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FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

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CONGRESS DOCUMENTS

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1. ON THE ROLE OF WATER

1.1 Water – Condition for the maintenance of Nature and Humanity

Water (H2O) is the most precious natural resource, for Planet earth in total and for the humans in particular. Let us not forget that:

- Life on Earth arose in water ("primordial soup") 4 billion years ago through complex chemical procedures, combined with the barrage of powerful radiation accepted, and an "atmosphere" which was struck by frequent electric evacuations.
- The world of science that deals with other celestial orbs, believes that the existence of water in them in any form (usually in the form of ice) is a necessary condition (not sufficient though) for the eventuality of life species to once have been developed there.
- The human body (mammals in general) consists of 75% water approximately.
- The 71.1% of the Earth's surface, along with oceans and seas is water.
- Water, fresh water, still plays a key- and in some cases growing role:

- In the life and health of humans, "Water for human use" is the modern definition, more accurate than the definition of "drinking water", which some services of the World Health Organization of the UN still use. The "water for human use" definition includes the water which human drink, the water used to cook, for personal and domestic hygiene.
- In agriculture, mainly in agriculture and inland fisheries, including aquaculture and the hinterlands.
- In industrial production, including energy production.
- The conservation of ecosystems and terrestrial biodiversity.
- In the maintenance, with the contribution of the seas, of permissible temperature fluctuations on the planet, while huge bodies of water act as thermal accumulators which save heat during the warm seasons and reflect heat during the cold seasons.

1.2 The Capital's notion on Water

The key contributions of water in sustaining life on planet Earth and in the prosperity of humans especially, is degraded by the ruling class even nowadays when its importance is increasingly recognized by numerous studies and surveys. This diminution has to do with the fact that capitalists are interested in its "commercialized value". What do the expressions such as "clean water will be the oil of the future" imply? In this way, they estimate the water's irreplaceable contribution in conditions of profitability over the capital that has already placed the management of the planet's water resources among the current business activities with the prospect of a rapid development in the next decade.

Of course such a perception, which stems from the imperialist system of production, is not at all surprising. That is because the imperialist system has as a sovereign value the predatory exploitation of everything, including human life, aiming at gaining as much profit as possible. The control and utilization of this natural resource by the international monopolies of this sector are therefore in the system's nature. This control provides additional geo-strategic advantages, and those who control major sources of water have a powerful instrument of pressure on the countries and peoples where these water sources exist but also on countries through which the

water passes.

This commercialized approach of the capital on water is not only theoretical. It is applied through international treaties, directives, national laws and international documents, resolutions of conferences and documents of international constitutions. Among them, there are some of great importance: The Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Union on water, the "General Comment no.15" on the Right to Water of the UN Commission on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the recent (June 2010) "Statement on Water" of the International Conference in Dushanbe Tatzikistan. The last two papers will be examined in detail below (section 6.3). We will see that through thoughtful, well-considered formulations in combination with inexpensive wishful thinking or some concessions towards the lower classes, the political representatives of the capital and can and do pass provisions which guarantee profits or create adequate conditions for profitability.

1.3 The position of the WFTU

The WFTU's notion on water is in a direction completely opposite to that of its commercialization. For us water is a public good, a valuable natural resource subject to absolute protection of its quantity and quality, which has to be provided with special care for the balanced satisfaction of the modern popular needs and for the maintenance of nature.

Specifically we declare and struggle to put into practice, that "water for human use" is not a merchantable product, it must not fall within the meaning of food and should be provided adequately, under the direct responsibility of each government, equally to all citizens of the dominion, as a public good, not being amenable to the "laws of market" and ruled by the rules of health engineering.

On this basis, "water for human use:

- Needs to be collected, processed and distributed at low cost or even free of charge to the tap of the consumer under the central responsibility of a unified public conveyor without the involvement of private enterprises, and according to all rules of health engineering, which require: Construction and function of modern water process units, regular monitoring of the processed outflow, a reliable system for the destruction of micro organisms and parasites, a complete and safe distribution net to the users and their place of residence.
- The statutory safety provisions, the existence of which is a basic prerequisite for achieving the quality standards of water are to be kept under constant observation.
- The monitoring of water quality and its complying with all the relative conditions must be performed by public authorities.
- Public authorities should directly and effectively undertake all the corrective actions required in cases of divergence of water from the safe limits set by the relevant law of each state.

