

OVER THE WALLS OF NATIONALISM AND WAR!

***SOLIDARITY AND RESISTANCE
AGAINST THE MACHINE OF DEATH!***



Final Statement of the Balkan Anarchist Bookfair 2023

9th of July 2023, in Ljubljana (Slovenia)

OVER THE WALLS OF NATIONALISM AND WAR! SOLIDARITY AND RESISTANCE AGAINST THE MACHINE OF DEATH!

From 6th to 9th of July around 800 comrades from all geographies of the Balkans, Europe and beyond gathered in Ljubljana, Slovenia to participate at the Balkan Anarchist Bookfair (BAB) 2023. The latter celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. More than a hundred publishers, distros and collectives from the international anarchist and anti-authoritarian movement presented their books, publications and other materials regarding current social struggles around the world. The BAB is more than a gathering of publishers, as it presents a convergence point for comrades from Balkans and beyond to learn from each other's struggles. Therefore, dozens of interesting discussions and workshops that took place parallel to the bookfair itself, were attended by up to a few hundred people each. The political intervention in the city of Ljubljana in the form of a demonstration against war, nationalism, patriarchy, borders and capital with up to 1000 people on Saturday evening was spontaneously initiated by the assembly of participants of BAB and self-organized by them. It was a clear and concrete confirmation of the internationalist character of this gathering and our movement in general. Numerous languages that were heard through the slogans, shouted during the demonstration and written on the banners, are not only a symbolic statement but a concrete expression of our internationalism and politics of unity in diversity. **We may be different, we come from different places and we may organize in different ways but we all share the same passion for freedom and the struggle for life and dignity. For us it is completely clear: everywhere in the world – from the Balkans to Russia and the Ukraine – the enemy is capital and the state; enemies of the peoples everywhere sit in banks and in parliaments!**

From Warsaw to Belgrade and Barcelona, Ankara to Copenhagen and London, Sydney to Valparaiso and Bogota, Sofia to Paris and Rome, Nikosia to Athens and Moscow: comrades from all around the world met in Ljubljana to share ideas, analysis and perspectives. We discussed our experiences, practices, models of organizing and struggles, and ways of participating in social movements and in wider popular revolutionary processes. **All with the intention to find points of convergence, build common direction that involves the multiplicity of tactics, and form strategic proposals and alternatives.** All of that can help us mobilize our strength and inspirations to tackle the challenges and social problems our movements and societies are facing in the context of the multiple ways in which political, economic and social destruction is implemented by the rule of global capitalism.

TOGETHER AGAINST WAR, BORDERS, PATRIARCHY AND CAPITALISM!

Our starting point of analysis and struggle is a common understanding of the role of capitalism and states with intertwined systems of domination, exploitation and oppressions, such as patriarchy, sexism, nationalism, and racism, play in destroying societies, peoples, nature and the environment. All the recent crises – the constant intensification of attacks against popular classes, colonization and occupation of our cities and villages by capital and police, radicalization of repression and state violence, and finally militarization and war, are confirming our analysis from the past: *capitalism is crisis*, and *capitalism is war*. All this makes our political agenda of radical social change and of building an alternative even more urgent for the future.

We understand war as an integral part of the existing system and destruction: it is its tool and natural expression. It manifests itself in different forms, but its results are always the same: subordination, oppression, death and genocide. We see that everywhere. From Ukraine to Sudan, from Kosovo to Chiapas, from France to the Mediterranean, from Kurdistan to Palestine: forces of power and capital – be it through the national armies, militarized police, imperialist alliances, private and proxy elements, or through other forms of violence and attacks – are waging war against people and society. For us, the enemy is war itself. For us, the states, which need the war in order to impose their rule over the population, are the enemy. For us, the enemy is capitalism that needs states and wars to perpetuate its grip on the world. To oppose war, means to attack the system that needs it and enables it.

