thanks to the collaboration of workers fighting for fair wages and against privatization, of young unemployed university graduates, of women and of democracy-seekers. The unity of the civic campaign has defeated the powers of oppression and their thugs, and liberated the multitudes from fear and despair.

The ejection of dictators and the transformation of political discourse has dealt a severe blow to the United States' plans, although a battle is still underway about the character of the new regime. The regional configuration that the U.S. administration built over the past years, through its imperialist strategy, with the goal of guaranteeing the flow of oil and securing its military bases, has lost its power. This change may have rescued the peoples of the regions from future wars.

The first clear victory achieved by the popular uprisings is a change of discourse. No regime and no autocracy can continue to ignore the rights and desires of the peoples.

The popular uprisings in the Arab countries, like the progressive democratic changes in the Latin American countries are weakening global capitalism, which has condemned the peoples of the Third World to be cheap providers of labor and a source for quick financial gain.

The Central Committee notes, that the revolutionary uprising reinforces trust in the power of peoples to attain civil and social rights, and to weaken and even eradicate a regime that is linked to local and foreign capital.

The Central Committee estimates, that the popular uprisings in the Arab countries will have positive ramifications also for the campaign for a just Israeli-Palestinian peace, and also for the campaign within Israel itself to defend the democratic public sphere and to protect workers' rights.

The entire world - with the exception of the United States -

supports the Palestinian struggle for independence and for a just peace.

One hundred and thirty-five member nations of the UN and all the members of the Security Council, with the exception of the United States, supported (on February 18, 2011) the resolution submitted by the PLO to the UN's security council. The resolution demands cessation of construction in the West Bank settlements, including East Jerusalem, and the establishment of a Palestinian State within the June 4, 1967 borders.

President Obama vetoed the resolution and prevented it from passing. However, by doing so, he again demonstrated that his condemnations of construction in the settlements, and his declarations in favor of creating an independent Palestine were empty words. The American veto is an unequivocal act of support for the Israeli occupation, which sabotages international efforts to achieve a just and stable peace in the region. Therefore, this is a veto against the right of both peoples - the Palestinians and the Israelis - to throw off the yoke of the occupation.

The PLO's executive committee, by rejecting the threats and blackmail of Obama and his administration, and by insisting on bringing the resolution to a vote, reiterated its stance that the liberation of the Palestinian people and its right for a state is not open for negotiation. Insistence on this PLO policy, which no longer compromises the rights of the Palestinian people nor places its hopes on the U.S. administration, but instead enlists the masses - is the only way to end the Israeli occupation, which began in 1967.

The CPI's Central Committee regards the stance taken by the nations of the world against the settlements and occupation as confirmation of its assessment, that the revolutionary tide in the Arab world, and the chance of democratization of the regimes in Egypt and in other Arab countries will contribute to the campaign for international recognition of an independent Palestinian State within the June 4, 1967 boundaries, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and for a solution to the refugee problem in accordance with UN resolutions.

CPI calls upon the government of Israel to draw the inevitable conclusion arising from the sweeping international support for putting a stop to the settlement and the occupation, and from the new developments in the Arab world; to stop relying on a policy of domination and warfare; to extricate itself from reliance on an alliance with the United States, which only leads to isolation; to adopt a policy of peace and understanding between neighbors on which the safeguarding of the true interests of the people in Israel and of the Palestinian people, as well as those of all the nations of the region, depends.

A broad-based democratic camp is the only response to the authorities' attack on democracy

The Central Committee of the CPI warns that the assault on Israel's democratic sphere is becoming more and more acute under the leadership of the Netanyahu-Lieberman-Barak government. This is not only an attack by a incited mob against Arabs, refugees, and migrant workers, but a methodically planned governmental assault, in light of the crisis of its own rejectionist policies vis-à-vis the peace process, and in light of the social callousness of the Israeli governments.

Israel's democratic sphere has always been deficient: beyond the fact that Israel is a bourgeois democracy, it has been marked from the very beginning by acute discrimination based on nationality, which seriously limited the rights of the Arab population. Therefore, the CPI has always struggled to expand democracy in Israel. But our consistent struggle to expand democracy does not mean that we are indifferent to the danger of its total erasure. We are struggling against an assault upon the limited democratic sphere that does exist in Israel, since this is the space which we and all

other progressive forces can still use as a platform for our political and social campaigns.

At the root of the present assault on the democratic sphere is a dangerous shift that the right wing is undergoing – with large sections of the established right wing openly adopting Kahanist, racist and anti-democratic positions. At the same time, the collapse of the traditional political center in Israel has greatly weakened the forces that in the past provided a counterbalance to the right wing. Under the current circumstances, a huge historical responsibility has been placed at the door of left wing forces – led by CPI and Hadash, to spearhead a campaign to consolidate broad-based actions against the dangers of Fascism.

But, despite the force of the anti-democratic assault, emanating from the highest echelons of political power, the battle for democracy in Israel is not lost. A large and powerful Jewish-Arab democratic camp does exist, and this is the time to shatter the air of despondence, despair and silencing, and to speak forth with a unified voice.

