



MAGAZINE

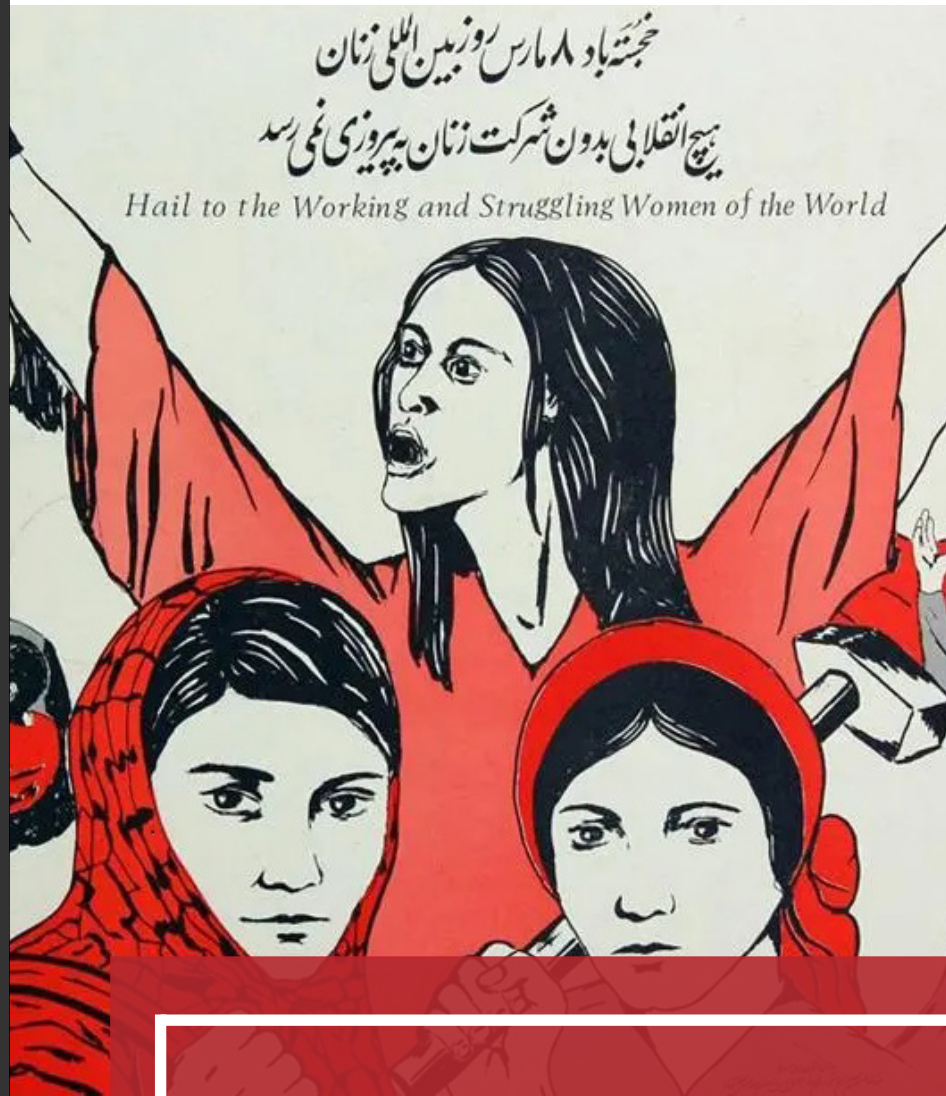
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“The women of our land face two major enemies, against whom the struggle must be central to every revolutionary organization and individual: imperialism and fundamentalism.”

- Naheed,
Afghanistan Solidarity Party



Title image: Poster published by the Iranian Students' Association in the United States:
"Hail to the Working and Struggling Women of the world!"

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How The Right Wing Has Used AI And Influencers To Make Up An Anti-Government Movement In Mexico

Tamara Pearson

“Down with communism,” they chanted while also waving the One Piece pirate flag, meant to be a symbol of resistance to elitist excess, corruption, and inequality. The right-wing march was also meant to be a Generation Z protest, but most of the people I could see among the 1,000 or so marching through the center of Puebla, were of older generations; clearly the most loyal membership of Mexico’s right-wing parties, the PRI and PAN.

Similar such marches were held in various cities around Mexico on Saturday. They were a bizarre attempt to copy-paste the recent uprisings and protests in Nepal, the Philippines, and Indonesia, but they were built from the top down. Money was spent conjuring the protest from AI campaigns, bots, and influencers, rather than involving real social movements.

The main chants in the march were “Out Morena” (Mexico’s governing party) and “No more narco state.” Meant to be organic, spontaneous anger at the government, crime, and corruption, the marches’ vagueness and misuse of symbols left serious and experienced activists in the country amused, and a little annoyed.

As 51% of content is now AI-generated, it’s worth decoding how this protest has been fabricated, and the impact of its co-option of the symbols and phrases of more genuine causes. AI literacy and awareness of how videos and facts are manipulated for political and economic interests, is becoming more important.

This Instagram account was among the first to publicly call for the November 15 protest. De-

scribing itself as Generation Z, “anti-party,” “the disinterested generation” and “enough of the same old shit” – there are dozens of signs signs the account was not created by movement activists. The account does not follow, tag or interact with other longstanding movements, collectives, or grassroots organizations like unions or community or alternative media. The only groups it follows are bot-like replicas of itself, that have each posted perhaps four times in total. The account’s first posts were created exactly a month before the November 15 protest, and got hundreds of engagements (likes and comments) straight off the bat: a sign the account holder either has funds to pay for significant boosting, or that the posts were supported by bots.

Almost all the account’s content, including videos, is AI-generated. Likewise, the sister account on Facebook. There are few real humans to be seen. But in Mexico, while people often cover their faces in public videos denouncing crimes and injustice due to fear of persecution, it is always important to show at least the eyes, or the full group of farmers on the land being attacked or the Indigenous people meeting, women standing together and so on, to demonstrate that these communities are organizing and speaking out. The Generation Z Mexico accounts don’t have such visuals because they don’t actually meet, discuss, decide based on voting or consensus, hold speak-outs to build larger protests, and other staples of real movements.

“Generation Z Mexico” doesn’t have real visuals of activists – and especially not young ones – because it is not led by actual activists or actual young people. In Mexico, there are strong



Photo: Tamara Pearson

women's movements, movements for the forcibly disappeared, for water rights and more, but there is no movement here to revoke the president, so there are no photos of that to be used. Instead, this group has resorted to AI-generated photos of protests like this one. After Saturday's march, they will have photos they can use, though even those are being digitally edited to make their crowds look bigger.

And because this made-up movement doesn't consist of real, committed activists, the people behind it instead throw money at influencers. One of the few real people seen on the Instagram account includes this influencer, who has 177,000 followers, and dedicates all her posts to fashion and to photos of herself posing. She openly advertises that she is available for paid promotions.

Another person featured on the account and who promoted the November 15 protest is this influencer, who also has never posted any political content until a week or two ago, when he suddenly went on a rant about "the left" or "com-

munists" trying to delegitimise his "movement." Like all the content generated for the November 15 protest, he is vague about what it is he wants, talking about "a movement that seeks to represent us" and "dialogue" and "tolerance" (post since removed). Influencer Carlos Bellow, who describes himself as a "man of god and business" and posts photos of himself in expensive suits, has also taken up the flag of the "protest."

Another indication that this protest isn't genuine, is the support it has garnered by right wing and commercial media. Media like TV Azteca for example, that usually demonizes real movements and resistance, was among the first to promote the November 15 protest. The head of TV Azteca, Ricardo Salinas Pliego, a billionaire recently investigated for money laundering and tax avoidance, has posted about the November 15 protest various times and with slogans totally in line with the phrasing used by the Generation Z Mexico accounts, not to mention directly sharing their posts.

Finally, the content of the protest and those promoting it, is muddy at best. Screaming without substance. There were references to phrases brought up in other Gen Z protests in other countries, like “corruption” and “authoritarianism” but without specifics. There were no deep dives into state power structures and collusion between organized crime, big business, and the various levels of government. There was no analysis of causes, no proposals, no named corrupt figures beyond the president. Calling out the lack of safety as “bad” is so obvious that it is meaningless. Everyone here knows how harmful the proliferation of organized crime is – the key is in denouncing its origins (including the US’s “War on Drugs” and rampant neoliberalism) and what should actually be done about it. Empty, obvious phrases like “corruption is bad” and “crime is bad” are typical of battles for individual power, not of genuine movements. Only politicians or CEOs make cheap references to “safety” and “transparency” in order to get votes or financing, without wanting to dent a thing about the way the rigged system works in their favor.

To make it worse, one of the influencers mentioned above created this post for the Generation Z account, where she argues that Che and Trump are the same kind of thing. It’s a typical right-wing argument, not dissimilar to the wackiness of the right wing in Venezuela adopting Guy Fawkes masks. Beyond the blatant disregard for ideological nuance, let alone the macro difference between an anti-imperialist revolutionary like Che and a racist blockhead, this conflating of “extremes” serves centrists and right-wingers as a way to dilute left wing heroes of their impact, while seeking to appropriate symbols or methods like diversity, dialogue, revolt, direct action, into their own sphere of influence. Portraying people who want basic decent things like healthcare for all, or unpolluted rivers as “extreme” sidelines them to a bubble of irrationality, while the boring, polluting conservatives get to claim reasonableness for themselves.

Mexico does need protests, but not like this

Nevertheless, there are many steep horrors in Mexico worthy of mass, protracted protest, and this manipulated initiative likely drew some genuinely frustrated youth. But, Mexico is not Nepal or Indonesia. The Mexican president, Claudia Sheinbaum, is extremely popular here, and abroad. She uses spin masterfully, vindicating important rights and oppressed identities, while in practice she and her party continue to put big business first. Morena is full to the brim with politicians who have migrated over from the traditional right wing parties. Here in Puebla, our human rights are violated constantly as our water is cut off for months so that Morena can roll out the red carpet to water-consuming transnationals like Google’s AI projects, Volkswagen, Audi, Walmart, and more. Morena promised to de-privatize our water before AMLO’s first term, and instead our rates have gone up.

There are a zillion more reasons to protest – and indeed people are – including the extreme femicide rates and the murder and criminalization of land defenders. Organized crime is booming, taking over industries like avocados, permissions (to park, to set up a stall, to sell gum on the train) and tourism. There are 134,000 disappeared people in Mexico.

We are intensely angry. But the pain, exhaustion, disillusion, trauma from being ignored and minimized, the concern for Mexican and Central America migrants, the rage at protection networks for rapists and the misogyny in healthcare goes back decades. The pain is, unfortunately, integrated into the rhythm of our lives, and so a sudden revolt led by faceless AI graphics and wealthy whitexican influencers, was always unlikely to provoke an overnight rebellion.

What’s worse with Saturday’s right wing march is that Sheinbaum and AMLO before her, have dismissed many important and real movements, claiming they were orchestrated by the right. AMLO has suggested that Mexico’s women’s

marches – some of the biggest globally – were organized by the opposition. Sheinbaum has dismissed the important demands of feminist marches by accusing them of violence and criminalising them, and she said “there is always dialogue ...so one doesn’t understand why they protest” in response to the CNTE (education workers) protests a few days ago and repressed by the government. AMLO rejected journalist protests against the high rate of murders of journalists in the country (one of the highest globally), and called journalists “conservative”. In that sense, an actual right wing protest only adds fuel to the fire of those trying to de-legitimize real movements.

The Latin American right

This is not the first time resources have been used to digitally promote disturbances aimed at overthrowing a Latin American government. The account calling for the November 15 protest on X only has 209 posts (they seem to be regularly deleting more posts than they share, that figure has since dropped to 182 posts, at the time of writing). When the account was first created in 2024, its first posts were sharing tweets in support of right-wing leaders and candidates in Venezuela.

In Latin America, the international right wing has repeatedly used AI and bot strategies to generate very vague anti-government discontent in countries like Cuba, Venezuela, and Ecuador (under Correa). I witnessed right-wing protests in Venezuela and Ecuador, saw the protesters parroted the online slogans (#SOS, or wearing gas masks to convey repression), and talking to them, noted how inarticulate they were. The participants in those protests, like Saturday’s in Mexico, were not people ever seen supporting other causes, like the sexual diversity marches, anti-racism, worker rights, or standing up to mines,

The #SOS hashtag was used in Cuba, Venezuela, and Ecuador as an attempt to convey that things were so desperate for people in the particular country, that US intervention was necessary. That is not happening here in Mexico – the govern-

ment here is barely centrist and never stands up to the US in practice, bar voting against the Cuban sanctions. Although, it does seem that a few on the right are dreaming about it. There was one guy at a protest recently against the killing of a mayor, walking around with a sign in English welcoming the US army to the region, and an unofficial US security news account with 500,000 followers shared the One Piece flag and wrote “It’s time for President Trump to order massive air strikes against all Narco Terrorist targets across Mexico” and “The People of Mexico are asking America to destroy the Cartels and end decades of violence, crime and corruption! Make Mexico Great Again!”