Borders in general and the deadly border regime of Fortress Europe in particular, are an integral part of this system of death. The Pylos disaster, where hundreds of migrants were killed in the drowning of a boat, just like tens of thousands of them before in the Mediterranean, on the Balkan route and in other border zones, was not an accident. It was mass murder by the Greek state and the EU. By following EU migration policies, negotiated beforehand by them, states are constantly murdering people arriving at the borders. They use nationalism, security discourse, and racism to legitimise pogroms, beatings, evictions and further discriminations. They exploit people, who managed to survive border violence in sweatshops. They build modern concentration camps to imprison migrants in a constant state of exclusion. At the same time they reward police and border guards who kill, rape and rob on a daily basis. This normalised violence is the official policy of the EU. We will con-



continue to organize against it in all its forms and against all its helpers: be it Frontex, fascist mobs or border patrols. We will continue to organize in solidarity with people on the move. We will continue to struggle against dehumanization and demand rights to travel, migrate and live in dignity and freedom for everyone. **We must fight racism, militarisation of borders and the criminalisation of migration.**

But even though we are dedicated to the fight against murderous border regimes both on the borders drawn around nation states, as well as those reproduced inside cities and communities, we still see how many different forms of racism are embedded in our communities of resistance. Our fight against all border regimes necessarily has to entail both critical self-reflection and identifying how certain discourses and practices reproduce imposed positions of power, as well as honest commitment to changing them. It is crucial to build a common struggle of those who are subjected to a racialized “migrant” condition and those, who are considered “local”. We recognize different starting positions of such struggle, as some in them have access to healthcare, housing and education, while others do not. We cannot count on the state to give us universal rights, the only way to achieve radical equality is to fight and resist all policies that cause death, forced migration, exploitation and all forms of oppression.

We understand patriarchy as one of the main pillars of the system of domination. We are seeing the rise of reactionary forces and counter-revolutionary processes everywhere. Re-patriarchalization of society, attacks on reproductive rights, violence against women, trans and queer people, femicides, homophobia and transphobia are all part of the same process. During BAB2023 the Tbilisi Pride was violently attacked by a mob of fascists and fundamentalists, while trans teenager Noa Milivo-

jev was murdered in Belgrade, Serbia. Hate crimes and discrimination against queer and trans people are drastically on the rise as we are globally targeted by violence and hate propaganda of the far right, religious fundamentalists and the conservative capitalist society as a whole. We express our determination to continue to organize resistance against these processes and set up self-defense against misogynist violence, often supported and ignited by the state powers, until patriarchy and other systems of domination are crushed. At the same time, we will continue to address patriarchal patterns in our spaces and movements as well, as the latter are already a reflection of the world we wish to live in in the future. Through Day0 of BAB2023, in which we dedicated space and time to making connections among anarcho-queerfeminist movements in the region and beyond; through other content on several occasions at the gathering, and through strong voices of trans liberation at the Saturday demonstration, we placed this issue at the center of our common struggle, and contributed to more connected anarcho-queer networks and organizing efforts.

We will continue to support anti-fascist mobilizations against the nazi marches in Sofia, Budapest and elsewhere. We need to constantly fight nationalism everywhere, as it is a tool of ruling classes and a state for legitimization of divisions and conquests. We know very well that nazis and other fascist mobs are the right hand of the rulers, as they continue to be the ones executing the dirty job of the state in the shadows. This is why we have to confront them, and destroy their ability to form a significant presence in either organized groups or on the streets.

We are determined to continue to organize locally, regionally and internationally so we can build resistance and solidarity against this reign of terror. At the same time we know it is important to build our organizations, structures, relations and communities, based on principles of antiauthoritarian self-organization. Coherence between ideas and practice, means and ends, is a critical principle of anarchism. As urgent as it is to build resistance, it is equally important to continue to challenge ourselves and our daily lives. We need to work towards de-colonizing our minds, deconstructing the dominant mentality within us and in society, and confront aggressive, sectarian and destructive behavior in our spaces. All of this is necessary precondition for us to build society and our movement, based on mutual respect, care and solidarity.

We also see how history is used by the rulers to legitimise their rule and to oppress us. We feel that to research and analyse history is a necessary component of any revolutionary process. This topic was among others discussed at the cluster discussion about Anarchist Archives. We

have to create practices of popular free education, write our own histories, build our own knowledge and disseminate it in all directions of society.

