

Protect! Resist! Transform!

Coronavirus: solidarity update 28 March

Saturday 28 March 2020, by [JOHNSON Mark](#) (Date first published: 28 March 2020).

Mark Johnson's selection of news and analysis from around the world

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Impact on poor and social movements

Europe

Italy is the European country hardest hit so far. The SI COBAS labour union is [calling for widespread action](#). [Antonello Zecca](#), an organizer with the [Sinistra Anticapitalista](#) (Anticapitalist Left) provides an [overview of the crisis \(22 March\)](#), and [David Broder](#) reports on the [beginnings of a strike wave](#) demanding closing down of protection not essential for the population, and adequate protection for all those still working (12 March)

From **Spain** Dani Ramos reports on strike [protest at the Mercedes-Benz factory](#) in Vitoria-Gazteiz. [Laia Facet](#) explains how the [Socialist Party and Podemos government is handling the crisis](#).

Britain The government seems to be abandoning its '[mitigation](#)' strategy of letting the old and sick die , but this has cost valuable time and will cause extra deaths, says [Phil Hearse](#). The National Health Service was already [weakened by years of austerity and the reduced EU migration](#) following Brexit, explains Siva Anandaciva. The crisis also requires [nationalisation of empty houses](#) and a new commitment to state housing.

South Asia

India's Coalition for Environmental Justice is arguing for [limited and people-centred public health](#), rather than the authoritarian and anti-science fumbling of the Hindu fundamentalist government. [Jean Drèze](#) analyses the [impact of the lockdown](#) on the poor. Statements have also been issued by People's Alliance for Democracy and Secularism ([PADS](#))

Pakistan [Ammar Ali Jan](#) and Zahid Ali propose a detailed [left strategy for fighting the pandemic](#).

The [Haqooq-E-Khalq](#) movement is [calling for a people-centred response](#).

South East Asia

Philippines: The National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL) warns that [President Duterte is claiming excessive emergency powers](#).

East Asia

From South Korea, the People's Health Movement explains the [success and limits of Covid-19 containment](#) and the challenges for labour and social movements on the peninsula. (19 March)

[China Labour Bulletin](#) explains how women in **China** bear [most of the burden](#) of pandemic response, in emergency services and on the home front.

Americas

Brazil's President Bolsonaro is a [dangerous liability](#), warn [Forrest Hylton activists](#) of the [PSOL](#). There is a [strong mobilisation](#) of social movements in **Chile** writes Javier Pineda of the Convergencia de 2 de Abril.

In the **USA**, [transport workers in Detroit are striking](#) for better protection, writes [Jane Slaughter](#)

Africa]] South Africa trade unions are demanding pro-people policies - see this [statement](#) by [SAFTU](#) and [this article](#) by NUMSA President Andrew Chirwa. [Community Health Workers](#) are also on the front line.

***Middle East & North Africa**

In Algeria, the pandemic seems to be blocking the [weekly hiraq protests](#) for justice and democracy.

How to resist

There are increasing strikes for worker safety and closing down non-essential production. This includes international coordination among [call centre](#) workers (see also this [declaration](#) of CGT (ES), SUD (FR) and other radical labour unions) and at [Amazon](#).

In Canada, Gary Kinsman takes inspiration from the strategy and tactics of [AIDS activism](#).

In the long term

[Cedric Durand](#) and Razmig Keucheyan look at [the four interlocking crises: health, economy, ecology, finance](#). [Niel Faulkner](#) (UK) predicts the Tory strategy to [use the epidemic](#) to force through unpopular reforms (16 March)

Understanding the science

[Daniel Tanuro summarises](#) the origin and impact of the pandemic and its implications for social movements.

Dr **[Jeyakumar Devaraj](#)** of the **[Socialist Party Malaysia](#)** explains the **[difference](#)** between the ultraliberal 'mitigation strategy' of letting the old and sick die, as opposed to the costly eradication strategy followed by China, South Korea and some other countries.

[_We're also reading...](#)

[Namibia 30 years after independence](#): a series of articles commissioned by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (DE) **[Teivo Teivainen](#)** and Pauli Huotari unpick the **[prejudices and assumptions in 'western' thinking](#)** about this global crisis. **[Ammar Ali Jan](#)** identifies the **[authoritarian mechanisms](#)** that the capitalist elite uses in times of crisis.

[_From our archives](#)

Swee Kheng Khor identified the **[negative impact of privatisation of health in South-East Asia](#)** in January 2020.
Its worth re-reading these key articles on the **[Ebola](#)** pandemic