In the Cuba “SOS” movement, it was non-local accounts that kicked off the July 2021 protests (the first account to tweet about a Covid-19 crisis in the country was in Spain and that account would tweet over a thousand times in two days;¹⁰ and 11 of July), with the support of mass amounts of bot accounts, then paid influencers, who, like the ones here, had previously never posted about political or social issues. Over 1,500 accounts that used #SOSCuba were created during those two days.

These digital campaigns can cause long-lasting damage. Especially in the absence of AI and media literacy, they can cultivate distrust of the symbols and demands of genuine movements and causes. It can become a game of popularity based on who can pay for the most boosts – and movements of the oppressed tend to lose that game.

As AI and bot manipulation is used increasingly by the right and elites, reliable, on-the-ground, quality reporting becomes even more vital. It takes experienced, local reporters and activists to be able to distinguish between real movements, and fabricated ones, to read between the lines of government spin, identify local actors and their alliances and interests, decipher the agendas behind the PR, and know when Zapata is being evoked for the right reasons and when his memory is being used by groups with no understanding of his legacy – parading Indigenous resistance for their own interests.

The Caribbean Faces Two Choices: Join the US Attempt to Intimidate Venezuela or Build its Own Sovereignty

Vijay Prashad

US President Donald Trump has authorised the USS Gerald R. Ford to enter the Caribbean. It now floats north of Puerto Rico, joining the USS Iwo Jima and other US navy assets to threaten Venezuela with an attack. Tensions are high in the Caribbean, with various theories floating about regarding the possibility of what seems to be an inevitable assault by the US and regarding the social catastrophe that such an attack will occasion. CARICOM, the regional body of the Caribbean countries, released a statement affirming its view that the region must be a “zone of peace” and that disputes must be resolved peacefully. Ten former heads of government from Caribbean states published a letter demanding that “our region must never become a pawn in the rivalries of others”.

Former Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Stuart Young said on 21 August, “CARICOM and our region is a recognised zone of peace, and it is critical that this be maintained”. Trinidad and Tobago, he said, has “respected and upheld the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and for good reason”. On the surface, it appears as if no one in the Caribbean wants the United States to attack Venezuela.

However, the current Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Kamla Persad-Bissessar (known by her initials as KPB), has openly said that she supports the US actions in the Caribbean. This includes the illegal murder of eighty-three people in twenty-one strikes since 2 September 2025. In fact, when CARICOM released its declaration on the region being a zone of peace, Trinidad and Tobago withdrew from the statement. Why has

the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago gone against the entire CARICOM leadership and supported the Trump administration’s military adventure in the Caribbean?

Backyard

Since the Monroe Doctrine (1823), the United States has treated all Latin America and the Caribbean as its “backyard”. The United States has intervened in at least thirty of the thirty-three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (90 percent of the countries, in other words)—from the US attack on Argentina’s Malvinas Islands (1831-32) to the current threats against Venezuela.

The idea of the “zone of peace” emerged in 1971 when the UN General Assembly voted for the Indian Ocean to be a “zone of peace”. In the next two decades, when CARICOM debated this concept for the Caribbean, the United States intervened in, at least, the Dominican Republic (after 1965), Jamaica (1972-1976), Guyana (1974-1976), Barbados (1976-1978), Grenada (1979-1983), Nicaragua (1981-1988), Suriname (1982-1988), and Haiti (1986).

In 1986, at the CARICOM summit in Guyana, the Prime Minister of Barbados, Errol Barrow, said “My position remains clear that the Caribbean must be recognised and respected as a zone of peace... I have said, and I repeat, that while I am prime minister of Barbados, our territory will not be used to intimidate any of our neighbours be that neighbour Cuba or the USA.” Since Barrow made that comment, Caribbean leaders have



Mural in Caracas

punctually affirmed, against the United States, that they are nobody's backyard and that their waters are a zone of peace. In 2014, in Havana, all members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) approved a "zone of peace" proclamation with the aim "of uprooting forever threat or use of force" in the region.

Persad-Bissessar or KPB has rejected this important consensus across political traditions in the Caribbean. Why is this so?

Betrayals

In 1989, trade union leader Basdeo Panday formed the United National Congress (UNC), a centre-left formation (whose former name was the Caucus for Love, Unity, and Brotherhood).

KPB joined Panday's party and has remained in the UNC since then. Throughout her career till recently, KPB stayed at the centre of the UNC, arguing for social democratic and pro-welfare policies whether as opposition leader or in her first term as Prime Minister (2010-2015). But even in her first term, KPB showed that she would not remain within the bounds of the centre-left but would tack Far-Right on one issue: crime.

In 2011, KPB declared a State of Emergency for a "war on crime". At her home in Phillipine, San Fernando, KPB told the press, "The nation must not be held to ransom by groups of thugs bent on creating havoc in our society", "We have to take very strong action", she said, "very decisive action". The government arrested seven thousand people, most of them released for lack of

evidence against them, and the government's Anti-Gang Law could not be passed: this was a policy that mimicked the anti-poor campaigns in the Global North. Already, in this State of Emergency, KPB betrayed the legacy of the UNC, which she dragged further to the Right.

When KPB returned to power in 2025, she began to mimic Trump with "Trinidad and Tobago First" rhetoric and with even harsher language against suspected drug dealers. After the first US strike on a small boat, KPB made a strong statement in support of it: "I have no sympathy for traffickers, the US military should kill them all violently". Penelope Beckles, who is the opposition leader in Trinidad and Tobago, said that while her party (the People's National Movement) supports strong action against drug trafficking, such action must be "lawful" and that KPB's "reckless statement" must be retracted. Instead, KPB has furthered her support of the US militarisation of the Caribbean.

Problems

Certainly, Trinidad and Tobago faces a tight knot of economic vulnerability (oil and gas dependence, foreign exchange shortages, slow diversification) and social crises (crime, inequality, migration, youth exclusion). All of this is compounded by the weakness of State institutions to help overcome these challenges. The weakness of regionalism further isolates small countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, which are vulnerable to pressure from powerful countries. But KPB is not only acting due to pressure from Trump; she has made a political decision to use US force to try and solve her country's problems.

What could be her strategy? First, get the United States to bomb small boats that are perhaps involved in the centuries-old Caribbean smuggling operations. If the US bombs enough of these little boats, then the small smugglers would rethink their transit of drugs, weapons, and basic consumer commodities. Second, use the goodwill generated with Trump to encour-

age investment into Trinidad and Tobago's essential but stagnant oil industry. There might be short-term gain for KPB. Trinidad and Tobago requires at least \$300 million if not \$700 million a year for maintenance and for upgrading its petrochemical and Liquefied Natural Gas plants (and then it needs \$5 billion for offshore field development and building new infrastructure). ExxonMobil's massive investment in Guyana (rumoured to be over \$10 billion) has attracted attention across the Caribbean, where other countries would like to bring in this kind of money. Would companies such as ExxonMobil invest in Trinidad and Tobago? If Trump wanted to reward KPB for her unctuousness, he would tell ExxonMobil CEO Darren Woods to expand on the deepwater blocks investment his company has already made in Trinidad and Tobago. Perhaps KPB's calculation to set aside the zone of peace ideas will get her some more money from the oil giants.

But what does this betrayal break? It certainly disrupts further any attempt to build Caribbean unity, and it isolates Trinidad and Tobago from the broader Caribbean sensibility against the use of the waters for US military confrontations. There are real problems in Trinidad and Tobago: rising gun-related violence, transnational trafficking, and irregular migration across the Gulf of Paria. These problems require real solutions, not the fantasies of US military intervention. US military interventions do not resolve problems, but deepen dependency, escalate tensions, and erode every country's sovereignty. An attack on Venezuela is not going to solve Trinidad and Tobago's problems but might indeed amplify them.

The Caribbean has a choice between two futures. One path leads toward deeper militarisation, dependency, and incorporation into the US security apparatus. The other leads toward the revitalisation of regional autonomy, South-South cooperation, and the anti-imperialist traditions that have long sustained the Caribbean's political imagination.

Like South Africa, The BRICS Suffer From Trump Appeasement Syndrome

Patrick Bond

The U.S. now assumes leadership of the G20 until the Miami summit ends on December 15, 2026 – but not without having lost some crucial soft power. In the wake of Donald Trump’s farcical attacks on the host of last week’s G20 summit in Johannesburg, might the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (plus Egypt-Ethiopia-Indonesia-Iran-United Arab Emirates) BRICS bloc – maybe alongside some annoyed Europeans – finally stand up straight, and boycott the Florida meeting?

After all, a process of shifting power relations – symbolic and real – is supposedly underway. At the University of South Africa in Pretoria on November 20, two days before G20 leaders met, Columbia University economist Jeffrey Sachs gave a viral speech in which he castigated Trump – as the equivalent of a four-year old throwing tantrums – and proclaimed that U.S. power

“is fading. It’s fading in part because of the BRICS. Because the BRICS are saying we don’t need to be under the thumb of a US empire. That’s what President Lula said when he was hosting the BRICS this summer. And Trump put on a tariff on Brazil because he didn’t like a court proceeding against the preceding president who had tried to make a coup. And so he put on a penalty tariff and President Lula said, ‘We don’t need an emperor and we’re not going to succumb to this kind of pressure.’ So the BRICS, of which you are an esteemed member ... have 46% of the world population. Thank you. And 41% of the world GDP. And they can look at the G7 and say, ‘Who are you?’ And that’s what they’re doing. So this is the new phase of geopolitics.”

Sachs’ rhetoric is certainly pleasing, but in a manner reminiscent of a too-brief sugar high.

Looking more closely over the past six months, the (aspiring) multi-polar world has provided many examples of the opposite process, suggesting the BRICS’ threat to U.S. imperialism is in fact, fading. Read on if you are worried that Sachs vastly hypes the BRICS, by not digging deeply enough, dialectically, into the devils in the details. Read on if you are worried that the BRICS’ ruling elites can and do behave in neoliberal subimperialist – not anti-imperialist – ways.

“We collapsed the ambitious agenda we had about revitalizing the Global South”

In the most obvious two examples of Trump appeasement syndrome evident in late November, first, there was no punishment whatsoever – e.g. climate taxes (such as a ‘carbon border adjustment mechanism’ on U.S. exports) – announced against his withdrawal from United Nations climate talks, which were hosted from November 10-22 by Brazilian President Lula da Silva in Belém.

The idea of smart sanctions against the U.S. for climate crimes was first mooted by Nobel Prize-winning economist Joe Stiglitz two decades ago. In 2016-17, campaigning by (now-jailed conservative) former French President Nicolas Sarkozy – defending his own capitalists – and by leading climate justice movement strategist Naomi Klein promoted a carbon tax against the U.S.. In contrast, technocrats overpopulating the Brazilian COP30 climate summit could muster no such gumption.

Second, regular U.S. temper tantrums were appeased by South Africa during this year’s G20 chairing process, rather than decrying and punishing Trump’s wanton-destructive approach to

climate, public health, humanitarian aid, international rule-of-law, long-accepted rules-of-military-engagement, and trade multilateralism. Indeed no one in power – aside from the Yemenese Houthis controlling Red Sea access – has stood up against Trump, his ‘Department of War’ and paramilitary immigration agents as they facilitate ongoing genocide in Gaza; attack speedboats off-shore Venezuela (killing scores); recklessly bomb Iranian nuclear facilities; nonchalantly threaten to invade Nigeria, Greenland and Panama; and brutalize immigrants including desperate refugees.

To illustrate, the G20 hosts behaved in an obsequious manner in relation to Trump starting a year ago when after his first outburst threatening the BRICS with tariffs if de-dollarization was pursued, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa begged Trump for a state visit and game of golf. This was openly explained by Pretoria’s former U.S. Ambassador, Ebrahim Rasool, on November 28, in an interview worth citing at length:

“We’ve tried the appeasement. Our president went to the White House [on May 22] with two white Afrikaner golfers and a white Afrikaner billionaire, Johan Rupert: ‘please tell him we’re not that bad.’ We tried the appeasement route. It didn’t work... Before I left [on March 14], Trump punished us and I explained that after I left, he doubled down on the tariffs even though we went with an appeasement agenda to the White House, as our president did, and I as I explained. So, we’ve tried the appeasement route. It’s not done anything. We’ve even, as we led the discussions to the G20, we kind of collapsed the ambitious agenda we had about revitalizing the Global South in this G20, completing four years of Global South leadership of the G20, starting with India, Indonesia, Brazil and now South Africa. We’ve built up to this crescendo. And then South Africa had to say, ‘listen we’re not going to achieve this, what we want to achieve on climate – go to COP 30 – what we want to achieve on other things. Let’s work with the UN agencies,

let’s stick to the financial economic agenda for this G20.’ So we gave into Trump’s idea that we’ve widened the G20 too much. He then said that his vice president will come. We said, ‘no that’s great, let’s go, let’s find a declaration that is comfortable for them as well.’ They’ve now said they’re not even going to entertain a declaration or a communique: ‘If President Ramaphosa wants to end the G20, he should simply he should simply have a chairperson statement.’ So every attempt at appeasing has not worked. And I can say in the seven months since my departure, and this weekend when our minister [Ronald Lamola] said what I said, if I can put it like that, that this is supremacy. I think that they have certainly tried the appeasement route and now we are saying, ‘okay there’s nothing we can do about this man. He’s in fact repeating the idea of a white genocide etc etc.’ So there is just malafides. There’s just bad faith that is involved here.” (emphasis added)

It didn’t have to be like this, of course. Across the world, there have been upsurges of dissent – e.g. ‘No Kings!’ protests gathering many millions in the U.S. in June and October – and international boycotts both against Trump’s economy and against Washington’s main personification of uncaring death and destruction, Elon Musk. Following a rebuff to Trump’s attempt to incorporate Canada as a ‘51st state,’ a first set of tariffs were imposed by Washington. This generated a bottom-up sanctions process against U.S. goods, by ordinary Canadians, in early February, followed by a BDS-USA process in many European societies.

