

Self-presentation

People's Solidarity for Social Progress (Korea): Analysis and Mission

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Self-presentation of the People's Solidarity for Social Progress (PSSP) posted on its website on July 1st, 201.:

- PSSP was founded in 1998 in the wake of the introduction of the IMF structural readjustment program in South Korea. It is our mission to cultivate a new social movement fighting against neoliberalism through 1) (re)constructing revolutionary social justice thought and theory, 2) searching for internationally-based people's alternatives to neoliberalism's financial and armed globalization, and 3) and reforming and revitalizing the workers and women's movements.
- We understand neoliberal financial and armed as a strategy for overcoming the structural crisis of capitalism through the exploitation of and violence against workers and common people. We seek to oppose this strategy by working to build an alterglobalization movement through on-the-ground struggle to protect human and labor rights and build people's democracy in South Korea.
- We are critical of the so-called citizens' movement, which establishes an antagonistic dichotomy between 'the people' and 'citizens' and confers legitimacy on neoliberal reforms. Instead, we promote the reform and revitalization of the workers and other traditional social movements, which have been weakened by their attempts to respond to neoliberal financial globalization in a defensive manner and on a single-country basis. As a voluntary network of citizens and activists working on diverse issues in different areas, it is our mission to put forth a new direction for South Korean social movements.
- Currently PSSP has a main office in Seoul and a branch in Incheon. PSSP is composed of several working bodies including a labor committee, an anti-war team, an anti-poverty team and a healthcare team, through which we work to reform, organize and strengthen Korean social movements. We also carrying out theory and policy development, public education, and solidarity work with other organizations struggling against neoliberalism.

PSSP Incheon Branch

PSSP's Incheon Branch was established in December 1999 to struggle against neoliberalism and find new energy and direction for social movements in the Incheon area.

- To achieve this goal, Incheon Branch members are struggling in solidarity the workers and women's movement forces in the area, developing new direction for social movements through social movement seminars and education programs and carrying out study, education and debate aimed at

strengthening critique of neoliberalism.

- We are also working to support and strengthen regular discussion and everyday activism of individual members through monthly meetings, small groups meetings, and publication of a membership newsletter.

Main activities

Theoretical

- The collapse of existing socialism, the rise of the 'third way', centrism, pragmatism and bureaucratism, and the strengthening of political disillusionment caused by the generalization of neoliberalism have caused a crisis of theory and politics. Given these conditions, we seek to reconstruct a theory and politics centered on the rights of common people and people's democracy.

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We are working to revive and adapt traditional critiques of political economy in a way that is adequate to a critique of the current structural crisis of capitalism. We see this work as a necessary part of the fight against the ideology of Neoliberalism, which has spread through all areas of society since the 1998 IMF foreign exchange crisis.

- We are making efforts concretely analyze the political structure and changes in the topography of the people's movement brought about by neoliberal structural readjustment and financial and armed globalization.

On the Ground

- We are fighting against neoliberal financial globalization, which leads to the exploitation and plunder of people around the world. Central to this struggle is the fight against the IMF, WTO and FTAs, the systemic means through which neoliberal financial globalization is carried out.

- We are fighting against United State-led armed globalization and the aggression-oriented restructuring of the U.S.-ROK alliance which is subordinated to it. We seek to building a peace movement that opposes war and other forms of extreme violence and proclaims peace as a people's right.

- We are working to overcome the objective and subjective crisis within the workers movement-caused by the increasingly precarious nature of employment and the weakening of democratic unions-and build a renewed strengthen workers movement.

- We are fighting against neoliberal policies concerning women, which accelerate gendered structural readjustment and divisions among women. We seek to build a new women's movement that brings together labor rights and women's rights

We are fighting against the generalization of poverty and bureaucratic policies for handling poverty by working in solidarity with a movement based on basic living rights that prioritizes and builds the leadership of poor people themselves.

- We are working for the equality and freedom of migrant workers, who are discriminated against and made into second class citizens through the process of racialized globalization. We seek to move past the dominant perspective, which treats migrant workers as the objects of help and pity and instead work together with them to develop a transnational struggle against neoliberal globalization.

PSSP's Past Work

1998

December, PSSP founded

1999

January, Participation in the People's Summit against the Davos World Economic Forum

September, Launch of the People's Action against Investment Agreements and the New WTO Round.