2. THE CURRENT SITUATION

2.1 General Ascertainments

"884 million people lack access to safe water, roughly one in every eighth person". With phrases such as the above, NGOs and international media welcomed the publication of the Report of the World Health Organization (w.H.O) and UNICEF, published in the beginning of 2010, which was entitled "Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water" (1). A careful reading of the report, however, shows that things are much worse. As we will see below, the above figure refers to people who do not have access to "supposedly drinkable water" rather than "presumed drinkable water". Also this number does not generally refer to water that is needed by people for all their personal and domestic needs, but for a small part: to drink and prepare food, to wash their face, hardly their body and to wash their clothes. The above figure would be several times larger ıf the criterion "access to adequate and safe water was taken as a standard.
The results of the Report for the entire population of Earth are grouped into three sections (Developed countries, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Developing countries) and are shown in the table below:

Group of Countries	Years	Population (residents in thousands)	Use of Interior Water System Net	Use of appropriate sanitary means
Developed Countries	1990	933.073	91%	99%
	2008	1.028.520	94%	99%
Commonwealth of Independent Countries (*)	1990	280.899	71%	89%
	2008	276.820	69%	89%
Developing Countries	1990	4.076.387	39%	41%
	2008	5.444.533	49%	52%
All Countries	1990	5.290.359	50%	54%
	2008	6.749.872	57%	61%

(*) Includes States of the former USSR

The above shows that based on the Report of the WHO [1]:

• Only 57% of people in the world and only 49% of people in developing countries were watered, in the year 2008, directly through accessible water system nets. That is 3.85 billion people. The remaining 2.03 billion, which according to the Report also were served by improved water systems, took in fact "drinkable water" as it is explanatory recorded in it:

- From public water points, usually a significant distance from the users' place of residence, without any reference or indication which shows that this water has been properly processed to make it safe.
- From piped wells or drills (in many cases, of toxic and infectious load).
- From "protected" wells.
- From "protected" springs.
- From collecting rainwater.

An important problem also exists (see paragraph 6.2.6) in the quality of drinking water in developing countries. All the above figures refer to the year of 2008. As shown in the table, the situation was much worse in previous years (base year 1990) with the tragic exception of the countries of the former USSR, which by paying the price of the capitalist way of development either remained stable (in the use of sanitary means) either fell back (in the use of domestic water supply).

The improvement, however, refers only to the percentages. As shown in the table, especially for the developing countries, the number of people who lack directly accessible water supply, that is to say inside their place of residence, (from 2.487 million in 1990 to 2.777 million in 2008) and those who lack adequate means of sanitation (from 2.405 million in 1990 to 2.613 million in 2008) rises in absolute numbers continuously.

2.2 The adequacy of the Safe Water crucial consideration in Developing Countries

According to the "General Comment No15: The Right to Water" of the UN Commission on Economic, Social and Cultural (Cultural) Rights (referred to arth.11 and 12 for Human Rights Treaty UN) [3]:

"*The human right to water refers to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and given water for personal and domestic use. An adequate amount of drinking water is necessary to prevent death from dehydration, to reduce the risk of diseases related to water consumption for cooking and demands for personal and household hygiene*".

Crucial parameter for controlling the implementation, or not, of the "human right to water" is that of "sufficiency". In the "Document of the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation" of the UN Council of Human Rights, entitled "Climate Change and Human Rights for Water and Sanitation" [2], the parameter of efficiency is indicated as:
"*The most widely used indicator of water scarcity is water availability less than 1,000 cubic meters per inhabitant a year. This is used as a threshold below which it is assumed that the social demand for water cannot be addressed. Nevertheless, the water for domestic use is only calculated as a small part of the water used in total, less than 10% of the global average, while agriculture and industry are much larger water users (70% and 20% respectively in the global average). If you assume that a quantity of 100 litres per capita per day are needed to cover the right to water, this amounts to 36 500 litres or 36.5 cubic meters per capita per year. This is just a fraction of the water available even in the most arid regions. In this regard, the IPCC underlines that "access to safe drinking water is more dependent on the level of technical infrastructure of the water rather than the quantity of runoff*".
The myth that the main cause for water scarcity is the growing demand for water by man and not the droughts is therefore rejected.