And the world boycott against Trump-sidekick Musk’s firms (Tesla and X.com) during the first half of 2025 also proved that surgical strikes can be formidable, crashing a quarter of his net worth (more than \$100 billion), and soon forcing him out of the White House, back to repairing his broken corporate empire.

In that spirit, nearly all leaders who attended the November 22-23 G20 summit in Johannesburg could well have tabled not just a toothless,

mild-mannered declaration devoid of ambition (as Rasool confessed). Instead, they could have voted Trump off the G20 island and shifted the 2026 G20 out of the U.S., expelling Washington from the body while he remains in office, just the way that – at the behest of Barack Obama – the G8 expelled Russia right after Vladimir Putin’s 2014 Crimea invasion.

This was not such a fantasy, because in September, there were indications that even G7-member Europeans would support a ‘G19’ without Trump. According to Institute for Global Dialogue Research Director Mikatekiso Kubayi, “Some embassies have already indicated, as such, that ‘look, we were even prepared to go G19 if need be.’ I don’t know if that would ever have been possible. But at least there’s some sort of sentiment towards moving along, even under the challenging circumstances.”

On November 23, Ramaphosa had mildly rebuked and refused Trump’s efforts to ‘hand over’ the G20 gavel to the 2026 host via a deputy U.S. ambassador to Pretoria, for it was an insult to the South African leader’s conservative sense of protocol and hence dignity. As a result, Trump announced on November 26 that he would expel South Africa from the 2026 G20 summit in Miami. To justify this, Trump again made false charges of ‘horrific human rights abuses’ and ‘genocide’ against Afrikaner farmers. (The main problem of survival that the latter faced, was Trump’s own mid-2025 30% tariffs imposed on U.S. imports of South African citrus products, nuts, grapes and wine – largely supplied by those same farmers.)

Trump’s November 26 Truth Social post: *“The United States did not attend the G20 in South Africa, because the South African Government refuses to acknowledge or address the horrific Human Right Abuses endured by Afrikaners, and other descendants of Dutch, French, and German settlers. To put it more bluntly, they are killing white people, and randomly allowing their farms to be taken from them. Perhaps, worst of all, the*

soon to be out of business New York Times and the Fake News Media won’t issue a word against this genocide. That’s why all the Liars and Pretenders of the Radical Left Media are going out of business! At the conclusion of the G20, South Africa refused to hand off the G20 Presidency to a Senior Representative from our U.S. Embassy, who attended the Closing Ceremony. Therefore, at my direction, South Africa will NOT be receiving an invitation to the 2026 G20, which will be hosted in the Great City of Miami, Florida next year. South Africa has demonstrated to the World they are not a country worthy of Membership anywhere, and we are going to stop all payments and subsidies to them, effective immediately. Thank you for your attention to this matter!”

Trump’s nonsense deserves no wasted time on rebuttal; but tellingly, even his own U.S. State Department Human Rights Report (issued three months earlier) had failed to identify any ‘genocide’ or similar crimes. At worst, Rubio’s department accused South Africa of having recently passed legislation (entirely consistent with its liberal constitution, grounded in property rights) that “could enable the government to seize ethnic minority Afrikaners’ agricultural property without compensation” – without mentioning expropriation law applies to anyone else’s property, for that matter (far more common would be, for example, a low-income black woman’s peri-urban shack in the way of a new sewage line).

In the wake of Washington’s ban on Pretoria’s participation, on November 29, Ramaphosa’s spokesperson offered this militant – albeit still entirely procedural – reaction from the South African president: “The world cannot allow this brazen disdain for rules and established norms of diplomatic engagements. The general disregard for rules is even being challenged in the US. Now, it’s being brought to global multilateral platforms. It can’t go unchallenged in global fora. And you can’t allow a precedent where this becomes acceptable regardless of where it emanates from.”



Matters may change but Trump appears intent on denying Ramaphosa access to Miami next year. On November 19, his State Department had also revoked the travel visa of former South African foreign minister Naledi Pandor, because, as Pakistani scholar-activist Junaid Ahmed recounts:

“Pandor remains one of the clearest moral compasses in global politics. Second, her analysis of oppression – whether in Gaza, the Congo, or Islamabad – remains indispensable. Third, her visa revocation is not a reflection of her weakness, but of empire’s fear. The real question now is not who fears Dr. Pandor. We know that answer. The real question – the one that determines the future of solidarity – is: Who among us is prepared to stop fearing the empire that fears her?”

There is still plenty of time to mobilize an alternative. As Ronald Reagan found in 1988 to his

dismay – after refusing Yasser Arafat entry to the UN General Assembly – one logical reaction to U.S. abuse of its multilateral-institution hosting power, is to hold the meeting somewhere else (in that case Geneva): this time as a G20 with South Africa but not the U.S.

Another option is a straight boycott, such as the 2022 Summit of the Americas witnessed from several Latin American leaders, due to Joe Biden’s refusal to invite Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. Even a mainstream commentator from South Africa’s Newzroom Afrika tv news, Simon Marks, suggested that, “maybe the other 19 members of the G20 decide to express solidarity with South Africa by saying, ‘Forget it. We’ll not go to Miami, but we’d like to do this G20 summit this year somewhere else.’ ... all of this raises huge questions about whether that summit next year is actually going to take place.”

At minimum, South African international relations commentator Oscar van Heerdon proposed on November 28, “I do think that if Trump doubles down on this issue, BRICS nations are going to boycott the next G20. I think Brazil, Russia, India and China are going to say if South Africa is not allowed to come, then we will also not come.”

BRICS as faders, not fighters

But the BRICS bloc contains loyal allies of the U.S. If we include Saudi Arabia – as did 2025 BRICS host Lula in his presidency (notwithstanding Russia having given up by late 2024) – then out of 11 BRICS, three are Washington’s solid subimperial partners, adding Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. And Ethiopia and especially the 2026 BRICS host India are generally also pro-Western and pro-Israel.

BRICS internal divisions extend to trade, which is why since February, Trump has found it fairly easy to divide-and-conquer the bloc. Resistance has come only from China’s threat to withhold rare earth minerals and magnets from U.S. suppliers, and Vladimir Putin’s refusal to make a Ukraine peace deal on the (very generous) terms Trump – anxious to have U.S. oil companies return to Russian fields – had suggested during their August meeting in Alaska.

The BRICS’ failure to work coherently against Trump tariffs was witnessed again on September 8 when Lula’s hosting of a virtual conference resulted in no concrete measures. Indeed on October 27, Lula told a news conference that his meeting with Trump at the ASEAN summit the day before in Malaysia left him “very happy... optimistic... I respect Trump, he respects me. The destiny was sealed. Soon there will be no problem between the US and Brazil.” As Livemint’s Akriti Anand reported, the Brazilian leader was willing to discuss with Trump “opportunities to boost the development of the key minerals used in electric vehicles, advanced weapons systems and medical devices,” which Washington rewarded by retracting the 50% tariffs he had put on Brazil’s coffee producers, in solidarity with Jair Bolsonaro.

Contrast that deal-making desire with the more militant approach of Colombian president Gustavo Petro, who on October 1 pulled his country out of NATO: “If a North Atlantic government decides to ally itself with crimes against humanity, what should we do there? These are drastic measures, but I think they must be taken now.” (Petro added, “I’m not going to be in the BRICS either, because the BRICS are oil-related.”)

These divisions have sobered Brazilian journalist Pepe Escobar, who on November 6 admitted that there was “not an overall BRICS strategy to counteract the empire. And this is this something that should they have they should have started this thing yesterday. It is taking too long. And sooner or later we could have a BRICS member falling or a BRICS partner falling or a direct destabilization of the empire of a BRICS member or a BRICS partner. This is extremely dangerous. Extremely dangerous but there’s still no political will”.

The day before, Escobar had also regretted how he had become “extremely euphoric after the BRICS summit in Kazan” (in October 2024). Since then Escobar had a reality check: “Internal frictions in BRICS are still very very serious. And BRICS is not united, not at all. And there are some very very dodgy players inside BRICS. I’ll give you just one, United Arab Emirates. We could go on about this forever, you know... I heard some frightening very serious inside information about the BRICS bank which I cannot make public.”

BRICS as a structurally-dependent sub-imperial bloc

The BRICS New Development Bank has been frightening enough already, especially in a South Africa where its loans directly mimic Western multilateral financial destruction and corruption. New York-based radical economist Michael Hudson observed on August 6 the lack of BRICS financiers’ will to overcome their neoliberal mentality:

“At the last BRICS meeting you have the same request that they’ve been making for a couple of years now: ‘We want Global South countries to have more representation in the IMF and the World Bank and the Security Council.’ I think that’s a terrible terrible idea. The problem isn’t to get more representation in an IMF whose guiding philosophy is to impose class war in the form of economic austerity to lower wages to make labor unions illegal, so that you can keep the cost of labor low, in the pretense that this makes countries more competitive and solvent.” According to Hudson, “What is lacking in the BRICS so far is a distinct economic philosophy. What they’ve talked about is how can we improve our position within the existing neoliberal economic philosophy, and even within the IMF and the World Bank. So the IMF has been very clever. It’s found the most reactionary Global South representatives to join the board of directors... There’s an illusion that if you appoint a right-wing neoliberal pro-rentier pro-creditor appointee, that somehow that’s going to represent the country.”

Similar complaints were expressed on August 26 by the best-known political economist from (new BRICS partner) Malaysia, Jomo Kwame Sundaram: “BRICS has no record of strong and consistent advocacy of the interests of smaller developing economies. Most financially weak small nations doubt that BRICS+ will serve them well.”

To understand why, BRICS New Development Bank vice president Paulo Nogueira Batista explained on May 30 that in Brasilia’s key economic ministries, “what we have there is a collection of neoliberals, all aligned with the Western agenda.” As a result, he continued,

“the Brazilian government is not politically strong. Among other reasons, because it is infested with officials who have little or no identification with the BRICS and maintain priority links with the U.S. and Europe (the famous fifth column). The Foreign Ministry, for example, with a few exceptions, has been dominated by bureaucracy and careerism. The Treasury is silent, with Minister

Haddad frequently absent from the debate. The Central Bank has always been an obstacle to the BRICS.”

The problem extends far beyond financial bureaucrats. Perhaps the most cutting statement in recent months was from Argentine Marxist Claudio Katz, just before the July Rio de Janeiro leaders’ summit:

“One need only compare the composition of the current BRICS leadership with the leadership that headed Bandung to confirm the monumental distance that separates the two organizations. Putin, Lula, and Ramaphosa have no kinship with Nehru, Nasser, and Zhou EnLai; and Modi and Bolsonaro were diametrically opposed to those figures. The fact that far-right presidents are able to keep their countries within the BRICS during their terms in office illustrates the impressive political plasticity of that bloc. The direct complicity with Israel of new members – such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt – is also indicative of the organization’s profile. None of this collusion with imperialism had any place in Bandung.”

In all these ways, with all of these voices – many who were once as vociferously pro-BRICS as Jeffrey Sachs remains – we should be able to set aside any further illusions in what currently postures as multi-polar politics. The BRICS’ 2026 hosting by its most consistently rightwing leader, Narendra Modi, is obviously the nail in the coffin for claims it will have any liberatory intent, much less impact.

The great dependency theorist Ruy Mauro Marini would recognize this situation, and would perhaps extend his famous 70-year old thesis about Brazil’s position in the world economy, to describe the BRICS as the logical economic-bloc formation which dependent capitalism assumes, upon reaching the stage of subimperialism: servile even to Donald Trump’s depravities, notwithstanding, that as Ambassador Rasool confirmed, “every attempt at appeasing has not worked.”

Afghan Women's Fight to Eliminate Oppression and Barbarism

*Naheed

For decades, women in Afghanistan have been among the first and easiest victims of fundamentalist fascism and imperialism. In every era and under every ruling regime, misogynistic policies and practices have either persisted or intensified. In Afghanistan's patriarchal and feudal order, women are either confined within their homes—stripped of their humanity—or exploited as props in the grotesque spectacles of U.S.-NATO occupation, used to mask the occupiers' crimes and ignorance while propping up their hollow and reactionary proxies.

During the bloody and treacherous rule of the Jihadi bands in the 1990s, thousands of women were subjected to the most heinous abuses—from the rape of seven-year-old girls to seventy-year-old women, from women forced to give birth in the streets to breast-cuttings and the widespread imposition of forced marriages on young girls. These horrors were only fragments of the filth and brutality committed by the Jihadi and Ikhwani gangs.

Afterward, in their first Emirate from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban imprisoned women within the four walls of their homes by erasing them entirely from public life, while their commanders routinely seized two or three women each as wives by force.

