

The assessment of forty years of neoliberal capitalist globalisation calls for a change in systemic paradigms and a global restructuring

Bruno Drweski (Havana april 2024)

Following the first wave of revolutions and then decolonisations in the 1960s, the neoliberal system centred on the Western capitalist powers was imposed almost everywhere in the world from the 1980s onwards. The time has now come, after forty years of domination by this system, to take stock of this capitalist globalisation that was supposed to bring peace, « the end of history » and economic progress. This assessment shows that the old system, which presented itself as a renewed and democratised capitalism in the wake of the dismantling of the socialist camp, has in the end once again turned out to be classically imperialist and neo-colonial, while at the same time showing signs of a growing manifest sterility in terms of social, economic and political innovation that we did not observe at the time of the old capitalism of the pre-Second World War era or the period of Keynesian attempts at social compromise during the post-1945 "thirty glorious years". We are witnessing now a deterioration in the global situation, which is becoming increasingly difficult to hide behind the much disputed GDP indices. This deterioration can be seen in terms of poverty, mortality, social polarisation, and regional cleavages provoking more and more tensions, conflicts and wars and this phenomenon can be observed even in the dominant Western countries. We observe only exceptions in the few countries that more or less escape the rules of capitalism without borders and what the liberals call "free and undistorted competition".

So late capitalism has failed to deliver on its promises, and there is an urgent need for political, social and, last but not least, economic alternatives.

The need for a second wave of decolonisation

If we analyse the economic and ideological causes of the growing number of wars and international tensions in today's still to a certain extent unipolar world, we see that they are all in fact one and the same hybrid world war, pitting a centralised imperialist camp centred around the USA/NATO/EU/AUKUS bloc against countries and more or less counterhegemonic powers. It is in fact an economic war that we are dealing with, revolving around the hegemony of the dollar, the desire to control energy sources, both old ones (fossil fuels) and new ones (rare earths), with the planned replacement of electricity at the expense of hydrocarbons. And therefore the challenge for big powers is the conquest of rare earths resources while maintaining their desire to dominate in the meantime the production and trade of hydrocarbons.

In this context, the peoples of the world, for reasons of sovereignty, environment and social justice, cannot accept the continuation or the reintroduction of what can be called the "liberal

extractivism without profitable returns for producing countries and workers". This system has prolonged in fact the policy of plundering, over-exploitation and usurious indebtedness of the producing countries, while leading to the de-industrialisation of the dominant countries at the expense of their own working classes. All countries must have the right to development, and this requires a new phase of industrialisation policies, in the global South and in the East, as well as in the West, and then the promotion of equality between States and a new regulation of the Terms of Trade.

It is therefore necessary to pursue a long-term "here and now" development policies within the framework of a revisited, restructured, multipolar, coordinated and planned globalisation.

Second wave of the struggle for the Right to Development and a New World Economic Order

The international struggle led by the non-aligned countries, the socialist countries and the international trade union and workers' movement in the wake of the Baku Conference of 1920 and the Bandung Conference of 1955 achieved a formal and legislative victory with the adoption by the UN in 1974 of the Right to Development and a New World Economic Order. This programme proposed a fundamental change in the production and transformation of raw materials, in the financing of development policies, industrialisation, agricultural policies, education and technology transfers, through the democratisation of international institutions and the control of the activities of transnational corporations based in dominant capitalist countries. This resolution was imposed by the majority of the world's countries and adopted by consensus by the United Nations General Assembly in May 1974 in its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI). Since then, however, this initiative has been practically rejected by the imperialist powers on the pretext of the systemic crisis and the debt policies of which they were the authors. Despite this, the resolution was reaffirmed by the UN in 2012. It is therefore one of the foundations of the international law that has to be implemented, and which has taken on its full value with the current systemic crisis that erupted in 2008 and whose effects have not been erased to this day.

Taking this right into account means tackling today the issue of rejecting a dominant virtual currency, the dollar, and therefore putting in place a global policy aimed at de-dollarisation and the promotion of currency-based production.

The very needed now Global restructuring must therefore be accompanied by a policy of reterritorialisation of productive economic activities, industrialisation for the less advanced countries and re-industrialisation for the countries at the heart of imperialism. These changes require a shift in the systemic paradigm, involving the promotion of emulation rather than competition, and a change in the social and class basis of the dominant political regimes. It is clear

that a major economic change is needed at international level, but this cannot be achieved within the framework of the existing dominant system. The fathers of non-alignment were then visionaries when they sought to bring about together economic, social and political transformations in the interests of the vast majority of working people, of peoples, of nations, of countries and of states.