

War is not a solution

Solidarity with the workers and people of Niger

The Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) reiterates its unchanging condemnation of the military coup d'état that took place on the night of 26 July 2023 in Niger and any form of access to power by unconstitutional means. It also reiterates its call for a return to constitutional order and popular sovereignty.

Following the coup d'état, ECOWAS imposed a series of sanctions, including the possible use of military force to restore deposed President Mohamed Bazoum to office. In addition to this economic blockade, several states and organisations have suspended their aid to Niger.

These inhumane sanctions, supported by certain external powers, only serve to worsen the situation of the workers and people of Niger and drive them into even greater misery and poverty.

Therefore, OATUU wonders about the real purpose of these measures, other than to make a people bend and submit to the interests of colonial powers who are prepared to use the cruelest means to achieve their underhand plans. Aren't we going to provoke a situation that will bring fire and blood to the entire region that, while all the peoples of the world, aspire for peace, security, development and prosperity for all?

The use of military force in a sovereign country is not only a danger for Niger, but for the entire Sahel region, which is already rife with terrorist groups and armed banditry. Who has an interest, particularly at this juncture, in setting this important part of the African continent ablaze?

Africa needs peace, solidarity, stability and cooperation rather than wars and conflicts, which ultimately only serve the voracious appetites of the enemies of the peoples and workers of Africa. In war there is no winner and no loser, only misfortunes and sufferings. (*While some wage war, others rub their hands- you might consider to drop it.*)

OATUU does not believe that the problems of democracy and human rights can be solved by firing cannons or starving people. On the contrary, only the people themselves can decide their own fate and establish a real and lasting democracy. Democracy is about enabling Africa's youth to make the most of themselves to build their nations, not to perish in pointless conflicts or in the seas and deserts in search of a better life. They deserve an environment that enables them to realise their full potential, that frees them from fears and diseases, and protects them from any war or conflict. Africans prefer to see their children with diplomas and sufficient training, not in coffins.

What our workers and our peoples want has already been well expressed in the African Union's Development Agenda 2063 at the time of its fiftieth anniversary. An Africa where good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law, and living in dignity, peace and security.

Democracy means stopping all interferences in African affairs and the plundering of the resources and wealth of our peoples, using the values most dear to humanity, freedom and democracy. It is based on equitable order, respect for the sovereignty of peoples and social justice.

The facts have shown that the use of force and blockades only aggravate the situation of peoples and often have the opposite effect. OATUU therefore urges ECOWAS to rescind the sanctions against Niger, to avoid violence, and to give dialogue and diplomacy a chance.

OATUU calls upon the African Union and the international community to act in favour of a lasting peaceful solution that restores legitimacy and guarantees peace and stability in the region.

OATUU reiterates its total solidarity with the workers and people of Niger who have been hard hit by these sanctions and calls upon all trade union organisations in Africa to do likewise by sending a message of solidarity to the following e-mail address:

ustnniger@rocketmail.com