In order for the growing problem of scarcity of water in developing countries to be hidden from those who "have access to safe drinking water" (they forget to add "adequate water"), they include, as we already mentioned those supplied by public water points, even if one accepts, in spite of the findings of medical science, that in some cities of developing countries, some of these points that obtain unprocessed water typically provide clean and healthy water, and even then, the quantity could not in any way respond to the needs of an average family. In fact the WHO Report states:

"*Investigations have shown that people who spend more than half an hour to round trip gradually collect less water, and eventually fail to provide the minimum daily drinking water needs of their families. In addition, the economic cost of multiple, daily, trips to collect drinking water is enormous*. "

So, according to the previous papers ([1] & [2]), the real water needs of an average five- member family was about 5 * 100 = 500 litres. If in each full circle journey, lasting even 25 minutes (with 5 minutes for rest) 16 litres of water is carried, 31 routes should be made a day (500/16= 31).That would require 13 hours daily work, which of course unthinkable. How can we solve the problem? It just cannot be solved. Such an amount of water is carried to cover the need for drinking, cooking, washing up in the morning, washing clothes once in a while, taking a shower once every 15 days or more whilst saving some for domestic hygiene. This is described in the next paragraphs - 2.3 and 2.5

2.3 The Situation in the Use of the Means of Hygiene

This is why the Report of the WHO, whilst celebrating the progress that supposedly exists (in a global level) concerning the goal of "access to drinking water" (with many insurmountable obstacles, we add), it also mourns the fiasco (based on data on the year of 2008) concerning the goal of hygiene (sanitation), announcing that "2.6 billion people lack adequate sanitation means".

Here, of course, the number is actually much higher as the "appropriate" (improved facilities) include means which in no way correspond to the current needs of the people on healthy living, such as the reporting as "Lavatories campaign" (pit latrine with slab). A question seems to be unanswered in the Report; whether and under which circumstances the appropriate means of hygiene include the "shallow pits" on the outcome of droppings or "dry latrines" which are used by several hundred million rural Chinese.

As a result of the lack of adequate means of hygiene, thus the consequent severe lack of adequate safe water is the huge number of people who suffer from 'diseases aqueous (2.3 billion) and 3.6 cm deaths every year from them.

2.4 The Deficit reliability of the data

The same WHO report shows a serious lack of reliable data, as they have been formed on the basis of the relevant departments of the respective States after the collaboration of the authors of the Report. It is stated that:

"*The last two years there have been collaborations with a number of pilot countries in order to:*
- *Develop a common understanding of the methods of monitoring.*
- *Explore the possibility of harmonization and alignment of monitoring procedures.*
- *Encourage greater cooperation between national agencies and between these national services one the one hand, and the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation on the other hand [SS the JMP of the WHO]*".

This assumption of the Report's authors does not discharge them from the responsibility of the obvious, almost provocative, errors that exist in it. We refer to and looked back on the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan and surprisingly concluded that:

• The puppet government of Afghanistan declared (which was accepted by the authors of the Report) that it increased the population's access to "appropriate" sources of water from 21% in the year 2000 (before the imperialist intervention that began in October 2001) to 48 % (!) in the year 2008, that is, after seven years of continuous bombing and cannonading. Especially for long-suffering rural areas the corresponding percentages were 17% (2000) and 39% (people's access to "acceptable" water sources in 2008). Of course the reality is much worse.

• More carefully, the government of Iraq, holds some appearances showing a decline in the access to "appropriate" sources of water by the population of cities from 97% in 1990 to 95% in 2000 and 91% in 2008.

2.5 Particular data concerning today's situation

Following the above analysis in the section 2 whilst remaining in developing countries, the following facts, published on the basis of scientific work, major epidemiological studies (among them see: http://water.org/learn-about -thewater-crisis/facts/), are not at all surprising:

• 3.575 million people, in the vast majority from developing country, die from diseases related to water. 1.577 million of them are children (one child dies every 20 seconds).

