

Fourth International: 16th Congress

Solidarity with the Mexican workers' struggle

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Two of the most important contingents of the Mexican proletariat, the Mexican Electrical Workers' Union (SME) and the National Mine, Metal and Allied Workers' Union (SNTMMSRM), are engaged in major battle to defend their organisations, their contracts and their jobs. These conflicts put the class struggle back at the centre of politics in this country.

These conflicts have laid bare the class hatred and unscrupulous nature of a regime that was born out of a scandalous electoral fraud in 2006, and which aims to destroy these trade union organisations in order to deepen the privatization of all public services, "flexibilize" labour laws and make it easier to apply a brutal package of economic reforms that will make workers carry the burden of a crisis caused by the greed of the employers.

On 10th October 2009, the right-wing government of Felipe Calderon sent the army to occupy the premises of the public electricity company Luz y Fuerza del Centro (LyFC), following an illegal decree to liquidate this company, throwing 44 thousand electrical workers into the street and leaving 22 thousand pensioners with nothing. The government tried to justify this measure on the grounds of the workers' alleged "inefficiencies" and "privileges", but in reality its objective is to privatize the public electricity service and its fibre-optic network, and to destroy a union that has been a symbol of struggle and democracy in the history of the country.

For their part, the miners - of the historic Cananea, Sombrete and Taxco mine - have for more than two years been striking to demand better safety and hygiene conditions from the multimillion dollar company called "Grupo Mexico". Almost three years ago, there was a terrible accident at the "Pasta de Conchos" coal mine belonging to this group, which cost the lives of 62 workers, caused by the lack of the most elemental safety measures. On 12th February, the strike at Cananea, in Sonora state, was declared illegal and now the government is preparing to retake control with the use of military and police forces. The workers have relied that they will not hand over the mine, even if it costs them their lives.

On the 16th March, the date when the SME's collective agreement should be reviewed, a broad group of unions and other social movements have called for a national stoppage until the mining and electrical industry conflicts are resolved. On the outcome of this struggle will depend, in large measure, the immediate future of the Mexican working class.

The Fourth International expresses its unconditional solidarity with the struggle of the Mexican electricity and mine workers and calls on all its sections, sympathizers and the workers of all countries, to organise protest actions on 16th March against the Mexican government outside the Mexican embassies in all countries of the world.

Long live the working class! Long live proletarian internationalism!

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P.S.

* Translation International Viewpoint.