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Subject: Solidarity and Struggle – Fighting the epidemic outbreak, defending workers and peoples’ rights

In the context of the epidemic outbreak affecting a growing number of countries, the CGTP-IN conveys its firm solidarity to the workers and peoples of the whole world. Redoubled solidarity when, besides preventing and fighting the virus and defend health and life, workers and peoples are being confronted with the violent increase of exploitation, attacks on their rights, income and living conditions.

In Portugal, the fight against the epidemic surge is the pretext for the government and the employers to undermine rights, freedoms and guarantees and make workers pay the cost of the growing economic crisis which this public health problem is enhancing – protecting big capital and the holders of large fortunes. This picture grows darker as a result of the EU and of its bigger powers’ policies and positioning, which, due to lack of solidarity, are trying to limit a budgetary response, by conditioning it to more indebtedment and to future efforts to return to absurd limitations of the deficit and of the debt.

We see with concern the spreading of the virus to the Third World countries, where the health systems and the economies are even more fragile and to which, instead of sending the necessary genuine aid and international cooperation, they try to impose the same neoliberal policies and the same protagonists (IMF and World Bank) that limit or prevent a clear answer to the problem, thus leading to the aggravation of the existing economic and social problems. We are also worried about the situation of refugees and immigrants, fenced in overcrowded detention centres that will be fertile ground for the virus, a situation which requires urgent measures to safeguard health and life.

We convey our reinforced solidarity to the peoples and nations that are the victims of the policies of embargo, sanctions, aggression, blockade and siege that US imperialism is currently trying to step up, namely against Cuba, Venezuela, Syria and China. A stance which, in a time of epidemic outbreak, underlines its criminal nature, in clear contrast with the solidarity rendered by these countries, taking genuine aid wherever it is asked for.

We also convey our firm solidarity to the Saharan people who are still prevented from building their free and independent State and who are suffering, in their occupied territories, brutal limitations to their access to health. Their population in the refugee camps has also become more fragile, despite measures implemented by the Saharan authorities,

We equally express, in a very particular manner, our solidarity to the Palestinian workers and people, who while fighting for the right to build their free and independent State, are suffering from Israel’s oppressive, aggressive and repressive policy, now aggravated with the health crisis the world is facing. A situation which has not made the Zionist regime retreat but, on the

contrary, it is intensifying the occupation and blockade policies and depriving the Palestinian people from the most elementary rights, namely to health and to water, notably in Gaza.

The evolution of the situation shows that fighting the virus is inseparable from the workers and peoples' struggles to defend their rights, a struggle that, despite being limited by the necessary measures to protect health and life, must necessarily continue and be stepped up in the future, also by strengthening internationalist solidarity.

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