• Diseases related to the lack of clean water and hygienic living conditions take more lives than weapons used in any war.

• The poor people of favella districts often pay 5-10 times more per litre of water [for example when bought by the kilo from the street "Waterman"] than the wealthy residents of the same city [who are served by the internal water net and pay by cubic meter = 1000 litres].

• The average American consumes more water during a 5 minute shower than the representative resident of a slum in the developing countries consumes during an entire day.

• Only 62% of world population (6.75 billion in 2008) has access to adequate means of sanitation ("improved sanitation"); means which ensure the sanitary division of human excreta from human contact. We note that, based on more detailed data from the Report [1], the percentage drops (data of 2008) to 52% for the developing countries (versus 99% for developed) and even worse, to 40% for the rural population (against 96% for the developed countries). And let's not forget both the strongly questionable criteria through which health means are described as "adequate" and both the unreliability of the data submitted by various government agencies to the authors of the Report.

• Each day women of developing countries spend 200 million hours for the covering of the most important human need [in fact, for its limited, inadequate satisfaction] by collecting water for household needs.

• Investment in safe drinking water and sanitary means of living contribute to economic growth. According to the WHO, each dollar invested in these sectors returns multiple benefits to the local society which, if converted into cash, range from 3-34 dollars, depending on the region and the applied technology. This demonstrates the inhuman nature of the capitalist system: Despite the carnage of the victims because of lack of adequate healthy water (3.575 million people each year, which means that a population slightly lower than New Zealand's (4230 .000) and slightly bigger than that of Panama (3.4 million) and Lithuania (3.321 million) is lost each year) and despite all the positive contribution of water infrastructure in the sector of economy and the social benefits, always in relation to developing countries, the monopolies -transnational and domestic- and their political representatives are refusing to allocate sufficient resources to this end, as long as their provided profits are not considered satisfactory.

- Less than 1% of the world's freshwater is readily available for immediate use by humans, with 70% of the consumed quantity used in irrigated crops.
- More than 80% of wastewater from the sewerage system in developing countries is rejected untreated, polluting rivers, lakes and coastal waters.

2.6 The Problem of Water in Developed Countries

The extensive reference to developing countries does not mean that the working class and generally the popular strata of the developed countries are free from problems related to water management. Although smaller in scale compared with those of developing countries, they do not stop making the life of the popular family harder. Among the problems encountered we note:

- The water scarcity, which occurs mainly during periods of drought when there is a lack of infrastructure that would enrich the available together with the outcome water resources, with appropriate use of rainfall and other precipitation. In this way the problem would be treated or substantially mitigated in times of drought.
- The poor and even dangerous to health, water quality, along with the water for human use because of pollution of (i) hazardous industrial waste, solids and liquids, (ii) leachate from landfills, (iii) leachate of pesticides and fertilizers and (iv) seawater in coastal areas due to over pumping (salinity effect). We also know the carcinogenic effects of hexavalent chromium in drinking water at extremely high levels near industrial areas in California, Italy, Greece and elsewhere. Also characteristic is the fact that the European Union still maintains the limits of hexavalent chromium in drinking water at extremely high levels (50 mg / l with the trivalent chromium), which proved to be carcinogenic to humans, to protect the profits of Euro-unifying monopolies of water in cooperation with the capitalist governments of member states.
- The high, ever increasing costs of water services for human use and the costs of obtaining water for agricultural use, as a result of this specific anti popular / anti environmental policy. Especially in the EU countries' pro-monopoly principles such as the "Polluter pays", "incorporation of environmental costs" etc. applied with the target to wipe out the poor and middle peasantry.

