

17th INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF COMMUNIST AND WORKERS PARTIES

30th October to 01st November 2015 - Istanbul

Intervention of Raja Collure, Chairman, Communist Party of Sri Lanka

The Communist Party of Sri Lanka (CPSL) conveys its warm fraternal greetings to all communist and workers parties participating in this 17th International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties. We are also extremely obliged and thankful to the Communist Party - Turkey, the host party, for the excellent arrangements made in facilitating this Meeting to be held in Istanbul with all the conveniences.

Comrades,

In our view the key issues that we should discuss here should pertain to the struggle of the international working class movement in defence of the rights of the working people the world over, for the advancement of their living and working conditions, for democracy, peace and social progress in the background of the capitalist onslaught in a globalised world.

Despite the aggressiveness of international capital it continues to be in crisis struggling to control its impact, jumping from one cyclical crisis to another. However, we have to contend with the spread of International Capital's hold on all countries without exception in regard to international trade, monetary relations and finance. There is a growing shift in capitalist production from the metropolitan countries to the so-called emerging economies, mainly in Asia. When it comes to World GDP the share of the major economies of North America (the United States and Canada) and Europe as well as Japan are in decline.

The emergence of China as the second most powerful economy in the world is a decisive development, although it cannot act independent of the world capitalist system. Another important development is that the European Union as a single entity comprising 28 countries has outstripped the United States in the placement of the world GDP line-up. The decline in the economic strength of the Western Powers is compelling them to come to terms with the emerging economies in regard to the management of the crises of the capitalist system. Hence the rise in importance of the G20 (Group of 20 Countries) which includes the emerging economies.

In world affairs the western powers are more and more finding it difficult to push their policy stances in

the direction they desire. For example, now they seek the cooperation of such countries as Russia and Iran, earlier considered as their adversaries, to come out of the quagmire in Syria. They are also concerned about their set-backs in Iraq and Libya. This reminds us of the statement made by the Republican front-runner for US Presidency, Donald Trump that the world would have been a better place with Saddam Hussain and Gadaffi in power.,

In Sri Lanka the progressive forces have suffered a setback with the effective return to power of a government led by the pro-imperialist United National Party (UNP) which represents the Sri Lankan big bourgeoisie in the main. The main causes for the defeat of the previous ruling Alliance led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) which had been in power for two decades continuously were the anti incumbency factor, its authoritarian rule, allegations of bribery and corruption and bad governance. Interestingly the people voted it out of power despite its significant achievements in the fields of economic development (mainly infrastructure) and uplift of people's living standards and ending the civil war which had gone on for 30 years.

However, under compulsion the new government has established independent commissions for administration of justice, the public service, the police, the human rights institution, the institution for the elimination of bribery and corruption and several others. The constitution was amended for the purpose with the support of the opposition in parliament including that of the CPSL. This has reduced the executive power of the president to an extent. Yet, the abolition of the executive presidential system and its replacement with a system under which the people's sovereignty is exercised through parliament, which is so important in the context of democracy in Sri Lanka, is still held in the balance.

The President who defected from the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), the main element in the former governing alliance, to contest the Presidential elections with the support of the UNP, subsequently became the leader of that party (the SLFP). After the Parliamentary General Elections the two major political parties (the UNP and the SLFP) have come into a grand coalition, thus complicating the political situation in the country. The SLFP is virtually split on the issue of formation of the coalition government. The section opposed to the coalition, comprising the majority, is cooperating with the anti-UNP opposition parties including the CPSL, but is unable to openly act with this opposition grouping for fear of disciplinary action which could forfeit their seats in parliament.

The present government which is dominated by the UNP pursues right wing policies and has aligned itself with the imperialist powers in its foreign policy. With the economy under stress it is bound to adopt measures that affect the living standards of the working people. Already it is on course to take measures of an anti-people nature. The need has arisen therefore to build a united opposition formation against the UNP led government. Although the situation is complicated the CPSL together with the Socialist Alliance comprising five left parties is working towards establishing such a

formation.

The defeat of the terrorist organisation - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) - in 2009 ended a civil war that lasted 30 years. Although it brought peace and stability to the country the immediate aftermath of the war was a period that gave rise to many a problem. Firstly, a lasting solution to the national problem which underlies the cause of the war has to be found. Tens of thousands of people who instantly became refugees had to be settled. The problem of rehabilitation of the militant fighters had to be addressed. Steps had to be taken for the reconstruction of the infrastructure damaged during the war and provision of housing etc. to replace those destroyed during the period.

An inquiry into violations of human rights and breaches of the humanitarian law by the armed forces and the LTTE was demanded by national as well as international organisations. The government appointed a Commission called the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) comprising eminent persons. Its recommendations were appreciated both locally and internationally. However, the government failed to implement them in time. The CPSL persistently demanded that the government should implement its recommendations without delay. The government was not responsive.

The failure of the government to implement the recommendations of the LLRC resulted in the international community and the Tamil diaspora insisting that the allegations of human rights violations and contraventions of the humanitarian law during the immediate aftermath of the war be investigated by the United Nations. Ultimately the United States brought forth a resolution in the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva proposing that the matters in issue be referred to an international investigation which was adopted by the Human Rights Council. Later the United States agreed with the Sri Lankan government to modify the resolution in certain respects to establish a mechanism with the participation of foreign judges, investigators and prosecutors etc. instead of a hybrid mechanism for investigation.

A section of the Opposition does not agree with the judicial mechanism proposed to be established. They say that the mechanism should be a fully national one and that the proposed mechanism violates the provisions of the national constitution. They also object to Sri Lanka co-sponsoring the resolution which was originally moved against Sri Lanka. The CPSL states that the judicial mechanism should accord with the constitution. The government insists that it is a national mechanism that is sought to be established. In any case the proposal for the creation of the mechanism has to be placed before parliament and a law for the purpose adopted. Then only the matters in issue would become clear.

With this I conclude my intervention.

Thank you..