After the September 11 tragedy and the US/NATO occupation of Afghanistan, they once again empowered the Jihadi warlords—men whose entire histories were soaked in blood and crime—to rule over our people and unleash yet more savage and dehumanizing violence, especially against women. During the twenty years of U.S. aggression, women like Farkhunda, Tabasoom, Rakhshana, Jamila, and thousands of unnamed and forgotten victims were sacrificed to the shared intoxication of brutality embraced by both the Jihadis and the Taliban. Meanwhile, NATO's bombings and

war crimes dragged hundreds of thousands of Afghans into the grave and turned our villages into ruins.

Western and CIA support was not limited to the male Jihadi and Taliban terrorists. It also elevated a cohort of treacherous female collaborators—such as Naheed Farid, Shukria Barakzai, Fawzia Koofi, Amina Balkhi, Qadriya Yazdanparast, Fatima Gailani, Amina Afzali, Sima Samar, Habiba Sarabi, Shinkai Karokhail, and others—rewarding them with prizes, positions, dollars, and fame. Their role was to legitimize the façade of the 'war on terror' and the supposed struggle for 'democracy,' and to sell to the world the fabricated narrative of 'liberating Afghan women.'

In August 2021, the United States and the West once again handed power to the brutal Taliban. The primary battlefield for these ignorant fanatics has been against women. Over the past four years, women have been erased from all political and social life—from attending schools and universities to holding jobs or performing civic duties. Mandatory hejab, bans on moving without a male guardian, prohibitions on music, and the closure of all educational and vocational centers for women, along with dozens of other medieval laws, have all targeted women. Many protesting women under this regime of ignorance and crime have been subjected to the worst forms of torture and sexual violence in prisons. Countless women have been mysteriously killed or disappeared, alongside other horrific crimes. Taliban oppression, which has further entrenched poverty, unemployment, and insecurity, has made the situation for women even more catastrophic.

Yet, despite decades of oppression, repression, and pressure, Afghan women have always stood at the forefront of struggle, fearlessly raising their voices against injustice and crime, undeterred by arrest, imprisonment, threats, or harassment, exposing the filthy faces

of imperialist and foreign collaborators. Just as Meena, the leader and founder of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), established the first women's political organization in Afghanistan, expanding the women's struggle from basic social demands to profound political change and taking to the streets, she proved that women are not 'weak' or 'incapable,' but 'sleeping lions' who, once awakened, conscious, and united, can defeat the most powerful enemies and seize power. Her struggles and those of her comrades have, for years, inspired and guided the resistance of Afghan women and continue to do so. Meena was assassinated in 1987, yet her goals and ideals remain a model for progressive and struggling Afghan women to this day.

Likewise, when the courageous women of Kobani took up arms and crushed the faces of the ISIS forces into the ground, we have consistently defended their struggle and resistance, emphasizing that the only path to liberation from oppression and exploitation is through struggle and steadfastness.

Violence against women has its roots in political, social, and economic factors, and until it is addressed fundamentally, no effective step can be taken to eradicate this oppression. The experiences of other nations have shown that awareness, persistent struggle, and the active participation of women in these arenas can elevate them to a position where, alongside men, they can play a decisive role in ending oppression and advancing society.

The women of our land face two major enemies, against whom the struggle must be central to every revolutionary organization and individual: imperialism and fundamentalism. These two are interconnected, and for over four decades, especially the United States and the West, have strengthened, armed, and supported Islamic fundamentalist groups and gangs, turning a blind eye to all their crimes. Through these groups, the U.S. has sought to suppress and eradicate every progressive, justice-seeking, and pro-democracy movement and voice.

Cheryl Benard, a RAND Corporation expert and spouse of Zalmay Khalilzad, conceded: "The reason we don't have moderate leaders in Afghanistan today is

because we let the nuts [the fundamentalists] kill them all. They killed the leftists, the moderates, the middle-of-the-roaders. They were just eliminated, during the 1980s and afterward." (Dreyfuss, Robert, *Devil's Game: How the United States helped Unleash Fundamentalist Islam*, Metropolitan Books, 2005.)

History has repeatedly proven that no nation has ever been liberated through kneeling, fear, silence, or flight. Our liberation will not be guaranteed by foreign armies or their puppet governments, but by our own strong arms and our own iron will—the only force capable of freeing this wounded country from the grip of imperialism and reactionaries.

The invading and occupying powers, time and again, simply change their masks and install new servants whose essence remains the same. Yesterday it was the Jihadis, today it is the Taliban, and if their interests demand it, they will raise the ISIS forces to power tomorrow like what they did in Syria. But it is we who must keep the flame of resistance alive and overcome the suffocating darkness that seeks to crush all hope, so that we may build a free and democratic Afghanistan—one founded on secularism and social justice. In such a society, alongside all ethnicities and faiths, the oppressed and long-suffering women of our land will finally taste equality.

Progressive, anti-fundamentalist, and anti-imperialist forces can, through organization and concrete struggle, bring closer the day when our people will no longer be sacrificed to political deal-makers and religious executioners. We must draw inspiration from the fierce steadfastness of the heroic people of Palestine who, under bombardment, famine, and genocide in Gaza, shattered the false pride and the so-called 'myth of Israel's invincibility,' reviving the Palestinian cause that much of the world had chosen to forget.

Inspired by these examples, we too can liberate Afghanistan from the grip of tyrannical, fascist, misogynistic, and reactionary regimes.

**This article was written by 'Naheed', a member of the Afghanistan Solidarity Party. She writes anonymously due to being persecuted.*

Reflections on Zohran Mamdani's Victory from the Global South

Subin Dennis

Zohran Mamdani, who describes himself as a “democratic socialist”, has won the New York City mayoral elections. He is a vocal critic of billionaires, ran on a plank to make the city affordable to the working people, and took a firm pro-Palestine stand in a country whose government is the staunchest supporter of the genocidal Zionist state. His campaign overcame the challenges posed by the propaganda fuelled by billionaires and the Zionist lobby. This, therefore, is a moment for cautious optimism.

Why optimism?

Optimism, because of the reasons stated above, and because such victories and campaigns (the other most notable campaign in the recent decades being the presidential campaigns of Bernie Sanders in 2016 and 2020) have helped make the term “socialism” less taboo in the US, a society where scaremongering about socialism and communism has been widespread, and where those suspected of communist sympathies have been witch-hunted. This, along with a campaign plank calling for greater taxation of the billionaires, is something to applaud.

Why caution?

Because we have repeatedly seen “democratic socialists” who have campaigned for the Democratic Party ending up endorsing the imperialist agenda pushed by the US ruling class. Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) are the best examples of this trend. It took two years and a huge barrage of criticism for Sanders to admit that what is going on in Gaza is a genocide, and even then, he added falsehoods to tone down criticism of the Zionist state. AOC even voted against a legislative amendment to cut \$500 million in funding to the Israeli military.

They are also often quick to condemn socialist countries such as Cuba, and those with socialist-leaning governments such as Venezuela, as “authoritarian”. Zohran Mamdani himself recently stated that he believes both Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela and Miguel Diaz-Canel of Cuba are “dictator”, no less.

This weak-kneed position on socialism and lack of a firmly anti-imperialist stand are basic traits of social democrats.

“Democratic socialist”, or “social democrat”?

Social democrats, particularly in the advanced Western countries, have by and large been pro-imperialist, often failing to oppose imperialist wars (e.g. the wars against Syria and Libya in the recent decade and a half).

Note that many social democratic parties call themselves “Socialist Party”, “Social Democratic Party”, “Labour Party”, and the like. While in government, they have pursued imperialist policies, and often actively led imperialist wars (e.g. the leading role of the Labour Party government under Tony Blair in the War on Iraq).

Social democrats in Western Europe never built socialism, but they did build welfare states during a time when the socialist bloc was powerful and the “threat” that socialism might win seemed real. Eventually, and especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, they actively pursued neoliberal policies, cutting taxes for the rich, selling off public sector enterprises and privatising public services. Another example worth recalling from the recent past is that of Syriza, a supposedly “radical left” party that came to power in Greece in 2015

promising to end austerity, and ended up reinforcing austerity, privatising airports and seaports, and undermining social security.

The situation in the US has been somewhat different. None of the two major parties in the US call themselves socialist or social democratic. Both of them have actively pursued horrendous imperialist wars. Both of them have implemented neoliberal policies in the past four and a half decades. The socialist and communist movements were significant forces in the past, but were weakened by the McCarthyite witch-hunts of the late 1940s and 1950s. In recent years, particularly with the campaign of Bernie Sanders to win the Democratic Party candidature for US presidential elections, socialism as a positive term has re-entered the political discourse in the US. As an aside, the term “liberalism”, often used to denote the political inclinations of the Democratic Party, has been a source of confusion for many. In the US, with a historically weak socialist movement, “liberals” are often thought of as “leftists”, even though liberals have been consistently imperialist, and neoliberal in economic policy in recent decades. The worldwide influence of the US media has meant that this confusion has been imported into the discourse in many other countries. In countries of the Global South with relatively more powerful socialist movements, such movements don’t consider US-type liberals to be leftists at all, although many even in the Global South do tend to get misled.

The term “democratic socialism” is used by those who claim to uphold it in an obvious attempt to distance themselves from the socialism that has actually existed and which actually exists, which also explains Mamdani’s lack of solidarity with the revolutions in Cuba and Venezuela.

One could of course argue that socialism in the US doesn’t have to be and will not be a carbon copy of socialist experiments elsewhere. The problem here, however, is our concrete experience that the “democratic socialists” who became prominent figures in the Democratic Party have ended up

taking the same position that social democrats elsewhere have taken.

In the light of this experience, it will be foolish for those of us in the Global South who are the main victims of imperialism to not be cautious.

Even with these caveats, we can hope that Mamdani would make a sincere attempt to make good on his promises to make New York a more affordable city for the working people. He would definitely face many obstacles put up by the Trump administration, the Democratic Party establishment, the bureaucracy and others. Whether he would hold steadfast, or go the way of Sanders and AOC, only time will tell. An optimistic take would be to say that just as the mass pro-Palestinian movement made it possible for Mamdani to maintain a pro-Palestinian position, an organised mass movement could possibly help him stay the course.

Excited about Mamdani’s victory? Join the Left and help build it!

The Mamdani campaign has excited a lot of people worldwide. While most people outside New York saw the brilliant, slick social media campaign, within the city itself, the campaign was powered by about 90,000 volunteers who knocked on 3 million doors.

If you are somebody outside the US who has become excited about Zohran Mamdani’s victory, join a left organisation where you are (if you haven’t already), and help build it. That will bring some positive change in your own society, and by extension, in the world. We see a lot of people from various parts of the world commenting below Mamdani’s social media posts, “my mayor (I’m from X country)” and so on. The fact of the matter, of course, is that no matter how much I wish, if I don’t live in New York City, Zohran Mamdani is not “my mayor”. If I want a socialist mayor/government and if I don’t have it already, I have to contribute by working for that outcome. And I must recognise that it is not just somebody else’s job to put in that work.

Beyond the State: The PKK's Socialism of the 21st Century

Mahir Engizek

We celebrate the 47th anniversary of the official establishment of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) (November 27, 1978).

The emergence of the PKK at the end of the 1970s should be assessed as a moment that triggered a deep rupture, not only in Turkey's political history but also within the multi-layered social structures trapped in the civilization crisis of the Middle East.

An analysis of this movement's 47 year trajectory clearly demonstrates the theoretical inadequacy of placing it in the simple category of a national liberation movement.

The PKK is neither merely an ethnically based organization in the classical sense nor a socialist structure that entirely fits the traditional Marxist Leninist template.

What distinguishes the PKK from other revolutionary, left, or socialist movements is not just its existence as a political subject. It is also the creation of a unique theoretical dynamic that re identifies modernity's three fundamental pillars the nation state, capitalism, and patriarchy essentially as a single, interconnected civilization machine, radically questions the entire historical continuity of this machine, and develops an alternative social ontology against it.

While most movements of the rising left wave in 1970s Turkey were shaped by the determinations of either the Maoist rural revolution model, the Soviet type vanguard party concept, or the Latin American guerrilla tradition, the PKK's founding core, despite being in contact with these traditions, grasped early on the impossibility of confining the Kurdish reality within these templates.

This grasp creates the historical rupture that would define the movement's fundamental character. The PKK does not merely become a socialist organization; it tackles the fragmented structure of Kurdish society, marginalized by state civilization for centuries, along with the ancient heritage of Middle Eastern civilization.

And thus, it develops a theoretical reading that details the civilization anatomy of the Middle East while analyzing the historical origins of the modern capitalist system. In short, the PKK establishes a political ontology that blends revolutionary theory and civilization analysis into a single whole.

This approach decisively separates the movement from other left structures. Because most socialist structures lean on a revolutionary strategy centered on seizing power, the PKK early on developed a much deeper analysis of the nature and historical continuity of power.

The idea of transforming society by seizing the state is evaluated not as a solution method, but as a form of hegemony that must be criticized from the very beginning. This evaluation would form the most fundamental theoretical basis for the movement's transformation spanning many years.

The PKK's radicalism lies not merely in its militant forms of action but in its way of rethinking society, history, and power.