3. THE RIGHT TO WATER: THE PRINCIPLES OF THE UN AND THE CRITICISM OF THE WFTU

3.1 The Right to Water according to the "General Comment No.15"

As mentioned above, the number of deaths from diseases related to unsuitability and / or lack of water remains extremely high. Despite of this the UN delayed in dealing with this issue on a political level. Its only move towards the political avocation with the problem of water was to in1992 establish the 22nd of March as the World day of water with a purely symbolic resolution of the General Assembly. The "General Comment No.15: The right to water" was first adopted just in 2003 by the committee of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the UN, and was based on the articles No. 11 and 12 of the UN treaty. Among the basic issues that corporate the Human right to water, as mentioned above in the "General Comment No.15", there are noted:

- Freedom of access to existing water supplies for private and domestic use (drinking, laundry, meal preparation, personal and domestic hygiene) free from arbitrary disconnections or contamination.
- The right to a supply system and water management that will provide equal opportunities for people to put into practice all their rights to water.
- The components of the right to water must conform to human dignity, life and health.
- Water should be treated as a viable social and cultural good and not primarily as an economic commodity, so as to ensure that the right to water "might be implemented by the present and future generations.

It is defined that the adequacy of needed water cannot be defined closely, considering only the volumetric quantity and technology, because there are other factors involved (for example social, cultural, conditions in working places, health) concerning each different country or region, as well as ethnic data.
On the contrary, the following parameters are applied to all situations:

- Water availability must be ensured, meaning that water supply per person must be sufficient (the quantity considered as sufficient by the "General Comment No.15" is based on directions given by the WHO) and continuous.
- Water quality must be ensured meaning that water for human use should be free from micro-organisms, chemicals and radioactive elements and acceptable in terms of colour, odor and taste.
- Water accessibility must also be guaranteed meaning that water as well as related facilities and services should be accessible to everyone without discriminations. This factor is divided into four dimensions:
  - Physical accessibility. Meaning the safe access of every person to adequate and safe water in or in the immediate vicinity of the household, the institution and the workplace.
  - The economic accessibility (economic accessibility). Meaning that water, water installation and services are affordable for everyone. Water cost securing must be supplied (by the State).
  - The non-discrimination. Water must be accessible to all both legally and in practice including the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of the population.
  - Information accessibility. That is to say the right to search, receive and impact information on issues of water.

Furthermore, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the UN, the "General Comment No.15" defines the core of immediate implementation of each Nation's obligations concerning its essential response to the right to water as following (see par.37):

- Ensure access to the minimum water quantity for personal and domestic use, enough and secure for the prevention of diseases.
- Ensure the principle of "non-discrimination".
- Ensure the principle of "physical accessibility" and a sufficient number of water points at a reasonable distance from homes to avoid prohibitive waiting times.
- Ensure personal safety during the physical access to water.
- Ensure equitable distribution of all available water facilities and services.
- The adoption and implementation of a national water strategy and action plan for the entire population, with particular attention to disadvantaged and marginalized groups.
- The monitoring of the level of implementation or not of the right to water.
- The adoption of relatively low-budget programs for the protection of vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Measures for the prevention, the addressing and controlling of diseases linked to water, in particular for the ensuring of access to adequate health resources.

Concluding, in paragraph 38 the "General Comment No.15" addresses the member states of the UN and other factors that are capable of action:

"To provide international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical that will make it capable for developing countries to meet their basic obligations…" meaning all those mentioned above.

3.2 The Critical Position of WFTU towards the thesis of the UN on Water as a Human Right

In regards to all the above WFTU states the following:

a. As it is made clear from the evidence we have already indicated, there is a huge discrepancy between the actual situation (mainly for the developing countries) and the conditions set out in the "General Comment No.15" from the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the UN. This means that the human right to water, even with the limited and largely inconclusive meaning ascribed to it by the WHO and the UN, remains an obviously unfulfilled right especially for the popular stratas of the developing countries but also, although to a lesser intensity, for the workers of developed countries. As most typical cases, we note the following:

i. In the brief analysis of the "Right to Water" (Paragraph 2), this right depends upon, referring to the quantity and safety of it, with the "reducing of the risk of water-borne diseases". Already it has been noted that in the middle half of the '90s, 2.3 billion people suffered every year from disease-related water ([3], footnote 1) that is to say 37.5% of the world's population (6,115,219 million in 2000).
ii. An essential element of the Right to Water is that everyone has equality of opportunity and the demand to fulfil this right ([3], par.10), but this is violated, because:

- There is, for starter, a huge gap between developed and developing countries, concerning

the direct access to the world (via the water supply) for water (see Table par.2.1).