October, Co-organizing and sponsorship of the "National Lecture Tour on the Working Class and the Unification Movement"

November, Participation in the international action against the WTO in Seattle
Publication of the first issue of the newsletter, "Socialization and Labor"

2000

January, Formation of the Korean People's Action against Investment Treaties and the WTO (KoPA)

March, Publication of the first issue of the monthly journal People's Solidarity for Social Progress

June, Formation of the Joint Committee to Abolish Agency Work
Participation in the National Action Committee for the Closure of the Maehyang-ri U.S. Armed Forces International Bombing Range

December, Struggle against the Asia-European Meeting (ASEM)

November, Participation in the Information Technology Workers Network

2001

January, Participation in the 1st World Social Forum

February, Participation in the Committee for a Proper Solution to Incidents of Sexual Violence

March, Participation in the National People's Solidarity (Preparation Committee)

April, Participation in the Struggle Committee to stop the Overseas Sale of Daewoo Motor

November, Formation of the National Alliance to Abolish Precarious Work (Preparation Committee)

2002

February, Campaign against privatization of basic public industries (power, rail, gas)
Joint struggle to abolish precarious work and win labor and basic living rights

September, Participation in the Committee to Support the Postal Worker's Workers Council

October, Formation of the National Coalition to carry out Elections Struggle

November, Struggle against 3 'evil laws' including the Act on Special Economic Zones

December, Participation in the National Response Committee concerning the Killing of Middle-school Students Shin Hyo-sun and Shim Mi-seon by a U.S. Armored Vehicle

2003

January, Participation in the struggle against provisional seizure of the property of Doosan Heavy Industries & Construction martyr Bae Dal-ho

Struggle against the price setting for Gleevec (cancer drug)

March, Struggle against the War in Iraq and the dispatch of U.S. and ROK troops

May, Participation in the Committee to win Basic Living Rights and a Realistic Basic Subsistence Protection System

September, Struggle against the WTO in the spirit of martyr Lee Kyeong-hae

October, Participation in the Committee to Free Song Du-yul and Win Freedom of Thought and Consciousness

December, Participation in Migrant Workers Sit-in struggle against deportation and for full legalization

2004

January, Formation of the Migrant Workers Movement Supporters Alliance

March, Formation of Solidarity to End Poverty (Preparation Committee)

Participation in the Network to win Citizen's Rights to Table Bills and Subpoena Public Officials

December, Co-organizing and sponsorship of the People's Tribunal on War Crimes in Iraq and dispatch of Troops by Bush, Blair and Roh.

2005

April, People's Solidarity for Social Progress (the journal) is renamed Social Movement

July, Participation in the 2005 World March of Women against Poverty and Violence

September, Criticism of the Special Law on Prostitution; sex worker organizing

November, Struggle against APEC; struggle condemning the deaths of farmers Jeon Yong-cheol and Hong Deok-pyo

Participation in the struggle to stop the 6th WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong

2006

January to December, Struggle against the expansion of the U.S. army base in Pyeongtaek
Struggle against the Korea-U.S. FTA

September, Participation in the Joint Action Committee to stop Water Privatization and Strengthen 'Social Publicness' (e.g. commons)

October, October 17 collective action to abolish poverty

2007

February, Participation in the Coalition for a Just Solution to the Tragic Yeosu Foreigners' Detention Center Fire

March, Participation in the Ecuador International Conference on the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases

April, Struggle to win a realistic minimum and basic subsistence allowance

May, Holding of the International Peace Conference against Nuclear War and Nuclear Weapons in East Asia

June, Struggle to abolish irregular work at Eland and NewCore stores

July to August, Emergency response to the Afghanistan hostage incident

August, Participation in the International Assembly to Abolish Nuclear Bombs
-Co-organizing and sponsorship of the "Communication · Solidarity · Revolution Social Movement Forum"

September, Struggle against the Korea-EU FTA

November, Launch and participation in the Coalition to stop Marketization of Social Services
Participation in the Emergency Committee to Stop Repression against the Migrant Workers in South Korea

2008

January, Organizing of "Act together for another World!: Toward a World with out Neoliberalism, War, Poverty and Discrimination" on the World Social Forum January 26 International Day of Action

February, Formation of and participation in the Women's Movement Network (Preparation Committee)

March, Collective action against privatization of public industries

April, Participation in the 4th Great March to Create a Poverty and Discrimination-free Seoul

May, Holding of the Labor Movement Forum

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* Posted on July 1st, 2010:
<http://www.pssp.org/eng/>