Given the tribal structures, feudal relations, scattered political culture, and multi identity fabric of Kurdish society, it was clear that classical nation state centered revolution strategies were incompatible with this social reality. Therefore, the PKK had to create a completely new intellectual framework to confront



Kurdish Freedom Movement (Photo: Mahir Engizek)

both the historical marginality of the Kurds and the civilization crises of the Middle East.

This framework created a radical theoretical break by uniting the freedom struggle of an ethnic group with the re evaluation of the history of civilization.

The armed struggle the PKK waged throughout the 1980s is only one period of the movement, and its entire theoretical character cannot be limited to the military aspects of this period. What is truly decisive is the unique paradigm that developed concurrently with this struggle. This paradigm exposes how the modern state creates domination through the concentration of power over society, while radically revealing the historical role of patriarchy at its base.

Thus, women's freedom was considered not merely

a secondary element of the movement, but the very subject of the revolution and the fundamental condition for social reconstruction. This point distinguishes the PKK from all other revolutionary movements with clear and sharp lines.

No revolutionary movement in history has placed patriarchy as the founding violence of civilization in such a central position. Precisely for this reason, the PKK's paradigm produces an alternative definition of socialism: a revolution that does not center women's freedom cannot move beyond reproducing the state.

The PKK's transformation became even more pronounced from the 1990s onward with the recognition of the limits of the classical Marxist Leninist organizational form. The end of the Cold War, the collapse of real socialism, and the failure of nation



state models compelled the movement toward a new theoretical orientation.

However, this transformation was not a dissolution but an attempt at self transcendence. In this respect, the PKK's evolution differs from the defeatist dissolutions seen in most left movements. The PKK, during this period, realized not just a political strategic update, but an ontological reconstitution.

This process, termed a paradigm shift, involved shedding all the ideological burdens of modernity and developing an alternative social model called democratic modernity. This model relies on a vision that horizontally organizes social freedom capacity against the state modernity which centralizes power.

This reconstitution's most shattering aspect is the idea of stateless democracy. This idea directs a radical critique at both the Left's power centered revolution understanding and liberal democracy's election focused representation models.

According to the PKK, the nation state is the necessary institutional form of modern capitalism's mechanism for controlling society. Therefore, achieving

freedom within the nation state is impossible.

This critique constitutes the fundamental difference between the movement and all other left structures. Because the classical left often evaluated the state apparatus as a neutral instrument, assuming that society would be liberated once it was seized. The PKK, conversely, argues that the state is the institutionalized form of hierarchy and domination itself.

For this reason, democratic confederalism is proposed as a form of political organization outside the state. This proposal is not merely a theoretical project but has gained a practical sphere of experience. The Rojava experience has emerged as a concrete area for the application of democratic confederalism, becoming an important laboratory for modern political theory.

The significance of this laboratory lies in the fact that a non nation state governance model can find a practical realization. This demonstrates that the PKK is not only an armed organization but an intellectual movement that generates comprehensive social theory.

One of the most important elements evident in the PKK's 47 year journey is its capacity to continuously

criticize its own ideological framework, resist dogmatism, and renew itself.

This capacity, which allows it to scrutinize even concepts considered taboo, completely separates the movement from classical revolutionary structures. Even the concept of leadership is within the scope of this self critique. A moral center has been built that sustains charismatic leadership alongside the collective subject but does not rely solely on personal charisma.

Therefore, the PKK's understanding of leadership is evaluated not as an authoritarianism that deifies the individual, but as a collective cognitive core necessary for holding together fragmented and dispersed social structures.

The movement's radicalism is even more pronounced in its approach to forms of social organization. The social system proposed by the PKK is a model that organizes itself in the absence of central power, relies on a communal economy, views women's freedom as a constitutive element, and makes ecological balance a political principle.

This model assumes that socialism is not merely a problem of economic regulation, but also an ethical, cultural, and ontological problem. This is a radical claim arguing that socialism must be rethought.

The historical experience of the PKK cannot be read solely as an armed resistance or a set of national demands. Because over the 47 year process, the movement has transformed into much more than an organization.

The PKK has become a colossal intellectual political school that generates its own theoretical reference framework, creates its unique concepts, and develops an alternative social ontology against the crises of modernity.

In this respect, the PKK, unlike most 20th century socialist movements, has not limited its existence solely to the goal of establishing a state; conversely, it has identified the state as a problem and argued that

freedom is possible through a social reorganization beyond the state.

Today, looking at the 47 year history of the PKK, it is clearly seen that the movement occupies a unique position both in terms of the political geology of the Middle East and global modernity.

As signs of the dissolution of capitalist modernity increase, as the authoritarian tendencies of nation states become more pronounced, and as social inequalities deepen, the paradigms developed by the PKK gain meaning not only for the Kurds but also for peoples facing similar crises in many regions of the world. This moves the movement from being regional to becoming part of global theoretical discussions.

The PKK's radicalism lies exactly here. It is a powerful political current that integrates all structural contradictions of modernity into a single analysis, develops a new political philosophy to confront these contradictions, and creates social practices where this philosophy is tested.

For this reason, the PKK can be read as a movement poised to fill the theoretical vacuum left by the classical left. What distinguishes it decisively from other revolutionary structures is the continuity of radical ruptures.

The PKK constantly reproduces itself by continuously conflicting with history, modernity, male dominated civilization, and its own past. This form of conflict is a dynamic that protects the movement from dogmatism and continuously makes it unique.

In conclusion, the 47 year journey of the PKK is not only the freedom struggle of the Kurdish people but the history of an alternative political philosophy, a new social ontology, and a radical theory of freedom developed against the crises of modernity.

This history has created a powerful intellectual political heritage that compels us to rethink socialism, places the state at the center of criticism, and carries the claim of re establishing society on the foundation of freedom.

Socialism: Here, There, and Everywhere

Michael Albert

It is hard not to notice the word “socialism” appearing steadily more often in steadily more places. Some appearances of the word aim to register dismissal or hate. But many appearances aim to register elevation and desire. Socialism in polls. Socialism as epithet. Socialism in Gracie Mansion. Socialism buried. Socialism resurrected. Socialism past. Socialism future.

That so many people nowadays so often use the word “socialism” or even say they support “socialism” is very promising. It builds momentum. But what is this thing called “socialism” that people say they favor?

Socialism’s advocates most often enumerate a long list of characteristics. All the items included in each such list are good things, often very good things, or for detractors they are bad things, often very bad things. But in each case, the things listed are overwhelmingly predicted outcomes of attaining socialism. For example equity but not the economic relations that will nurture and sustain equity. People having a say over what affects their lives but not the political, economic, familial, or cultural institutions that will foster such participatory decision-making. Free health care, education, and housing. Some serious redistribution. Sustainable energy production and use. Peace. But good as the desires are, the items listed in such descriptions rarely describe defining institutional features of socialism itself. Worse, the expositions that do contain institutional substance are often full of obscure terminology and convoluted passages.

Do people who list good socialist results have in mind defining institutional features that could yield those good results? Or is there considerable confusion about actual working features that could attain peoples’ desired outcomes? Put differently, to what extent does the current growing

use of the term “socialism” reflect people moving to the left or, to what extent does it indicate that the term’s meaning is moving to the right?

In just the latest instance I have seen of this strange conflation of desire and vagueness, of assertion and confusion, we have a keynote speech by Bhaskar Sunkara delivered recently at the New York City Democratic Socialists of America’s biannual organizing conference. In his speech, Sunkara rightly celebrated Zohran Mamdani’s New York City mayoral victory. He rightly celebrated the role of grass roots volunteers and in particular of the New York City chapter of DSA. He rightly warned that we need to understand the many pressures Mamdani, a democratic socialist member of DSA, will face. He rightly urged that we should find ways to aid Mamdani in seeking to implement worthy aims that will in turn propel pursuit of still more worthy aims. And Sunkara did all that with no obscure terminology or convoluted passages. Not one.

So what is my problem with his excellent speech and with many other uses of the label “socialism” that are now proliferating? The problem is certainly not new. It is cumulative and has deep roots. But is it getting worse?

Read poll questions, speeches, celebrations, and beyond them still more substantive sentences, paragraphs, speeches, essays, and even books that feature the word “socialism.” You will encounter wonderful wise and thoughtful values that socialism advocates want to attain. However you are unlikely to encounter descriptions of the institutional features of the thing the authors denote by the word “socialism.” Do they mean socialism is just changes in policies, or even just the desire for changes in policies? What about a shared institutional destination?



Does that explain my concern sufficiently for clarity? I am not sure it does. Try this. Find someone who says in a poll that they identify as socialist. Ask “what is socialism?” Listen closely to the answer. Is there institutional clarity? Are there institutions at all?

Or read speeches by socialists and carefully examine their words. Or even read books with socialism in their title. Take your time. When you are done, based on your investigation, explain what the authors said socialism was to a spouse, friend, school mate, or work mate. What image of socialism do you convey? It is certainly not capitalism,

at least as we know it. And it offers good things. But what is it?

Based on what you read—speeches, articles, and even books—did you describe the institutions of a proposed alternative system? Maybe the works you read saw “socialism” as mainly or perhaps even only a replacement for our capitalist economy. If so, did they explain what socialism’s new division of labor would be? What its new approach to determining how much income actors receive would be? What its new approach to making decisions would be? What its new way to allocate inputs to workplaces and outputs from

workplaces to consumers or to other workplaces would be? How the new system would sensibly affect the ecology? Why the new system's new institutions would yield the author's desired results, and why the new institutions would eliminate the oppression and alienation the author abhors? Did the authors show, for example, how the new institutions would leave behind class division and class rule? How they would yield no bosses and not new bosses? When you related their message about socialism, did you perceive and convey all that? Shouldn't we be able to do that in ways that inform and inspire?

Perhaps instead the writings that you examined used the word "socialism" more broadly to refer to all of society. They described socialism as a replacement for defining economic institutions but also for defining political, familial, kinship, racial/religious/ethnic, international, and ecological institutions. The same questions arise. Did they describe the new features of each sort of new institution and explain why they would be viable? Why they would yield desired outcomes? How they would avoid creating new oppressive hierarchies and relations?

I worry that socialism has become unmoored from proposing new defining institutions. Is that unfair? I am sure many will think it is. Does that include you? If so, you may say that socialism is in fact just the good things you like. Thus, my problem disappears because socialism isn't new institutions. It is just new outcomes. But will that conception attract mass belief, mass support, and arrive somewhere we intend to wind up?

Or you may agree that socialism is more than a list of desirable outcomes. You may agree it is instead the institutions that yield those outcomes. And then you may add that you know that, of course—and even that everyone knows that, of course. That is fair enough, if it is true—but does everyone know that? If so, will you tell me what they all know are socialism's defining institutions? Will you tell me how those institutions will work? Why they will be viable? Why they will last? Why

you are convinced they will deliver the outcomes you desire and not also horrible new ills?

I worry that many who use the word socialism can't do that. Is that false? If it is true, I wonder, is the increasing use of the word "socialism" a sign of steadily

more people believing in and wanting to attain viable and worthy new economic or even new economic and also new political and social institutions? Or is it a sign that the word has become so vague that using it conveys little? The answer is likely, "some of each," but to the extent that the term is vague, why has that happened?

Here are some possible partial and highly tentative answers. I think nowadays the word "socialism" is used more frequently in the U.S., where I live, and is also less often ridiculed or hated here largely because of the U.S. impact of Bernie Sanders, AOC, and most recently Zohran Mamdani on huge audiences along with the growing dangers of capitalist tendencies.

Okay, but still, what does the word convey? For the tens of thousands and indeed millions who now say they align more with socialism than with capitalism, does that just mean they like good outcomes and positive aspirations, or does it mean they favor an array of institutions that compose a system they want to put in place of capitalism? If it is just the former, why is that?

I have thought it is because pro-socialist proclamations and literature have rarely tried to clearly present new institutions. They have tended to either not describe new institutions or to describe them too obscurely for nearly anyone to wade through much less be moved by and then able to explain the proposals to others.

I still think that is part of the reason, but taken alone it seems an insufficient explanation. Why? This morning I woke up, checked my email, and in the mass of materials one missive immediately got my attention. It was a promotional mailing

from Jacobin Magazine that offered a “socialist reading list.” I looked closer and the list offered three books that people could order. Two were by Bhaskar Sunkara, who I mentioned above—one that he edited and one that he wrote. I hadn’t read either one and I decided to take a look. I expected to encounter something more or less like what I encountered ages ago when I first read Michael Harrington’s book, *Socialism*. That is, a brilliant account of the ills of capitalism, some revealing history of socialist movements or parties, and a moving call for better things and perhaps even some indication of what’s necessary to win those better things, but not a description of new institutions.

Well, I was partially surprised. First, Sunkara’s efforts had no jargon and no convoluted passages. For those who read, which is a steadily declining proportion of the population, Sunkara could be accessibly read. More, Sunkara addressed real things that people do say and think. He used familiar examples. He offered some quite clever but on point humor, and no obscurity.