- Even within the framework of the same country a large gap between the urban and rural population is noted. In the Report of the WHO (1) it is recorded for the year of 2008 that in developed countries 98% of the population in cities and only 81% of the rural population are served straightly by watering nets. In developing countries the respective figures have a larger gap: 73% for the population of the cities and just about 31% for the rural population.
- Finally, strong is also the class difference in the exercise of the right to water in both urban and rural areas both in developed countries as well as in developing countries. It is known that in the same country, in the same city, the rich stratas, the class that is that exploits human labor, abuses this right by wasting huge amounts of "water for human use" for usage which falls outside the scope of this right (for example pools, watering lawns, private parks, golf courses, etc.). But also in the exercise of its right (for example personal and domestic hygiene) the rich stratas use quantities of water, multiple tan the ones consumed by the popular strata.

b. In the "General Comment No.15" of the relevant UN Committee the "drinking water" or more accurately "the water for human use" (with a distinction to the use of water for industry / energy and agricultural production and other auxiliary uses) is part of the "economic goods" ([3], par.11), with the hypocritical notion that the "social" and "cultural" status of it precedes the financial status of water ("Water should be treated as a social and cultural good, and not primarily as an economic good").

The above approach, hostile to the interests of workers, all workers, indigenous peoples, communities and popular stratas, find us wholeheartedly opposite. It comes, in the year 2003, to confirm, to further strengthen the capture of this valuable natural resource for humans and the planet as a whole, from the capital, from the international monopolies. It subscribes its commercialization, together with the political representatives of the European monopolies in the EU, which had preceded two years ago with the Directive 2000/60/EC on Water and four years ago with the Directive 1998/83/EK on Water for Human use ("drinking water"). Evidence we will be presented further down.

c. The "General Comment No.15" ([3]) and the WHO report ([1]), both systematically avoid indicating the numeral limits within which the adequate amount of daily water consummation per capita must lie, so that the criteria of quantity sufficiency will be fulfilled during the practice of the right to water. To all intents, this factor is obliterated. By this logic, therefore, a family of five that has access (by 72% this is possible through women and young girls) to a "protected" well and is forced to perform, for example, four routs to supply itself with 4 * 16 = 64 kg water, is recorded among those "who have access to adequate water sources". The fact thou that this amount of water translates into only 12,8 litres of water per day per capita, which is not enough even for the fulfilling of the basic personal and household needs, mainly the issue of hygiene, doesn't really bother the operators of the various elements.

The WFTU understands and accepts that especially cultural reasons justify a reasonable variation in the average daily consumption of water per person for human use between peoples and social groups. In no circumstances thou do WFTU accept, for example, that the consumption of 20 litres of water per capita per day for developing countries ([3] , footnote 1) can be an acceptable "threshold", a criteria of "access to safe water; When in another UN document it is noted as an issue of work, as already mentioned, that "an amount of about 100litres per capita per day is needed to

fulfil the right to water" ([2], p.2). In this way we can explain the contradictory findings of the WHO Report, according to which:

- Concerning "drinking water", "the world is in the course of achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG)", that is to say to decrease the percentage of the global population which has not access to adequate sources of water by 12% by the year 2015 ((1), page 9).
- By contrast, concerning the use of appropriate means of hygiene, it is far from achieving its respective goal, that is to say that by the year 2015 there will be a 23% decrease in the percentage of the world population that is without access to adequate sanitation, whilst the relative projection for the year 2015 gives a figure of 36% (!!).

The contradiction lies in the fact that it is not possible to on the one hand have the desired improvements concerning the access to water and on the other hand have a significant delay in the improvement of household sanitary conditions, for which water plays a key role. The explanation of this contradiction lies in the simple fact that the quantities of accessible water for the popular stratas are too undersupplied to cover their needs.

The huge number of 2.3 billion people suffering every year from diseases related to water and the 3.6 million who die each year from them is explained in the exact same way. This issue is addressed by the next section 4.