Access to land, seeds, quality food, energy and other natural resources are an important aspect of political struggles for antiauthoritarian movements. We recognize them as a precondition for building any meaningful autonomy. Neoliberal expropriation, exploitation and plundering are processes inherent in the reorganization of the countryside worldwide. In the Balkan region they manifest themselves in specific local contexts. They materialise in suburbanization, gentrification and touristification of the countryside, as well as in environmentally harmful megaprojects in marginalized communities or ever-expanding corridors for logistical needs of globalized markets, transforming and narrowing social possibilities for access to resources. Thus, our struggle should not only be centered around abstract environmental issues, but we should also be able to participate in various processes in the countryside – as an antiauthoritarian movement, as farmers, as comrades, as villagers, connecting rural and urban struggles. We have opened these discussions at the BAB in Novi Sad, continued at the BAB in Cluj and at this year's BAB in Ljubljana, with an aim to expand them on both a theoretical and a practical level in the future.

SOLIDARITY WITH ALL PEOPLE IN REVOLT!

From Nanterre to Atlanta, from Iran and Kenya to Chile: we express our solidarity with all people rising up everywhere.

We also express our solidarity to all people who are targeted by repression, and with all political prisoners from Belarus to Turkey and from Greece to Germany. We will continue to organize solidarity and help all those who are prosecuted by the state. In some geographies, the prison system is a continuation of slavery; in all of them, it is an integral way for the ruling classes to control, exploit, and kill disposable population. Therefore we aim to struggle for the abolition of prison systems. *We are truly free only among those who are equally free; the slavery of even one human being violates humanity and negates the freedom of all.*

We express our solidarity with revolutionary processes in Kurdistan. We also express our determination to continue the dialogue with the Kurdish Freedom Movement, discuss the ideological and practical proposals and expressions of Democratic Confederalism with them and build strategic relations for a common front of anti-system forces against capitalist modernity.

From the Balkans from below, we send greetings of solidarity and support to the Zapatista communities in the south-east of Mexico that are increasingly finding themselves under attack by the (narco) paramilitary forces supported by the Mexican state. We express our commitment to the continuous weaving of the transnational web of support for the struggle of the Zapatistas, demand an immediate stop of the war against the Zapatista communities and are joining the call for days of action issued by the “Espacio de Coordinación Nacional Alto a la guerra contra los pueblos Zapatistas” for July 13 to July 16, 2023.

FOR GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST THE MACHINE OF DEATH!

We declare that it is necessary to create an alternative, emancipatory vision of the world, one that opposes the numbing effect of the normalisation and banalisation of war. In other words, we want a clear, inspiring and motivating position against the dead-ends of the new-bipolar-world-in-formation and the feeling of getting lost in geopolitical analysis. **We propose the building of a Global Alliance Against the Machine of Death, so that the movement regains the initiative.** The idea is to bring together global networks, initiatives and communities of struggle, clarifying and targeting the many faces of capitalism as war. On the level of everyday life this means a fight against the prerequisites of war: nationalism, militarism, patriarchy, politics of exclusion, etc. On the level of political economy, we must organise campaigns against the arms industry, the corporate war profiteers, food and energy corporations, etc. We must not forget about all and every national military apparatus and multinational military coalitions. The process through which we will create this Global Alliance Against the Machine of Death is also crucial if we want to put again into perspective the movement for social liberation by horizontally organising on local, regional and finally global level, aiming to a planetary meeting (perhaps on May Day 2024).

At this point we also have to thank the people of Ljubljana that welcomed us with open arms and for four days hosted us, fed us and made it possible in other ways for us to participate at this beautiful political gathering. It is clear that a gathering of this scale would not be possible without the massive support from the residents of the city. Ljubljana from below again confirmed that infinite and organic connections between real people, bound together through love, solidarity and respect are at the center of our struggles. Once again it was made clear that no state intervention can tear apart these bonds across the Balkans and beyond that have only been strengthened over these last days.

It is clear that we need to create more such spaces where we meet, discuss and organize on different levels and in different forms. The Balkan Anarchist Solidarity Network is determined to strengthen its organizing efforts with various initiatives in the future. We are already meeting soon at the Anti-authoritarian gathering Anarchy 2023 in St. Imier and will look for other opportunities where we can continue the processes of BAB2023.

One of these spaces is naturally going to be the next Balkan Anarchist Bookfair in 2024 that will take place for the first time in an Albanian speaking country – in Prishtina, Kosovo.

Participants of the Balkan Anarchist Bookfair 2023
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