The longer offering, titled *The Socialist Manifesto*, which is what I read first, had an initial very creative, down to earth, daily life argument against what we endure in capitalism and for generating vision and indications of how to transcend capitalism. Then followed a long historical part with impressive breadth and depth. And then there was a third part offering insights bearing on current conditions and ways to go forward. Beyond style points, and I would have to give a great many of those, Sunkara did in fact address current institutions and their ways of impacting people’s options and actions. I liked and found compelling much of what he said, though I admit, not all. But that is not the point here. More, the book was from quite a few years back, and some conditions have changed. Also not the point here. But the fact is, I hadn’t previously read Sunkara’s work, so two new questions arose.

First, why hadn’t I? And, second, why hadn’t his efforts and other efforts more or less like his had

more impact on what a person who says “I favor socialism more than capitalism” would answer when asked, “okay, but what is socialism?” Sunkara’s *ABCs of Socialism*, a collection, had similar virtues. Written very accessibly, it experimented with different daily life rooted ways of presenting its material. But neither book described defining core institutions.

I suspect the reason for my having not read Sunkara’s works before may in part be because I didn’t see much notice about the books among “intellectuals” and economists and that led to my assuming it was nothing new or different. That seems like it might explain it. Or maybe there was more to my not reading it. I honestly don’t know. But then comes another question. Why didn’t these books get more notice? Jacobin admirably pushed them into view and is still, years later, doing so. That is good. Even exemplary. Of course, mainstream media did not promote them. But that’s our current world. We get that.

Another question rises. why didn’t literally all alternative media review and debate these books, as well as others also serious about addressing what we want and how to get it? Why isn’t collective attention to vision and strategy across progressive venues a persistent priority? Why didn’t these books, for example, reach further into the public, at least the “capitalism dismissing and socialist leaning” public, and cause more such people to have coherent answers when asked what institutional changes would bring into existence the wonderful things they want? And to have coherent answers for what what they now favor wouldn’t generate the horrific outcomes so-called socialist revolutions have delivered in the past?

The Socialist Manifesto and *ABCs of Socialism* are admirably more accessible than most other such works but they too present socialism as movements, as history, as desires, but not as a set of institutions that would generate wonderful and not horrific outcomes. Why is that?

Is my concern about the word “socialism” just

that presentations that have sought to advance “socialism” have not in fact gotten across? Is it that presentations that try to advance socialist vision and that have offered institutional proposals and arguments, have been too obscure and too divorced from the experiences, desires, and fears of working people’s daily lives? Or is it—and this is ultimately my concern—that today’s populations are overwhelmingly disinclined to even look at such works much less to give serious attention so as to gain and spread insights from them? Is it that their merit is never even assessed, and only tangentially even noticed?

Whatever obstacles are at play, they apply pretty equally to pretty much any positive alternative vision, including participatory economics which is sometimes called participatory socialism—as well as to participatory society—and to every other vision for economics or for other parts of society.

In short, are socialists and really everyone who has offered economic or social vision just doing a poor job of communicating for one reason or another? What we offer doesn’t resonate. Or is it that regardless of how good a job anyone might do, the public resists reading about any vision? Such writing doesn’t get as much less debated, refined, augmented, and spread. Folks just aren’t interested or even actively resist? And if that is the case, why?

One thing is certain. It is not because everyone likes what we now endure much less the growing risks for coming years. It could be that those of us trying to expand commitment to vision haven’t found an effective way to convey our proposals, and I actually hope that it is, because then once we find better ways, we will do better.

Even just in the U.S. at least tens of millions do not like what we have. Tens of millions even hate what we have. So why don’t tens of millions pay attention to alternatives? Setting aside promotion problems, why is there vastly more inclination to write and read self help nonsense than to write

and read serious vision and strategy? It may be because most people are convinced nothing better is possible, or nothing better can be attained, or nothing better would last. People may feel that to read about something fundamentally better and how to attain it is a waste of time.

Yes, I know, our immersion in social media, the corruption of culture, our lacking any memory or operational conception of collective action, our rampant individualism, simmering and even currently escalating fear, and especially manipulated cynicism based on lies and confusions all also play a role.

But whatever obstacles impede people hungering for and devouring and then assessing, refining, and finally augmenting works of vision and strategy—to gain shared clarity about what we want, about its actual institutional substance, and about why it would work as we say, why it would deliver the goods we seek, and why and how our actions can lead toward it instead of leading in circles or even toward still more abominable relations—overcoming the obstacles is an essential step to amassing growing support to not only reduce the horrors around us, but to finally eliminate their causes and attain new institutions that promote better.

Whatever obstacles interfere with people arriving at really widespread shared visionary and strategic clarity, we have to overcome them. We want new economy, new polity, new kinship, new culture and community, new ecology, new international relations. We have to find ways to envision viable lasting institutions for all that and, more so, we have to communicate effectively about those desired institutions and about the strategies they entail.

Whatever the obstacles to all that are, to overcome them is a priority task. Being right matters, but it is the easy part. The hard part is effective communication. To communicate effectively needs more attention.

Afro-Descendant Communities Offer a Living Blueprint for Amazon Conservation

Reynard Loki

Spanning nine nations and covering more than 5.5 million square kilometers—roughly the size of the continental United States—the Amazon is the world’s largest rainforest. Often called the “lungs of the Earth,” it regulates the global climate, maintains freshwater cycles, and sustains life on a planetary scale. Yet the Amazon is not a single uniform forest. It is a vast mosaic of interconnected ecosystems, each with its own character and species. Dense tropical rainforests form the iconic canopy, towering over extraordinary biodiversity. Seasonally or permanently flooded forests—known locally as *várzea* and *igapó*—support plants and animals adapted to the rising and falling waters. The Amazon River and its extensive network of tributaries form the largest freshwater system on Earth, dotted with wetlands, swamps, and oxbow lakes. Beyond the forest, savannas, mangroves, and cloud forests along the Andes’ foothills provide additional habitats, collectively harboring at least 10 percent of all known species—from jaguars and macaws to pink river dolphins and black-headed uakari monkeys.

The Amazon is home to more than 30 million people. Indigenous populations settled the region as far back as 39,000 years ago, while Afro-descendant communities arrived more than 300 years ago. Afro-descendant communities—descendants of enslaved Africans, as well as those who escaped bondage to establish settlements in remote forests, mangroves, and marshlands—have cultivated a unique and enduring relationship with the land. Over generations, they developed “escape agriculture,” a subsistence strategy that kept communities hidden from colonial powers while sustaining them. These systems integrated traditional African knowledge with local ecosystems, incorporating food forests and agroforestry techniques that provided food security while maintaining ecological balance. Over centuries, these practices evolved into landscapes

that are both productive and resilient, preserving biodiversity and storing carbon.

Cultural and spiritual ties to the land remain central to environmental stewardship. “For centuries, Afro-descendant communities have managed landscapes in ways that sustain both people and nature, yet their contributions remain largely invisible in mainstream conservation,” said Sushma Shrestha, director of Indigenous Science, Research, and Knowledge at Conservation International and lead author of a landmark 2025 study. Hugo Jabini, a Maroon leader from Suriname’s Saamaka Afro-descendant Tribe, adds: “Our land management practices combine traditional African knowledge with the Amazon Rainforest. The areas where we have lived have become healthier and sustained entire communities.”

Afro-descendant territories are among the most biodiverse in the Amazon and contain exceptionally high concentrations of “irrecoverable carbon”—carbon that, once released, cannot be reabsorbed for decades. Most of the world’s irrecoverable carbon—nearly 140 billion metric tons—is stored in peatlands, mangroves, marshes, and old-growth forests, ecosystems that often overlap with Indigenous and Afro-descendant lands. By maintaining traditional practices that conserve forests, wetlands, and mangroves, these communities help lock away carbon that would otherwise accelerate global warming.

Governments and funders are beginning to acknowledge this. In 2025, more than 35 countries and philanthropic organizations renewed a \$1.8 billion global pledge to strengthen land rights for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and—for the first time—Afro-descendant peoples. The effort reflects growing recognition that securing community tenure is one of the most effective, evidence-based strategies for protecting forests and stabilizing the climate.

Recent research underscores these findings. A landmark 2025 study published in *Communications Earth & Environment* found that deforestation rates on Afro-descendant lands are dramatically lower than in surrounding areas, and that more than half of these territories rank among the most biodiverse regions on Earth. The Forest and Land Tenure Pledge, renewed in 2025, builds on earlier commitments and directs more funding toward Afro-descendant territories across forests, savannas, and mangroves—ecosystems that support high biodiversity and climate benefits. Leaders caution that funding must flow directly to communities and be paired with strengthened land titling processes to translate global promises into on-the-ground protection.

Legal recognition of Afro-descendant lands remains scarce. Many territories are unrecognized or only partially protected, leaving communities vulnerable to land grabs, industrial agriculture, logging, and extractive projects such as mining and oil development. Jasmine Hardy, associate editor at Atmos, notes: “Approximately 77 percent of Afro-descendant peoples’ territories in Latin America and the Caribbean are located within biodiversity hotspots... Only 5 percent, however, are officially recognized as owned by these communities, leaving their homes open to exploitation.” Political marginalization compounds these challenges. Afro-descendant voices are often excluded from national decision-making and global climate forums, meaning policies are developed without their input, threatening both human rights and ecological integrity. Jabini observes: “Through our deep cultural and spiritual connection to the land, we have sustained vital forest areas. We hope this raises awareness, so that political leaders no longer see us as mere claimants of land.”

“Indigenous Peoples from all over the world are here to confront the global climate emergency,” said Kleber Karipuna, executive coordinator of the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, in a November 2025 press statement in advance of COP30. “What we are demanding is that governments finally secure Indigenous territories, because it has already been proven to be an effective measure to protect the forests, the rivers, and life.”

Across the Amazon, Afro-descendant communities implement stewardship tailored to local conditions. In Brazil, agroforestry systems blend native trees, crops, and livestock, reducing soil erosion, maintaining forest cover, and ensuring food security. In Colombia, communities in Buenaventura restore mangrove ecosystems that protect coastlines, sequester carbon, and sustain fisheries. In Ecuador, nearly all Afro-descendant lands are located within biodiversity hotspots and are managed through rotational farming, forest gardens, and community reserves. In Suriname, Maroon peoples—including the Saamaka—combine spiritual practices with environmental stewardship, preserving some of the region’s most intact forests. Women play a leading role in restoration projects, seed-saving networks, and local advocacy. Many communities also engage in sustainable livelihoods, from small-scale fisheries to carbon-credit cooperatives, demonstrating that ecological protection and economic well-being can advance hand in hand.

Despite these successes, Afro-descendant communities face ongoing threats: lack of formal land tenure, encroachment from agriculture, mining, and infrastructure development, socioeconomic pressures, and political marginalization. Conservation works best when rooted in local knowledge and reinforced by secure land tenure. Secure rights empower communities to defend their territories, ensuring forests, wetlands, and mangroves remain intact. Cultural values and spiritual practices reinforce stewardship, intertwining conservation with tradition, identity, and deep connection to the land. Equitable policy that includes marginalized voices produces solutions that are both fairer and more effective.

As the world confronts climate change and biodiversity loss, Afro-descendant communities offer a living blueprint for sustainable development. Protecting their lands, supporting their leadership, and amplifying their voices in international forums is both a moral imperative and a pragmatic strategy. When these communities thrive, the Amazon—and the planet—thrives with them.

Why America Is Removing Thousands of Dams and Letting Rivers Run Free

Tara Lohan

With more than 550,000 dams in the United States, free-flowing rivers are an endangered species. We've dammed, diked, and diverted almost every major river in the country, straightening curves, pinching off floodplains, and blocking passage for fish and other aquatic animals. But this has come at a great cost. Freshwater biodiversity—all the organisms that hail from our rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands—is among the most threatened on the planet. Dams have played a big role in that demise, pushing fish, mussels, and other animals to the brink, and some over it. In North America, nearly 40 percent of fish are imperiled, and 61 species have blinked out since 1900.

A growing dam removal movement has led to some 2,200 dams being blasted and backhoed from U.S. rivers—most of them in the past 25 years. It's an extraordinary turn of events for a dam-loving country. Europeans began erecting river barriers soon after they arrived in North America. Massachusetts's Old Oaken Bucket Pond Dam, built in 1640, is one of the country's oldest known dams. Thousands more followed across New England, then down the East Coast, and eventually westward. They powered mills that ground corn, cut lumber, forged tack, and produced textiles. As dams raised the height of the water behind them, they also smothered rapids and white water so that logs could be floated from upstream forests—where they were felled—to downstream industry, where they were processed. After hydroelectric power replaced mechanical power in the 1880s, the dams kept towns and cities alight.

As dam building pushed westward, dam heights pushed skyward. Hoover Dam, built in the 1930s with the labor of 21,000 men, sits 726 feet high and more than 1,200 feet long—more a fortress than infrastructure. Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River in Washington rises to 550 feet and stretches nearly a mile long. The United States emerged from the Great

Depression into a dam-building frenzy that lasted more than 30 years, dubbed the “go-go years” by Marc Reisner in *Cadillac Desert*, his iconic book on western water. Between 1950 and 1979, approximately 1,700 dams were built each year.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which built many of the country's mammoth dams and reengineered its rivers, had a motto: “Our rivers: total use for greater wealth.” Millions of Americans cashed in on the boom, often without giving it a thought. Politicians and regulators championed dams for their power, flood control, water storage, and recreational potential. Indeed, dams shaped the architecture of the West, irrigating millions of arid acres to grow crops for people and livestock, corralling drinking water for cities hundreds of miles away, churning the engines of war to create aluminum for fighter planes and plutonium for bombs, and turning valleys and canyons into giant swimming pools for our amusement.