3.3 Dushanbe International Conference on Water and the position of WFTU

During the seven years that followed the adoption of the "General Comment No.15", many things concerning water were resolved in a pro capital manner on a level of political positions, organs, services, and various institutional patterns in the UN framework. Towards this direction the recent "Dushanbe Declaration on Water"[5] - which is the final conclusion of the "High Level International Conference - HLIC" held in the framework of the UN Action Plan "International Decade of Action, Water for Life, 2005-2015" in the city of Dushanbe in Tajikistan, from 8-10 June 2010 - is particularly instructive. The Conference took place after the No.64/198 Resolution of the UN General Assembly. Heads of States and Governments, Ministers, government agencies, Heads of sectors of the UN, representatives of international and regional financial institutions and the "Society of Civilians", as well as businessmen from 75 countries participated in the Conference.

The "Dushanbe Declaration on Water" (hereinafter "Declaration") which consists of 38 points initially confirms its belief on the content of all previous policies of the ruling class for the water and generally for the environment and the "sustainable development" which were reflected in decisions of various Conferences and Forums. Repeated references are made with a positive spirit, in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, but without getting to the trouble of explaining why a very large part of the world's population suffers from a lack of access to adequate and safe water.

The monopoly – friendly substance of the Declaration is revealed (sometimes it is even showed off, although carefully) in many points, as we will show further on. What is of special importance is the fact that the Declaration makes it clear how the ruling class understands the "Human right to Water". It is clarified in the end of the Declaration (paragraph 32) that the "Right to Water", is more or less a "personal matter" of each country to handle. Its reference on this issue reads: "32: The access

to safe drinking water and sanitary means, which are recognized by some countries as human rights are inextricably tied with life, health (...)" Of course, after this there is no reference to water as a public natural good. Its commercialized character is considered, in any case, a fact. Thereafter, the whole spectrum of the capitals action, that is to say the "private sector" (point 9), the "business community" (Point 1) and by the finest expression the "development partners" (Points 16, 18, 28), the "Financial institutions" (Points 17, 28), the "private investments" (Point 28), the "public- private partnerships" (Point 18), are considered basic contributors for the "sustainable management" of water with an understandable emphasis given to the developing countries.

On the contrary, not even a phrase, not even a word is "wasted" in the Declaration text, on labor and other radical peoples' movements and social groups, on native people and communities, as "social bodies" which could play a significant part in the management of this issue of prime importance. A pure class position, hostile to the interests of the peoples of the Planet, which the forces of WFTU must take into serious consideration.

But it is not only this. The Declaration of Dushanbe:

• Follows the Monopoly- friendly perception (which is prevalent in the European Directive 2000/60/EC), which says that the problem of water scarcity must be addressed primarily at the level of demand of water and not at the level of enrichment and rational management of available and technically received water supplies. So it is exhausted in suggestions about saving water that are said millions of times before and which normally lead to the following measures: The additional heavy taxation of the popular stratas and farmers under the pretext of reducing water consumption in all sectors (Point 22). It also suggests the usual formula for implementing an "innovative and more modern efficient irrigation and drainage" (Point 23). It does not explain thou why large rural areas of the world which maintain huge, directly usable, water wealth (according to modern techniques available) appear, nonetheless, a zero (sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia) up to limited (Latin America), access to safe water from the water supply net?
• It refers to an "international donor community" called upon to help the poorest countries that are lagging behind in the "Millennium Development Goals""according with national priorities of the country that will accept the donation" (Point 29). It is clear mockery, as if it has not repeatedly demonstrated that:

- Only a small fraction of the hundreds of millions, billions of dollars sometimes, that are declared by several lofty plutocrats to communities affected by natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, etc.), is ultimately given and a much smaller part finally reaches its destination.
- Any financial or technological "donation" or "assistance" given on transnational level is accompanied by conditions imposed on the assisted country which serve the general but also "geostrategic" interests of the "donor".
- Apart from the above general benefits, even this money given as "help" goes mostly to the monopolies which are asked to materialize projects and supplies that are executed in the framework of this assistance. In normal cases where the multinational construction companies assume also the function of the project that it built, then the profits are more and have longer duration. And, of course, any technology transfer is extremely limited and only in the extent that serves the investor.
- Correspondingly these apply to Point 33, in which the leading class, no more no less, is called upon to provide "sustainable and predictable economical assistance and technology transfer on

fair and equivalent terms" to the developing countries that they have drained and looted until today. This is a provocation to billions of people that suffer from the brutal exploitation of capital and from the abandonment by the "civilized western countries".

