

# ILPS AND BUILDING THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST PEOPLES' UNITED FRONT

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IPE Manila The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in 1991 presented a completely new situation for the world – the US became the sole global super power or what many would call the US Empire. In the decade that followed until the end of the twentieth century US imperialist triumphalism held sway.

Progressives and anti-imperialists were demonized as has been communists, and after 9/11 demonized as terrorists. Such triumphalist imperialist propaganda created a new narrative exemplified by the bold declaration by Francis Fukuyama's "end of history". He has since relented that he was incorrect but postmodern theories were promoted to supplant class struggle and revolution with identity politics of gender, LGBT, indigenous people, and race.

With Russia and China neutralized in the UN, the US held sway including the invasion of so-called rogue states like Haiti under Duvalier, Panama's Noriega, and Iraq's Saddam. It demonized revolutionary struggles as illegitimate non-state actors and labelled liberation movements as terrorist such as those of the Philippines, Palestine, Kurdistan, and Colombia. In the meantime, the IMF-WB's "post-Washington consensus" promoted false 'multi-stakeholder' processes and 'civil society' reformism.

9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan in the name of the US-led "War on Terror" provides the backdrop of the founding of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) in Zutphen, the Netherlands in May 2001. Since 2013 US hegemony has given way to a multipolar world where China and Russia challenge US dominance as the latter strives to rebuild its Western imperialist coalition of the G7 and NATO.

ILPS was and remains a potent new force for direct unequivocal militant struggle against imperialism and their puppet states and inter-governmental organizations that they control like the UN, IMF, World Bank, and WTO. Soon global campaigns were conducted one after the other. In 2004 and 2008, ILPS assemblies and its commissions supported or sponsored the building of broader anti-imperialist networks to reach out to more organizations.

Among these organizations is the Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN) that was set up in 1998 and became a network of progressive and critical NGOs and militant people's movements. It provided a strong framework for militant campaigns and critical advocacy engagement such as in the Battle of Seattle and a partner of ILPS in the region in the succeeding struggles against the WTO at the Hongkong Ministerial and beyond. It became active in engaging the ADB and the WB-IMF, and launched other struggles against economic imperialism such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

Asia Pacific Network in Food Sovereignty started in 2000, and eventually developed into the global Peoples Coalition on Food Sovereignty in 2004. The Asian Peasant Coalition was set up at the same time. These remain very active in promoting and coordinating peasant struggles besides struggles and engaging on issues on food and agriculture globally.

The International Migrant Alliance (IMA) was founded in 2008, and Inter-national Women's Alliance (IWA) in 2010. The Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self Determination and Liberation was set up in 2010, and the Workers Network Initiatives for Struggle (WORKINS) in 2011. These sectoral and thematic networks are actually the networks of networks and continue to draw in democratic and anti-imperialist trade unions, organizations, institutions, and individuals to coordinate and consolidate global struggles that translate to strengthening national struggles and campaigns led by their member organizations.

Many international networks have also become members of ILPS like the Asian Peasant Coalition, Asia Pacific Women on Law and Development, Samidoun, and Arab Network on Food Sovereignty, which continue to reach out to grassroots and other people's organizations.

ILPS also sponsored the development of campaign platforms - loose campaign networks like Resist US-led War Movement (RESIST) which was created as a result of a resolution of the Toronto Anti-war Conference in 2016. On the other hand, the People Over Profit (POP) continues the tradition of broad militant struggle led by the ILPS and brings together different international networks and the ILPS commissions to coordinate campaigns against monopoly capital's inter-governmental institutions and transnational corporations like at the WTO in Buenos Aires (2017) and WB-IMF in Bali (2018).

More networks are also associating themselves with ILPS and the family of anti-imperialist and democratic networks. We can cite the One Billion Rising, International Alliance of Democratic Lawyers, Peace for Life, Arab Network for the Protection of Nature, and others who cooperate with this family of networks or with ILPS member organizations. These networks strengthen capacity and cooperation

for struggles and activities including conferences, forums, seminars, education sessions and exchange.

### **International Festival for Peoples Rights and Struggles**

In 2011, ILPS organized the Inter-national Festival for Peoples Rights and Struggles (IFPRIS) in conjunction with the 4<sup>th</sup> International Assembly of the ILPS. In the three days of the festival before the 4<sup>th</sup> ILPS International Assembly more than 600 persons representing organizations and networks gathered at the University of the Philippines. Multiple venues were utilized for different simultaneous activities like the second assembly of the IMA, and the first assembly of IWA. Other activities included the anti-US bases conference that gave birth to the Anti-Bases Coalition, a seminar of the youth, an artists' workshop and so on.

In 2015 the second IFPRIS was organized at the University of the Philippines preceding the 5th Inter-national Assembly of the LPS which was held again in a different venue several kilometers away. IWA also organized its second assembly at IFPRIS, along with IMA. APRN organized several workshops and meetings and the Palestine -Philippines Friendship Society was launched. Other organizations and networks also contributed to make the festival a great success. The highlight of the second IFPRIS was the preparation of the big demonstration against the summit meeting of leaders of the APEC which was being held in Manila.

### **The Anti-Imperialist Anti-Fascist United Front**

The broad anti-imperialist united front is an aspiration of all progressives and anti-imperialists who see the need to expose and criticize, oppose, and militantly struggle to end imperialist domination in the world. We need to build an effective anti-imperialist united front in a continuous process of struggle against imperialism - ever expanding, broadening wave up on wave of networking and struggle - strengthening its core, aggressively drawing in more organizations and individuals as we defeat imperialism and its reactionary cohorts.

The ILPS and the other anti-imperialist networks mentioned continue to reach out to other networks and organizations internationally and in each country build an anti-imperialist united front with all democratic forces fighting imperialism, fascism, and all forms of reaction.

We coordinate with other inter-national networks. In 2019 the 6<sup>th</sup> International Assembly resolved to build a more formal organization of the united front. We started building an Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Fascist United Front with other networks including ICOR.

We are not yet there. We need to learn how to develop the united front, aware of the complexities of developing a broad united front coordination at the global level that should be militantly committed but sufficiently loose to be democratic in the

full sense. We need to be even more creative in reaching out to other organizations, especially at country level including those that are already active in other networks, as we reach out to other networks at global level.

The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are ultimately the result and handiwork of imperialism as monopoly capitalism intensifies its degradation of the planet, and along with it the workers and the rest of the people who are subject to more severe economic crisis, poverty, and misery. Such combination of global crises is symptomatic of the decay of capitalism and the death throes of imperialism as the last stage of capitalism. But such a process also means the intensification of the worst global forms of imperialist state, fascism, and war.

Building a global peoples united front brings together the strength of the people to fight for justice, peace and a better earth.

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