Woody Guthrie captured the sentiment of those years in his 1941 song “Grand Coulee Dam,” which refers to the Columbia River as a “wild and wasted stream.” Wasted until it was dammed, that is. The folksinger, spurred by a government paycheck for his efforts, penned 26 songs espousing the virtues of the Columbia River's dams. That sentiment was also a natural extension of an ethos brought to the Americas by European colonists: Nature should be harnessed, subjugated, bent to the will of those manifesting their destiny. Along the way, any impact on fish and river health was either poorly understood or simply ignored. Often the latter. Also ignored were obligations to tribes that had treaty rights to fish rivers that were quickly becoming empty of fish.

For most Indigenous people, dams didn't bring enrichment or progress; it was one more theft from the enduring process of colonization in which food, community, ceremony, and sovereignty were stolen. Barry



McCovey Jr., a member of the Yurok Tribe in California, called the dams on the Klamath River, where his people reside, “cultural genocide.” Dams have swallowed creation sites, burial grounds, gathering places, fishing holes, homelands, and human history.

In the 1990s, then-Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt reflected that we have been building, on average, one large dam a day every day since the Declaration of Independence. It hasn’t been without ecological consequences either. Dams have decimated migratory fish populations by blocking their access to vital upstream habitat for spawning, feeding, and evading predators. The barriers also obstruct the downstream movement of sediment and nutrients, thus depleting riverbanks and coastal beaches, hastening erosion, and reducing the growth of riverside plants that feed insects, birds, and other animals.

The water that backs up behind a dam—its impoundment—turns a river into an unnatural lake. Migrating young salmon that once quickly rode spring freshets to the ocean must now navigate slow-moving water over a wide expanse, which takes more energy and increases the chances that they’ll end up as dinner to a hungry predator, of which there are many if you’re a tiny fish. And that’s all before they have to run the turbine gauntlet and face the drop from the dam’s height to the water below. The slack water in an impoundment behind

the dam can also heat up, turning these reservoirs into bathtubs with lethal temperatures for some fish. The warm water can also spur the spread of invasive species that prey on native residents.

Dams upend so many natural processes that it could be argued a river dammed isn’t really a river at all. It’s also possible that many of us don’t remember how a free-flowing river really looks and sounds. Dam removals can help restore not just river function but our collective memory, and I think we’ll need to do a lot more of it. The U.S. dam-building flurry hit its peak in the 1970s, and since 2000, we’ve been taking down more dams than we’ve been building. But the dam removal movement didn’t happen spontaneously. It was fought for by tribes, conservationists, fishers, and eventually broad, somewhat unlikely coalitions. It was also aided by environmental laws that protect clean water and endangered species, by scientific studies of dam removals and their impacts, and by regulators willing to manage adaptively.

Many people may see removing dams as outlandish. After all, they provide clean, cheap energy, right? But it turns out that only 3 percent of dams produce hydropower. Although hydropower is often placed in the “clean energy” column, dams and reservoirs also produce greenhouse gases, such as methane, and some do so to a significant degree.

Climate change poses yet more challenges. In drought-plagued regions, such as the Colorado River Basin, very little water can leave major reservoirs too low to produce hydropower or deliver water supplies. On the flip side, many dams today aren't designed to withstand climate-amplified storms, which are increasing in frequency and severity, can threaten public safety, and may leave big cleanup bills. A big storm in 2023 put Montpelier, Vermont, underwater, and experts found that dams actually made the flooding worse.

There are many compelling environmental reasons to remove dams—including the long list of ecological consequences given above—but public safety is also paramount. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the nation's dam safety a "D" grade in 2021. Until 2019, there were more than 15,000 "high-hazard" dams, where a failure would result in the loss of life. And there's ample reason to be worried. The average age of our dams is 57 years, and more than 8,000 have surpassed 90 years. Aging dams require regular maintenance to ensure their safety, but this comes at a significant cost. As of 2024, \$165 billion was required to rehabilitate all nonfederal dams in need of repair, and another \$27 billion was needed for federal dams, according to the ASCE 2021 report.

Dams also don't have to fail to be dangerous. At U.S. low-head dams, many only a few feet tall, some 1,400 people have drowned because of the unseen and unsafe hydraulics that these dams produce. The 6-foot-tall Dock Street Dam in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, has taken 31 lives between 1913 and April 2025.

Of course, many of our dams serve critical purposes, and I've yet to meet a dam removal advocate who thinks that they should all come down. I certainly don't. But there's no shortage of low-hanging fruit when it comes to dams worthy of demolition. Tens of thousands of dams—in some states, the majority of dams obstructing rivers and streams—no longer serve a useful purpose. These so-called deadbeat dams include mill dams, where the mills are decades (or centuries) gone, and obsolete dams, such as the 168-foot-tall Matilija Dam in Southern California, which was built for water storage but filled with silt in

just 50 years. Some dams are orphans, with no known owner and therefore no one overseeing their upkeep. In many cases, it's cheaper to take down dams than to refurbish and retrofit them to meet modern safety and environmental laws.

Dam removals can also be a necessary step toward ameliorating harm to Indigenous communities from the loss of food sovereignty, treaty rights, cultural resources, and homelands. More people are now realizing the benefits of restoring nature for nature's sake—for the bears, birds, and beavers. For the salmon and cedars. Certainly, that's been the case on the Elwha River in Washington state. People also benefit from ecological restoration. Over the last few decades, we've started to better account for what healthy rivers provide. These ecosystem services have helped put a value on something invaluable.

These days, we're still building dams, although fewer than before, which is a step in the right direction. But to undo centuries of environmental harm, we'll need bigger leaps.

American Rivers has set an ambitious goal to work with partners to remove 30,000 dams and open up 300,000 river miles by 2050. That work is aided by aquatic connectivity teams now operating in 26 states and counting. There are also some other unlikely partners, such as the hydropower industry, although it's not a booster of every project.

"It has really come down to safety and economics. They're electing to take out their lower-performing assets," Brian Graber, senior director of River Restoration at American Rivers, told me. "There are many more dam owners who want to remove dams, and so trade groups, like the National Hydropower Association, are no longer adversaries."

Opening up rivers, I think, opens up a door of possibilities both for fish and people. It allows us to reimagine how to grow food without emptying rivers of life, how to generate clean energy without driving extinction, and how to move forward without leaving part of the community behind. We can be better neighbors to each other, but also better people on this planet.

The New Kill Zone: Gaza's Borders after the 'Ceasefire'

Ramzy Baroud

The so-called Gaza ceasefire was not a genuine cessation of hostility, but a strategic, cynical shift in the Israeli genocide and ongoing campaign of destruction.

Starting on October 10, the first day of the announced ceasefire, Israel transitioned tactics: moving from indiscriminate aerial bombardment to the calculated, engineered demolishing of homes and vital infrastructure. Satellite images, corroborated by almost hourly media and ground reports, confirmed this methodical change.

As direct combat forces seemingly withdrew to the adjacent "Gaza envelope" region, a new vanguard of Israeli soldiers advanced into the area east of the so-called Yellow Line, to systematically dismantle whatever semblance of life, rootedness, and civilization remained standing following the Israeli genocide. Between October 10 and November 2, Israel demolished 1,500 buildings, utilizing its specialized military engineering units.

The ceasefire agreement divided Gaza into two halves: one west of the Yellow Line, where the survivors of the Israeli genocide were confined, and a larger one, east of the line, where the Israeli army maintained an active military presence and continued to operate with impunity.

If Israel truly harbored the intention of, indeed, evacuating the area following the agreed-upon second phase of the ceasefire, it would not be actively pursuing the systematic, structural destruction of this already devastated region. Clearly, Israel's motives are far more insidious, centered on rendering the region perpetually uninhabitable.

Aside from leveling infrastructure, Israel is also carrying out a continuous campaign of airstrikes and naval attacks, relentlessly targeting Rafah and Khan Yunis

in the south. Later, and with greater intensity, Israel also began carrying out attacks in areas that were, in theory, meant to be under the control of Gazans.

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza, 260 Palestinians have been killed and 632 wounded since the commencement of the so-called ceasefire.

In practice, this ceasefire amounts to a one-sided truce, where Israel can carry out a relentless, low-grade war on Gaza, while Palestinians are systematically denied the right to respond or defend themselves. Gaza is thus condemned to relive the same tragic cycle of violent history: a defenseless, impoverished region trapped under the boot of Israel's military calculations, which consistently operate outside the periphery of international law.

Before the existence of Israel atop the ruins of historic Palestine in 1948, the demarcation of Gaza's borders was not driven by military calculations. The Gaza region, one of the world's most ancient civilizations, was always seamlessly incorporated into a larger geographical socio-economic space.

Before the British named it the Gaza District (1920-1948), the Ottomans considered it a sub-district (Kaza) within the larger Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem – the Jerusalem Independent District.

But even the British designation of Gaza did not isolate it from the rest of the Palestinian geography, as the borders of the new district reached Al-Majdal (today's Ashkelon) in the north, Bir al-Saba' (Beersheba) in the east, and the Rafah line at the Egyptian border.

Following the 1949 Armistice Agreements, which codified the post-Nakba lines, the collective torment of Gaza, as illustrated in its shrinking boundaries,

How the US plan divides the Gaza Strip



Guardian graphic. Source: IDF

began in earnest. The expansive Gaza District was brutally reduced to the Gaza Strip, a mere 1.3 percent of the overall size of historic Palestine. Its population, due to the Nakba, had explosively grown with over 200,000 desperate refugees who, along with several generations of their descendants, have been trapped and confined in this tiny strip of land for over 77 years.

When Israel permanently occupied Gaza in June 1967, the lines separating it from the rest of the Palestinian and Arab geography became an integral, permanent part of Gaza itself. Soon after its occupation of the Strip, Israel began restricting the movement of Palestinians further, sectionalizing Gaza into several regions. The size and location of these internal lines were largely determined by two paramount motives: to fragment Palestinian society to ensure its subjugation, and to create military 'buffer zones' around Israeli military encampments and illegal settlements.

Between 1967 and Israel's so-called 'disengagement'

from Gaza, Israel had built 21 illegal settlements and numerous military corridors and checkpoints, effectively bisecting the Strip and confiscating nearly 40 percent of its land mass.

Following the redeployment, Israel retained absolute, unilateral control over Gaza's borders, sea access, airspace, and even the population registry. Additionally, Israel created another internal border within Gaza, a heavily fortified "buffer zone" snaking across the northern and eastern borders. This new area has witnessed the cold-blooded killing of hundreds of unarmed protesters and the wounding of thousands who dared to approach what was often referred to as the "kill zone."

Even the Gaza sea was effectively outlawed. Fishermen were inhumanely confined to tiny spaces, at times less than three nautical miles, while simultaneously surrounded by the Israeli navy, which routinely shot fishermen, sank boats, and detained crews at will.

Gaza's new Yellow Line is but the latest, most egregious military demarcation in a long, cruel history of lines intended to make the lives of the Palestinians impossible. The current line, however, is worse than any before it, as it completely suffocates the displaced population in a fully destroyed area, without functioning hospitals and with only trickles of life-saving aid.

For Palestinians, who have been battling confinements and fragmentation for generations, this new arrangement is the intolerable and inevitable culmination of their protracted, multi-generational dispossession.

If Israel believes it can impose the new demarcation of Gaza as a new status quo, the next few months will prove this conviction devastatingly wrong. Tel Aviv has simply recreated a much worse, inherently unstable version of the violent reality that existed before October 7 and the genocide. Even those not fully familiar with the deep, painful history of Gaza must realize that sustaining the Yellow Line of Gaza is nothing more than a dangerous, bloody illusion.

Who Is Ready to Die for Trump's Gaza Plan? So Far, Nobody

Medea Benjamin, Nicolas J.S. Davies

On November 17th, 2025, the UN Security Council passed a resolution to endorse President Trump's plan for Gaza, including a transitional government headed by Trump himself and an International Stabilization Force (ISF) that is expected, among other tasks, to disarm Hamas, a task that Israel has failed to do through two years of genocide and mass destruction.

The ISF will be tasked with securing the borders in a way that confines Palestinians, stabilizing Gaza's security environment by suppressing resistance, demilitarizing Gaza while leaving the Israeli regime untouched, and training the Palestinian police to control the population. Yes, the force is also mandated to "protect civilians" and assist humanitarian aid. But under U.S. supervision, can anyone honestly expect it to restrain Israel when Israel simply refuses to comply—as we see with the current so-called "ceasefire"?

Hamas and other factions in Gaza have issued a joint statement that unequivocally rejects Trump's plan and the Security Council resolution, saying it "will turn into a type of imposed guardianship or administration – reproducing a reality that restricts the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to managing their own affairs."

As for the foreign military force, the Hamas statement says, "Assigning the international force with tasks and roles inside the Gaza Strip, including disarming the resistance, strips it of its neutrality, and turns it into a party to the conflict in favor of the occupation."

