

## **LET'S BUILD A CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE IMPERIALIST WAR**

In the early Nineties, the existing American bases in Greece were moved to Crete in order to make this island an aircraft carrier aimed at Middle East. The restructuring of foreign – and particularly NATO – military presence in Greece immediately gave rise to a wave of widespread protests and demonstrations among the population. Currently, the NATO base located in Suda, near the city of Chania, still constitutes a strategic point within the current NATO offensive strategy against Middle East countries. The bombing raids hitting Syria during the early days of last April started also from this base. At the same time, there is a strong feeling of hostility against this US military presence. The comrades of Anti-Imperialist Front of Greece, in the current situation of permanent imperialist war, propose to develop a mobilisation campaign that, starting by building a mobilisation at the Suda base, aims to extend this initiative to other areas, including Italy. Today we may speak of a «Mediterranean in War», and in this geopolitical space NATO presence is a common denominator in all EU-bloc countries, both those bordering on the Mediterranean and continental ones. NATO, in managing the crisis by means of imperialist war, is expanding towards Eastern Europe and Southern Mediterranean. This is why we may say that mobilisation against NATO becomes an objectively unifying element capable of making internationalist revolutionary action concrete. An unifying element is opposition to imperialist war whose main partners are US and EU, the main instigators and perpetrators of ethnic, religious and clan-based conflicts and confrontations, also through their relationship with the Zionist entity. In the Middle East conflict, they are primarily responsible for the redefinition of «state order», redesigning a new map of exploitation and oppression for the benefit of Euro-American companies and deepening the subordinate relationship between centre and periphery. They are also primarily responsible for having transformed the Mediterranean into a «war sea».

Last April 15<sup>th</sup>, we met at Panetteria Occupata in Milan to reply to the proposal made by the comrades from Greece and to lay the basis for the building of a common campaign against NATO bases and US imperialism. This will be one of the points characterising the international meeting to be held in Athens on June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018. In order to launch the campaign here in Italy, we have thought we should start by proposing this path to those subjects who are already mobilising and putting into practice a real criticism against military presence in local areas, and particularly to the movement against military bases in Sardinia. During the two-days mobilisation in Cagliari «Against RMW» (a German multinational corporation having its Italian office in Ghedi and manufacturing bombs in Domusnovas), we proposed to organise, during the regular military exercises to be held next fall on the island, a day of mobilisation linked to similar initiatives to be organised in Crete, as part of a common campaign of international initiatives against NATO-led imperialist war. The proposal we wish to make to all those who are against war is to develop an «international campaign» together, by organising debates and initiatives (meetings, pickets, marches, etc.) in local areas where NATO is present, culminating in a common initiative in Sardinia.

All local areas are affected by NATO presence. In the neighborhood of Centocelle in Rome, an enlargement of the military area is being planned through the building of the so-called «Italian Pentagon» in one of the city's green areas. There are mobilisations against this further militarisation of the territory, and on June 2<sup>nd</sup> a demonstration will be held by committees and associations taking to the streets in defence of the archeological park of Centocelle. In Lombardy only, we may highlight the presence of the air base of Ghedi (Brescia), where US is keeping nuclear weapons to be employed by the planes in the base, or the Solbiate Olona installation, housing the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps headquarters. These are just some examples of the approximately 120 bases located

within Italian territory, that can be divided into four military base types: 1) Bases and infrastructure granted for use to US, under the secret arrangements of June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1951 and October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1954. Under these arrangements, and only theoretically, these installations are placed under Italian command, while US commands exercise military control over equipment and operations. 2) NATO bases, under the Atlantic Alliance agreements. 3) Italian bases «enlisted» to be assigned to NATO, i.e. made available to the overseas military bloc, under the Atlantic Alliance agreements. 4) Mixed bases (USA, NATO, and Italy), under the Atlantic Alliance agreements. In this short list we should mention the Sigonella base and MUOS in Sicily, the NATO southern flank hub – the Atlantic Alliance observatory on Middle East, Northern Africa, Sahel, and Sub-Saharan Africa – located in Giugliano, a territorial subdivision of Lago Patria municipality near Naples, and the Aviano base (Pordenone). A country-wide presence of the war machinery in various forms, all being part of the same strategy aiming at exporting a new colonial dominance by imperialist centres of USA and EU to other areas of the world, by means of war.

With their proposal – «organise joint campaigns and actions, organise a campaign against US imperialism and NATO bases» – the comrades of Anti-Imperialist Front of Greece are urging us to build a common fighting front, a mobilisation that could strengthen an international class movement. Support to resistance against imperialist schemes of fragmentation, balkanization, starvation and subjection can be a step towards a bridge between the Mediterranean shores, thus allowing to build a relationship with existing class and anti-imperialist experiences. After the meeting held in Milan, we think this is the right moment to do it. We have arranged to meet again on June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Athens, where we also are going to discuss about this.

Milan, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018

P.S.: The meeting was an opportunity to introduce the experience of the Anti-imperialist Front and a report about the situation in Turkey, where the comrades (among the promoters of the Front's proposal) are currently facing an increasingly authoritarian social system and are being targeted by a very strong government repression, both in Turkish territory and abroad. The movement against the war in US was outlined, as there, too, several meetings and demonstration have been held both in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance and against NATO and US imperialism, and further mobilisation is planned for next summer and fall. Discussions highlighted the importance of placing mobilisation in a wider context, that of crisis, and always seeking a relationship with other ongoing struggles, from workers' struggles, to struggles for basic needs such as housing, through struggles against environmental devastation.