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Georgia

## **No solidarity with Russian imperialism - Russia's ruling class is main obstacle to self-determination**

Full and unconditional support for the struggle of Ossetians for their national self-determination

Sunday 7 September 2008, by [Vpered](#) (Date first published: 4 September 2008).

Operation "Compulsion to Peace", lasting five days, is finished. This military conflict will have, nevertheless, a continuation which will find an expression in the further increase of intensity in the Caucasian region, and on the international scene.

From the first hours of a confrontation, the Russian and international media was filled with statements and attempts to give an explanation of the current situation. At the same time we are compelled to ascertain that only a very small share of those messages which have filled media space, expresses a position adequate enough at this conjuncture: we have to deal with one-sided patriotic statements (frequently reaching a hysteria) or, on the other side, we face another extreme measure - desire to accuse the people which have been involved in military operations of all mortal sins. Our task as Russian socialists is not just to declare a general position, but also to give the Marxist analysis of the situation, and to be capable of offering an alternative to state propaganda of any kind.

Unlike many, we are not going to choose, from the two sides (Russian and Georgian), who was "right" and which was "guilty". We believe that both sides of the conflict went to it menacingly. There is no requirement for discussion about who has begun the first fire and who whom has provoked. The position of the governments of both countries consists in orientation to the military opposition, and is capable of revealing the real political resource of these countries on the international scene.

Not the first or last time, the hostage of interests of both imperialistic groups, into one of which includes the United States, there were ordinary people. This time - the people of South Ossetia became victims, whose right to self-determination became a subject of trade in this conflict, as did the Georgian population which has already suffered from intrusion of Russian "peacemakers".

It is impossible to deny that the choice of the South Ossetian people is quite clear: Russia is considered by the majority of Ossetians as the defender from ethnic cleansing and violence by the Georgian government.

This position of the peaceful population of South Ossetia, perishing under blows of the Georgian army, is quite natural. The concrete balance of forces on international scene, no less than weakness of the international (and especially Georgian) labor movement, means that at present the Ossetian population does not have any defenders other than armies of imperialistic Russia.

In this situation the demand for withdrawal of Russian troops from a conflict zone, before a ceasefire

and at least the most preliminary arrangements for a peaceful settlement are developed, means to give worry to the population of Ossetia; its workers, its old people and children.

From the very beginning of the conflict we clearly demanded the immediate termination of military operations. We demanded that military operations of the Russian armies in South Ossetia were limited to necessary defence, without developing into war with the peaceful Georgian population, which died in Gori and other places under the Russian bombs.

We decisively declared that our position has nothing in common with a position of the right and pseudo-left Russian politicians acting under the flag of struggle for "the state interests of the Russian Federation".

Proclaiming the full and unconditional solidarity with the Ossetian people, expressing the full and unconditional support for the struggle of Ossetians for their national self-determination, we also unconditionally refuse any solidarity with Russian imperialism, or any support for the state of Putin and Medvedev.

"The state interest" of imperialist Russia is an interest of corporations and the top bureaucrats, which is strongly opposed to the interests of the working people. To support "the state interest" today means actually to support that the Russian imperialism could include new regions in its sphere of domination.

We have a moral and political right to support the Ossetians against their oppression by the bourgeois nationalist regime of Saakashvili, only because we are ready to act in support of any people oppressed by the Russian imperialism.

We unconditionally support the right of South Ossetia to self-determination, up to a split from Georgia and creation of an independent state, or reunion with the North Ossetia as a part of the Russian Federation.

But we are convinced that despite all the "humanitarian" and "peace-making" rhetoric of the Russian authorities, the Russian ruling class becomes the main obstacle in a way of the real self-determination of the people of South Ossetia.

In spite of the fact that the Russian government is ready for today to play openly with recognition of independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, it never approve their joining the Russian Federation. The independent decision of the population of South Ossetia of its own destiny would create a dangerous precedent of infringement of the system of a "vertical of power" and unconditional submission of regions to the centre. The reunion of Ossetia as a part of Russia could seriously call into question those principles and rules on which the Federation is currently based.

Despite the present termination of operations, military-political intensity will not decline for a long time, and open military operations will give way to incidentally repeating acts of sabotage and mutual provocations in a combination to mutual charges of the infringement of norms of international law and an exchange of diplomatic notes. Russia will continue to conduct its own game in this region: it will keep the armies, most likely, having increased a contingent and definitively having put South Ossetia under a complete control. Georgia, probably, will receive the vote for joining NATO (this point still will be a subject of huge political discussions) and additional support from the USA.

The United States will continue the strengthening in Caucasus. To the accompaniment of threats to the Russian government and conversations about new "cold war", the American and European establishment will not dare at the beginning of the real confrontation with Russia. The defeat of

Georgia was a serious blow to the foreign political strategy of the USA in the region, directed on support of satellite states of "New Europe". On the other hand, Sarkozy's peace initiative has shown the desire of the EU to take advantage of this situation for the demonstration of its own position. Energy dependence on Russia, no less than its remaining serious military potential, are able to force the EU and the USA to reconsider the unconditional support of the regimes like Saakashvili's. At the same time, the consent to actual freedom from the hands of the Russian government in South Ossetia and Abkhazia gives the EU and the USA the right to demand from Russia support on such strategic questions, such as pressure on Iran. For its part the Russian capital, which is deeply integrated into the world market, is least interested in political isolation directly beating down its profits. The fall of the rouble exchange rate and the beginning of recession in the market are disturbing symptoms creating a threat to political stability in the country. The original aspiration of the Russian ruling class today is (as fast as possible) to smooth the situation, simultaneously using it for the statement as the full member of world club of imperialistic powers.

Thus, the side which remains lost, as before, is the South Ossetian people. Inhabitants of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, who got Russian citizenship in their masses in recent months, remain citizens of the second grade: Refugees from Ossetia, already coming into the southern regions, will drag with them a pitiful existence, becoming the object of racism and oppression.

We demand a real right for the Ossetian people to decide their further destiny without external dictatorship from any side. We consider that the decision of the status of South Ossetia, should be considered with the opinion of thousands of Georgians living on its territory and today who have appeared in the position of refugees in territory of Georgia.

We call the peoples of Russia, South Ossetia, Georgia to struggle against a policy of the governments that can lead to new wars. We consider necessary that each of these people has called to account the politicians and business elite of this countries, bearing on them responsibility for bloodshed and troubles of the ordinary people.

**- We call for Russia, as a real, equal and democratic federation!**

- Against imposed from above chauvinism and Caucasophobia, for the full personal, political and social rights for all inhabitants of South Ossetia and Abkhazia if they want to become citizens of Russia!

- Against secret maneuvers of the governments of the USA, Russia and the European Union! For the full and unconditional right to the self-determination independent of situational interests of the imperialistic centers!

- For the peace and class solidarity of working people!

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**P.S.**

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\* The socialist movement VPERED (Forward, Russian: Социалистическое движение «Вперед») is a radical left-wing political organisation in Russia.