The joint statement reserves its strongest condemnation for the Arab rulers who support Trump's plan, calling their support "a form of

deep international partnership in the war of extermination waged by the occupation against our people."

Trump has claimed that all sides agreed to his peace plan, but Hamas only agreed to the first stage of it, which involved returning the remaining Israeli prisoners in Gaza to Israel under a permanent ceasefire and resumption of humanitarian aid that Israel has still not complied with.

Hamas always said clearly that it has no authority to negotiate over other parts of Trump's plan, since they involve the future government of all of Palestine and require the input of many different groups in Gaza and the other occupied territories. Hamas said it would only disarm once a Palestinian state is fully established, at which time it will hand over its weapons to the new armed forces of the state of Palestine.

In October, a number of countries told U.S. officials that they would consider sending their troops to participate in the proposed International Stabilization Force in Gaza. They included Egypt, Indonesia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Malaysia and Pakistan, as well as Australia, Canada and Cyprus.

On the other hand, Jordan, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have all rejected sending troops to join the ISF. Azerbaijan has said it could only send troops once all fighting has ended, and Egypt has flip-flopped on taking part. As it became clear that Trump and his "peace board" might order the ISF to use force to disarm Hamas fighters, the UAE said its forces would not take part either.

In fact, not a single country has so far committed to join the force, while Israel has said it would



not allow Turkish forces to enter Gaza, and claims the right to approve or refuse any country's participation. Israel has also been escalating its ceasefire violations since the Security Council resolution was passed, a sure way to deter countries from joining the ISF.

Hamas and the resistance groups are not alone in rejecting Trump's plan. Al Jazeera asked people in Gaza City for comments, and they were just as critical. "I completely reject this decision," said Moamen Abdul-Malek. "Our people ... are able to rule ourselves. We don't need forces from Arab or foreign countries to rule us. We are the people of this country, and we will bear responsibility for it."

Another man in Gaza City told Al Jazeera that the plan violates the Palestinians' right to armed resistance. "It would strip the resistance of its weapons," said Mohammed Hamdan, "despite the fact that resistance is a legitimate right of peoples under occupation."

And Sanaa Mahmoud Kaheel said she doesn't trust Trump, who previously threatened to ethnically cleanse Gaza and steal its land to build a U.S.-Israeli beach resort. "Things will be unclear with the international forces, and we do not know what might happen tomorrow or the day after tomorrow with them being in Gaza," she said. "This could help Trump tighten his grip on Gaza and work towards establishing a 'riviera'

there, as he himself said before. Nothing is guaranteed.”

The Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy (PIPD), based in Al-Bireh in the West Bank, rejects the false choice that the United States has presented to the world: “either accept their plan with all its flaws and non-guarantees, or accept going back to a live-streamed genocide.”

Instead, PIPD and the global Palestinian solidarity movement are working to end the Israeli occupation and the impunity that sustains it, and to hold Israel accountable for its illegal occupation and crimes against humanity. On its Global Accountability Map, PIPD charts the progress of “concrete and approved actions by governments, local authorities, civil society, the private sector, courts and academia to hold Israeli colonial entities and interests accountable.”

More and more of the world is supporting the Palestinian struggle and the movement to hold Israel accountable for its decades of illegal occupation and ever-escalating international crimes. While the U.S. uses its veto to corrupt the UN Security Council, people and governments have come together to hold Israel accountable in the UN General Assembly, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Instead of passively accepting subservience to the Security Council, the General Assembly asked the ICJ to rule on the legality of the Israeli occupation and its legal consequences, and the ICJ ruled in 2024 that the occupation is illegal and must therefore be ended as quickly as possible.

Instead of making further demands on the occupation’s long-suffering victims, as the U.S.-controlled Security Council does in its Trump plan resolution, the ICJ and the General Assembly have flipped the U.S. script to make demands on the perpetrator, Israel, including the demand, in September 2024, that Israel must end the occupation within a year.

The ICJ issued a new ruling on October 22, 2025, that Israel must allow all humanitarian aid into Gaza and allow UNRWA (UN Relief & Works Agency) to reenter Gaza and do its work there without obstruction.

The UN General Assembly can and should respond to Israel’s failure to comply with any of these rulings and resolutions by meeting in an Emergency Special Session to organize a UN-backed arms embargo, trade boycott and other steps to enforce them, until Israel ends its illegal occupation and starts complying with international law and UN resolutions.

More and more countries are cutting trade and military ties with Israel, and 157 countries now recognize Palestine as an independent nation with the same rights as others. People in many countries are rising up to protest Israel’s genocide and occupation, and to boycott Israeli products and companies that are complicit in its crimes.

The Israeli and U.S. governments are feeling the pinch. If the world was passively accepting Israel’s genocide in Gaza, Trump would not have felt compelled to conjure up his fake peace plan. It is a victory for people of conscience everywhere that he felt he had to try to change the narrative. So this is not the time to give up on the real solutions to this crisis: justice and freedom for Palestine, and accountability for Israel.

We shall see in the coming days whether the corrupt governments that hope to profit from the genocide in Gaza will send their own troops to fight the Palestinian Resistance and perpetuate the Israeli occupation. Are they really ready to sacrifice their own young people’s blood to mix with the blood of innocent Palestinians in the rubble of Gaza?

We hope that they will instead make common cause with the people of Gaza and insist that Israel must comply with the demands of the ICJ and the UN General Assembly and immediately end its obscene, decades-long, illegal occupation of Palestine.

How Did We Get Here? — Palestine and the Mandates of Deception

M. Reza Behnam

Each day, we learn of Israel's theft of yet another slice of Palestine. Piece by piece, acre by acre, the Palestinian nation has been seized by Israeli offensive forces and carved up by Zionist colonizers in contravention of all treaties, accords, "peace" agreements and the like.

Meanwhile, Israel remains accountable to no laws, no treaties and no global organizations. It takes what it wants, when it wants. It kills, destroys, pillages, imprisons, rapes and tortures because it has been allowed to.

It is important to understand how Israel's wantonness and lawlessness unfolded, especially as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) recently delegated trusteeship (authority) of Gaza to the Trump administration, essentially handing the United States an internationally sanctioned "mandate" of the enclave.

It is the shameful story of the manner in which the League of Nations, created by the British and other imperial powers, "gave" itself the "mandate" of Palestine; how 28 years later, the United Nations authored a plan to partition the mandate; and how, in 2025, the American empire has sought, in collaboration with Israel, to assume "trusteeship" over Palestinian land in Gaza.

The Imperial Mandate System, 1919

The British and French empires learned, after the horrors of World War I, that they could further their colonial interests in the Middle East, not by aggression, but within the legal framework of international institutions.

The League of Nations served that purpose when, in 1919, after the First World War, the victorious

Allied powers established the mandate system—traditional colonialism disguised as benevolence. The mandates, meant to be temporary, served to legalize British and French imperial gains over former Ottoman Empire colonies in the Arab Middle East.

Underlying the mandate system was the imperious racist assumption that the people who had lived for thousands of years on the land were incapable of governing themselves, that they needed the "tutelage of an advanced nation" before achieving independence—an attitude that has yet to change.

The text of the 1919 League of Nations Covenant (Article 22), for example, reveals the inherent racism of the imperial powers; it stated:

"To those colonies and territories... which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant..."

The Mandate of Palestine, 1922

Betrayal of the Palestinian nation began in 1920 when the League assigned the role of mandatory power in Palestine to the British government. The Mandate of Palestine (1922-1948) laid the foundation for the atrocities and colonial wars waged thereafter by Britain, Israel and the United States.

In total disregard for the political rights of the indigenous Arab majority (90 percent at that time), the British government included the text of the 1917 Balfour Declaration in its mandate, pledging to support a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.

By formally approving the mandate in 1922, the League gave legitimacy under international law—law defined by the imperial powers—to the Zionist project, as well as the green light to continue their aggressive expansionist pursuits.

There was nothing in the mandate that gave Britain the right to give away another peoples' land; land lived on for thousands of years. Instead of decolonization and independence as required, the British government callously and illogically handed Palestine to European colonizers.

United Nations Mandate of Palestine, 1947

Palestine was, once again, betrayed when the disdainful “trusteeship” of the League of Nations was replaced with its political invalidation by the United Nations in 1947.

Like its colonial predecessor, the United Nations—created largely by the United States—was structured to institutionalize the dominance and further the interests of major imperial powers. After the devastation of the Second World War, the United States assumed that autocratic power.

With the establishment in 1945 of the United Nations and dissolution of the League of Nations in 1946, Britain transferred all of its mandate territories—except Palestine—to a UN Trusteeship system.

Despite the rising cycle of violence and unrest, Britain continued its “trusteeship” until 1947 when it officially ceded its mandate, described as a “wasps nest,” to the United Nations. It should be noted that all of the League of Nations mandates were ultimately “guided” toward independence—except Palestine.

The United Nations' solution to the Palestine “problem” was adoption in 1947 of UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 181 recommending its partition into two unequal states, one Arab and one Jewish, with Jerusalem under international administration.

Although General Assembly resolutions are largely symbolic and are not legally binding on member states, Zionist leaders declared statehood in May 1948. Resolution 181 did, consequently, sow the seeds for Palestinian anti-colonial resistance and perpetual regional conflict and discord.

The Proposed U.S. Mandate of Gaza, 2025

Like all previous imperial actions, the United States has sought to obtain global legitimacy from international institutions to shield the Zionist colony and to impose control over the land of Palestine and the entire region.

By protecting Israel, the United States has sided with powers that exist in a liminal space, outside the law, no matter how dastardly their behavior.

The most recent act of U.S. initiated deception against the Palestinians came with the adoption by the UN Security Council (UNSC) of Resolution 2803, the so-called “Trump Gaza peace plan.” In so doing, it gave international credibility to his proposal and in effect, handed the United States a colonizing mandate over Gaza, passing the occupation and oppression of the Palestinians from Tel Aviv to Washington.

The U.S. “guardianship” plan mirrors the legacy of colonial land theft in Palestine—seizure repackaged and rebranded as peaceful resolution. Once again, plunder and dispossession have been shrouded in the guise of diplomatic “solutions.”

By systematically sidelining the Palestinians, denying their voice, their right to self-determination and their very existence, the United States is continuing the colonial dynamic—imperial policies and racism—that began with the Balfour Declaration and British mandate of Palestine. It has not and will not succeed.

The Palestinian people and leaders cannot be fooled. Interactions and transactions, with their adversaries, forged over decades, have fostered a keen understanding of them. Despite unimaginable

hardships and extreme duress, they have refused to surrender and to give up their struggle for national liberation.

Conclusion: Partnership not Obstruction

The historical manipulation of international organizations by powerful states cleared the way for betrayal of the Palestinians and facilitated Israel's horrors and lawlessness.

Although the United Nations has, since its birth, created a comprehensive body of international treaties, laws, condemnations and countless reports, as well as multinational bodies, like the International Court of Justice, to provide legal interpretation and rulings, it has yet to insure justice for Palestine and its people.

What the Security Council has done, however, is allow the genocidal and rogue Zionist colony of Israel to remain a member of the world body and unaccountable for its 78-year war on Palestine.

Mirroring the United States, the Council's failure to impose restraints or consequences has cultivated, in Israel, a sense of absolute entitlement and belief that, since 7 October 2023, it has unmitigated impunity to commit genocide, sow discord and wreak havoc across the region.

If it is to have any credibility now and in the future, the United Nations must take measures to redress more than a half-century of failure to fulfill its obligations and to correct the life-altering injustice it wrought with passage of Resolution 181.

One of the first steps it could and should take to restrain Israeli terrorism is to enact UNGA Resolution 377(V), "Uniting for Peace" (adopted in 1950). The resolution empowers the General Assembly to use armed force if the Security Council fails to exercise its primary responsibility of maintaining global peace and security. Text of Section A on the "use of armed force," informs:

"Resolves that if the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members,

fails to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in any case where there appears to be a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, the General Assembly shall consider the matter immediately with a view to making appropriate recommendations to Members for collective measures, including in the case of a breach of the peace or act of aggression the use of armed force when necessary, to maintain or restore international peace and security."

Unquestionably, Israel is a regional and global threat, warring on Gaza, the West Bank, on its Arab neighbors and provoking confrontation with Iran. Given that the UNSC has failed its primary responsibilities of preventing genocide, maintaining peace and security, it is time for the majority—the 193 members of the General Assembly—to exert authority (two-thirds majority vote required).

In addition, the United Nations needs to state unequivocally that resisting occupation is a fundamental human right; it isn't terrorism, it is survival; and that Palestinian resistance, including armed struggle, is legally reinforced under international law.

Also, given Israel's refusal to adhere to international and humanitarian law, as well as the principles of the UN Charter, the U.N. should determine that the Zionist colony lacks standing within the international community and should be expelled from the world body.

The Middle East and the global community are at a crossroads, and Palestine and its people are at its heart. The need for benign international intervention on behalf of the Palestinians is long overdue.

The United Nations must acknowledge, however belatedly, its role in one of the greatest deceptions of history. And, if it is to live up to its charter and conventions, it has an obligation to work toward the liberation and self-determination of the Palestinian people and ultimately to the restoration of their homeland.