



The World At A Crossroads: Internationalism or Extinction

By David Adler



November approaches, and the eyes of world turn to the United States. With fires raging in California, protests rising in Wisconsin, and a president inciting violence in Washington, the upcoming election has been hailed by politicians in both the Democratic and Republican parties as the most important in US history. “The character of the country is on the ballot,” they like to say, calling on supporters to turn out and vote.

But far more than national character is at stake in the US election. From climate to Covid-19, the result of this contest will determine fates far beyond the borders of the United States for generations to come. And it is this awesome power — not Donald Trump himself — that defines our present crisis.

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recognition that the challenges of our century — of climate, capital, and viral pandemic — are planetary in scale. On the other, there is a shrinking set of actors that is empowered to address them. Authoritarian nationalists like Trump, Modi, and Bolsonaro are some. But so is Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, expanding an international empire extraction. And so is Bill Gates, shaping public health from his personal bank account.

The stakes of the election, then, not only reflect the differences between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. They also reflect the fragility of an international system in which a few men can ruin the world on a whim. And unless we address this underlying imbalance of power — between North and South, the US and its neighbours, the ultra-rich and the rest — we will keep returning to this cliff edge.

In short, we face a simple choice: *Internationalism or Extinction*. Either we form a common front of workers and peoples that can reclaim the world from this tiny set of oligarchs and dictators. Or they will continue to amass wealth and power, watching the world burn outside their window.

Back in May, the Progressive International launched with the mission to build this common front, calling on progressive forces around the world to join the fight.

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Since then, this front has grown to include unions, parties, and movements that represent millions of people around the world, from the National Alliance of People's Movements in India to the Congreso de los Pueblos in Colombia to the Landless People's Movement in Namibia.

Together, the members of the PI have launched international campaigns on issues like debt cancellation in the Global South, developed a policy vision for 'The World After Covid-19', and built a wire service for the translation and dissemination of critical perspectives shut out by mainstream media around the world.

The Covid-19 pandemic has postponed the plans for a gathering of the Council in Reykjavik, Iceland. But the pandemic has also accelerated crises of democracy, inequality, and environmental breakdown, calling on progressive forces everywhere to act quickly and decisively.

That is why the Progressive International is convening [its inaugural Summit this weekend](#): to map our current crisis, to reclaim our shared future, and to strengthen our planetary front to do so.

The [Summit](#) will bring together members of the Council to help set a strategic direction for the year ahead. These include members like Aruna Roy and Vanessa Nakate that took part in May's launch events. And they include new members like Dr. Cornel West and Natália Bonavides that have come on board since.

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The [Summit](#) will convene movements from across the membership to share their struggles and shape the future of the initiative. The questions under review range from ‘Constructing a New International’ to ‘Building Power During Covid-19.’

And the [Summit](#) will invite the public to join the conversation. Tomorrow’s sessions include keynote speeches from Noam Chomsky, Yanis Varoufakis, and Naomi Klein. And they include panel discussions on topics like the future of democracy in Latin America and the prospects for post-capitalism around the world.

The Progressive International remains in formation. The journey toward a new internationalism — one that is powerful enough to stave off extinction — has just begun. But the [Summit](#) marks an important step on that journey — not only to defeat Donald Trump, but to build a new world that is free from the need to fear him.

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