The demonstration by tens of thousands of people on January 15, 2011, initiated by CPI and Hadash (Democratic Front for Peace and Equality), proved that it is possible to mobilize the masses for a democratic struggle. The Central Committee notes the importance of the broad-based cooperation, that was evident in the demonstration and in its basic messages. The CPI expresses its appreciation for the Tel Aviv branch of CPI for the central role it played in organizing the demonstration and enlisting broad participation, and to members of the CPI and Hadash throughout Israel, for their important mobilization that made the demonstration possible.

A supreme strategic mission at the moment is to continue to consolidate a democratic camp, moving beyond ideological differences and political divisions, as a broad movement, which combines forces from the political arena and civil society, activists, political parties and civic organizations. The threat to the democratic spheres has, unfortunately, become a permanent aspect of Israeli reality, and in face of this reality, we must create broad-based and permanent collaborations.

The success of the democratic camp depends on its ability to create a broad collaboration between diverse forces, while building on a common foundation. At the same time, it is important to deepen and expand the meaning of the struggle for democracy in Israel. In our opinion, this struggle must be founded on three understandings:

The struggle for egalitarian democracy for all must include disempowered and beleaguered groups and social strata. In a society where attacks on the Arab national minority are a central component of the anti-democratic threat – the democratic camp must be an Jewish-Arab one.

Democracy must defend not only against racism and rejectionism toward the peace process, but also against the economic oligarchy and the links between finance capital and government, which undermine democratic norms for the sake of an economic policy that exacerbates socio-economic gaps, reduces workers to poverty, deepens national and ethnic discrimination, damages the health and education systems, harms the environment, women, senior citizens and children, and systematically erodes the middle and lower classes. Democracy requires solidarity and social justice.

The crisis of democracy is also one of the prices Israeli society is paying for the occupation which has lasted for more than forty years. For Israel to be a democracy – the occupation must end.

CPI's Central Committee calls upon all the organizations and members of the party, the members of Communist Youth and Hadash, to take action to consolidate broad Jewish-Arab democratic organizations in different parts of the country, at the universities and in work places.

The campaign for fair wages, affordable housing,

and adequate health services and education

The Netanyahu government, which led the move to pass a bi-annual budget, under the pretext of preserving stability, was forced, under the pressure of growing demands, to announce a number of modest measures to reduce the prices of fuel, raise the minimum wages, and respond to a few other demands. But the Netanyahu government has not given up the policy of awarding tax breaks to the rich, privatizing the rail system, the ports and the electric corporation, nor has it retreated from taking steps toward privatizing health and education services. The government has rejected the demands for creating affordable public housing projects and has adopted recommendations that will reward the gas barons with the majority of the profits from the newly discovered offshore gas reservoirs.

The CPI supports the demands of the social workers, the nurses and the doctors, of the railway employees and of other groups of workers for a fair wage, and demands increases in the health and education budgets, while opposing the privatization initiatives.

The Central Committee calls upon all the party branches and the partners in Hadash to mobilize for the success of the important demonstration in Haifa (February 25) to advance campaign initiatives on social issues, to demonstrate involvement and engagement in workers' struggles, and to build as broad a partnership as possible against the policies in service of capital, CPI supports full compensation for prices rises, the raising of the monthly minimum wage to NIS 5000 (\$ 1380), abolishing the water corporations and reducing the prices of water; CPI seeks recognition of the right to housing, implementation of the compulsory free education law from age 3 upwards and rejects national and gender discrimination in the work place and in wages.

In advance of the elections in the Teachers' Union and in the Histadrut Labor Federation

The Central Committee congratulates its activists, and the activists of Hadash in the Teachers' Union for submitting lists to the national convention and to branch committees. The CPI's branches must take action, together with its partners, to mobilize broad support of the Hadash List in the Teachers' Union .

The Central Bureau repeats its call to all of the party's organizations to tend to registering its members and friends as members in the Histadrut Labor Federation, as required by the time table: eligibility to vote in the elections for the Histadrut and Naamat convention in 2012 is contingent on membership in the Histadrut as of May 2011.

Side by side with the residents of Al Araqib in their heroic struggle

The Central Committee condemns the violent attacks by police forces and by the border police against the families of the unrecognized village Al Araqib, which has included the use of bullets and the injury of civilians, home demolitions, and the arrest of residents and of citizens who came to support their campaign.

The struggle of the residents of Al Araqib against dispossession from their land and against the attempt by the Jewish National Fund to plant a forest on their land is an important, just and democratic struggle, which is deserving of every support from any seeker of justice - Arab or Jew.

For the militant observance of Land Day

The Arab population and the Jewish democratic forces will observe the 35th anniversary of Land Day

on March 30.

CPI calls to place the campaign against the home demolitions at Al Araqib and at other locations at the center of this year's Land Day ceremonies, along with the campaign against racist legislation and racist trends, and in favor of protecting workers, children, young people, and the underprivileged social strata, which constitute the majority of Israel's Arab population.

The observance of the 35th Land Day must clearly and forcefully express the struggle of the Arab population for peace, equality, democracy and co-existence that respects the rights of the national minority.
