

## On the assassination of Raúl Reyes and the Colombian government's aggression

Contributed by Corriente Marxista Revolucionaria (CMR) in Venezuela  
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The assassination of Raúl Reyes and 18 other FARC guerrillas exposes the real intentions of the Colombian state and the US government. With this massacre, the Uribe government and American imperialism aim to derail the negotiations over the release of hostages and thus deny any peace in Colombia, and at the same time for more acts of aggression against the unfolding revolution in Venezuela and Ecuador.

American imperialism is intensifying its offensive against the Latin American revolution. They are witnessing how control is slipping through their fingers and are stepping up their campaign against the revolution. In particular, the imperialists are aiming their fire against the Venezuelan revolution, a point of reference for the masses across the whole of Latin America. All this explains the manoeuvres of the imperialists and the pressure they are exercising in an attempt to put a halt to the shift to the left taking place in the whole continent and especially in Venezuela.

In this sense, Chávez's successful mediation to free the hostages, on top of the internal crisis in Colombia and the perspectives for peace, have pushed the Colombian oligarchy and the American imperialists to brutally attack the FARC, assassinating Raúl Reyes, who was in charge of the negotiations to release the hostages. Chávez's mediation in the process has generated huge expectations amongst the masses and has provoked further divisions within the ruling class. At the same time, this very success meant that for the imperialists it would be much more difficult to try to criminalise the Venezuelan revolution in the eyes of the working masses around the world.

The assassination of Raúl Reyes and the killing of other 18 FARC guerrillas exposes, once more, the policy of the Colombian State and the US government of trying to avoid any peaceful way out of the conflict with the guerrillas, revealing thus their complete lack of interest in the lives of the hostages. The Uribe government survives on the basis of inciting internal war and constantly using the "struggle" against the guerrillas as a means of attacking the Colombian left. With this massacre, the Uribe government and American imperialism aim to derail the negotiations over the release of the hostages and thus deny any peace in Colombia.

The Colombian government, in its attempts to sabotage the release of the hostages and any peaceful way out of the conflict, has not hesitated to invade and bomb Ecuadorian territory. To cover up this abuse, the Uribe government has had to resort to a mountain of lies. Firstly, Uribe stated that the Ecuadorian government knew about the attack and that this had taken place after the FARC had attacked them. He also said that the guerrillas had been killed while the Colombian army was chasing them, something which later was proven to be false. The troops deployed in the area by the Ecuadorian government were witnesses to the fact that most of the dead guerrillas were in pyjamas, having been taken by surprise while asleep. When evidence about these lies started to pile up, the Colombian government changed its tune and pointed the finger at Ecuador, accusing the governments of Rafael Correa of supporting the guerrillas, using alleged documents found in the attack against the FARC.

The tactic that the American imperialists and their puppet in Bogotá are following is to criminalise the governments of Ecuador and Venezuela, trying to link them up with the guerrillas and drug trafficking in order to criminalise the revolution in both countries and prepare new acts of aggression against them.

While all this has been taking place the Colombian government has moved troops towards its border with Venezuela. Faced with the threat that this means, president Chávez ordered that 10 battalions be moved to the border with Colombia in order to prevent any aggression against Venezuela or incursion of the Colombia army.

The working class of Latin America and around the world must be aware of the danger of an attack on Venezuela or Ecuador. North American imperialism will not hesitate to divide the peoples of Latin America, who are all brothers and sisters, to set them one against the other and subdue them; they will not think twice about balkanising Latin America to maintain the capitalist system and imperialist exploitation. The reactionary government of Uribe, a puppet of North American imperialism, could serve as an instrument for a military aggression on Venezuela or Ecuador. The Colombian government, armed to the teeth by the imperialists, is a threat to the Venezuelan revolution and the whole of the continent. Should Colombia carry out a new aggression, the governments of Venezuela and Ecuador would be justified in defending themselves with any means at their disposal.

The assassination of Raúl Reyes demonstrates that the only way of achieving peace in Colombia is through the revolutionary overthrow of the Uribe government by the Colombian working class in alliance with the peasants. Only a mass movement struggling for socialism can guarantee peace, with the struggle for the expropriation of the means of production from the bourgeoisie and the destruction of the Colombian state. A purely military victory over the Colombian state is impossible. More than 70 years of heroic guerrilla struggle have demonstrated the limitations of this method of struggle, leading up to the current impasse. The guerrilla struggle in the countryside can only be victorious as an auxiliary to the working class struggle in the cities. Only the insurrection of the armed working masses in the cities can put an end to this reactionary and bloody regime.

The Marxists of the CMR repudiate the assassination of Raúl Reyes and the violation of Ecuadorian sovereignty by the Colombian army, and support the preventive measures taken by the governments of presidents Chávez and Correa. There are powerful interests within the Colombian state not to deliver peace. More and more the Colombian bourgeoisie is divided due to the weight of the paramilitary in the country and in the State apparatus. This crisis reflects the awakening of the masses after years of brutal repression and a unilateral civil war carried out by the Colombian State and their paramilitaries.

Should American imperialism move in the direction of imposing a military action by the Colombian army against Venezuela, the workers, peasants and poor of Colombia must rise up against this imperialist intervention. Any aggression against Venezuela or Ecuador should be seen as the rallying call for the socialist revolution in Colombia. In his attempt to put out the revolutionary fire in Latin America, Uribe will find that he is sparking it off in Bogotá.

In Venezuela and Ecuador, the people and the workers would help to free the Colombian people and undermine the threat of the Colombian bourgeoisie and of American imperialism, by deepening the socialist revolution in each of these countries, expropriating the capitalists and building an authentic revolutionary state. That is to say, they would show the way to the oppressed people of Colombia in their struggle to shake off the yoke of capitalism and imperialism. That is the best way of preventing war and the manoeuvres of imperialism.

Our slogans are: Against the Uribe-Bush aggression against Ecuador and Venezuela! Unite the workers and peasants of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela! Down with the reactionary Uribe government! Long live the socialist revolution in Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador! Long live the socialist federation of Latin America and the Caribbean!

Read this appeal in Spanish and Portuguese.