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NIAMEY DECLARATION Solidarity with the Peoples of the Sahel: For Anti-Imperialist Unity, Peace and Friendship Between Peoples

willianlopes · Thursday, November 21st, 2024

Participants from various parts of the world—The Americas, Asia, and Africa—attended the Conference in Solidarity with the Peoples of the Sahel. This event was organised by the West African Peoples’ Organisation (WAPO) and the Pan Africanism Today Secretariat (PAT). It took place from 19-21 November 2024, at the Mahatma Gandhi International Conference Centre in Niamey, under the theme “For Anti-Imperialist Unity, Peace, and Friendship Between Peoples.” We hereby issue the following declaration:

I. International Context

The world faces a multidimensional crisis on the brink of a third World War, characterised by the aggressive and offensive actions of imperialist powers led by the United States and their NATO allies. These powers engage in actions that signal their decline—including commanding massacres and genocides in Gaza and Lebanon and inflaming the wars from Ukraine to Western Sahara and Sudan. They are inciting multiple provocative actions in Southeast Asia, maintaining an over six decade long illegal blockade against Cuba and imposing sanctions on the Venezuelan people as part of their global tyranny.

As participants of the Conference in Solidarity with the Peoples of the Sahel, we strongly condemn these acts, which we view as fuel for a potential full-scale third world war. We hold the United States and its NATO allies responsible for these actions and demand an immediate cessation of the atrocities in Gaza and Lebanon, an end to blockades against Cuba and Venezuela, and a stop to imperialist provocations worldwide for the peace of humanity.

II. African Context and Specific Focus on the Sahel Region

1. 140 years ago on November 15, 1884, fourteen European colonial powers led by German

Chancellor Bismarck convened in Berlin to divide the African continent for their gain. Following centuries of exploiting tens of millions of African workers through slavery, these European nations physically occupied Africa to exploit its rich natural resources.

2. During this division, France and the United Kingdom claimed the largest portions of West Africa. France came to control large parts of the Sahel, taking the supposedly less fertile desert regions, while the United Kingdom occupied Africa's more fertile, populous regions.

3. Whilst heroic liberation struggles were waged and significant gains won, independence in the 1960s did not translate into true sovereignty, especially for French Colonies. The nations of the AES remained tethered as "French Enclosures" in Africa, where all aspects of sovereignty, from currency and defence to natural resources, were controlled by France through puppet governments coerced by a permanent military presence. Continuous exploitation made the so-called Francophone African states among the poorest globally, with Niger as a poignant example.

4. Recent coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger stem from rulers' failures to protect their nations against French imperial aggression and their cultivation of terrorist forces. This includes the connivance and complicity of these former Governments with terrorists in the massacres against the population. These coups also reflect widespread discontent and a call for substantial change within these countries.

III. Support for the Resolute Peoples and Leaders of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES)

1. We commend the governments emerging from recent coups for adopting patriotic measures to reclaim political and economic sovereignty over their territories and natural resources. These measures include terminating neocolonial agreements, demanding the withdrawal of French, American, and other foreign forces, and undertaking ambitious plans for sovereign development.

2. We are particularly encouraged by these countries' formation of the Alliance of Sahel States. This move revitalises the legacy of Pan-African leaders and represents a concrete step toward true independence and Pan-African unity.

3. These governments currently enjoy widespread support from their citizens, who drive and rally around these revolutionary actions. This unity is crucial for achieving democratic and patriotic ideals and is an aspirational development model for other African nations.

In conclusion, while much remains to be done toward the complete liberation of the Sahel states, we are optimistic that these governments, by continuing to listen to their people, will fulfil their objectives for total national liberation and contribute to the broader goal of a unified and free Africa.

We stand together with popular and revolutionary forces in the Sahel in their struggle for full and total sovereignty. We depart Niamey with a commitment to defend the advances the people have made in the Sahel and Rally the internationalist forces around the world to this aim.

Long live patriotism, anti-imperialism, and Pan-Africanism!

France and Allies, withdraw!

The Participants.

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