- Finally, in an attempt to exculpate the key responsible, the Declaration states, in Point 34, that in conditions of economic, political and military domination of imperialism, "the vital nature of water is a powerful incentive for cooperation and dialogue, which obligates the leaders to reconcile even the most divergent views. Water unites peoples and societies more often than it divides". Namely, something that really happened in the multinational state of the USSR and in general in the community of socialist countries that we knew, appears here as an element of the capitalist way of development of the global society.

The reality of course is completely different. Let us see some cases.

4. Water Resources - a Factor of Controversy, Conflicts and Military Interventions in conditions of Imperialism

Often we hear and read in the media of the leading class that in the not so distant future, the control and management of the remaining water reserves will be one of the main reasons for the onset of combative conflicts and civil wars in developing countries. This position must be "read" by the working class, the popular stratas, as an open confession of the exploitative system on the intentions and goals of the international capital; that is to say to put the most important sources of water on the planet under its control. It is obvious that in the context of inter imperialist conflicts and antagonisms but also targets of the national capital of each country, this effort will be accompanied by the stimulation and provocation of conflicts, indigenous and inter governmental, with victims always the workers of these countries, the native peoples and communities.

The very nature of water as a precious natural good of crucial contribution to a number of sectors (see Section1) is an objective basis on which this effort can succeed in several occasions. Already in the last decade, we have been given several examples of controversy, conflicts and military interventions that were related to water resources and their use.

More specific, the water is involved in many ways and parameters in the provocation of controversy, conflict and military interventions with the following ways: As an element of international conflict, as a claimed good (mostly methodically as an "apple of (the goddess) Discord"), as a sensitive military target, as a mean of pressure, as an object of internal socio-political confrontation. The figures below come from the "Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security, database on Water Conflict" [4] and have as publication date the 11/10/2008. The facts mentioned therein cover the period 2000-2008. Their selection and presentation belongs to the editors of this treatise.

4.1 Water as an element of International Conflict

i. In 1999 and 2000 on an island in the Zambezi River, armed conflicts occurred between the states of Namibia, Botswana and Zambia. The case was brought before the International Court of Justice in 1999.

ii. In 2004-2006 at least 250 people were killed and many more injured in clashes between Somalis and Ethiopians for the control of wells and pastures, known as the "The War of the wells".

iii. In 2007, a reduction in rainfall led to conflicts between breeders and farmers of Burkina Faso, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

iv. Although not an "international" conflict, with the legal meaning of the term, we do mention the case of political tension between China and the "Autonomous Region of Tibet" which exists within the PRC. In addition to the variety of differences between China and this "autonomous -to be- region", the important role of Tibet, by some called the "World's water reservoir, as a shaper of the water resources of China and beyond, is noted in this treatise [4]. It is mentioned that the plateau of Tibet has extensive reserves of iced water and supplies 10 of the largest rivers (among them the Gianktse, the Indian, the Mekong, the Brahmaputra, the Yellow River), thus covering one quarter of the world's population.

On the basis of these facts, one more reason is exposed for why the traditional imperialist western states provoke and support, with any means, the secessionist policy pursued by the Governments of the "Autonomous Tibet region" under each Dalai-Lama (political and religious office).

4.2 Water as a Claimed Good and Fomented "Apple of Discord"

i. In 2000 violent clashes occurred between the Afghanistan villages Bourna Legan and Taina Legan and the greater region as the drought limited the local water sources.

ii. In 2001 conflicts of several months occurred in Pakistan because of water shortage, as a result of a long drought period. The conflicts were also transferred to Karachi. Ethnic reasons were reported with some communities accusing the government of favouring the residents of Punjab in the distribution of water.

iii. In 2002, in the Indian Kashmir, the police forces intervened with weapons to separate peasants that were interlocked for the distribution of water resulting in two dead and 25 wounded.

iv. In 2004, in China, the construction of the Pubugou dam on the Dadu River caused severe reactions and clashes between the police and tens of thousands protesting peasants.

v. In October and November of 2004 there were militant protests by farmers in India because of the diversion of water from the large irrigation canal «Indira Gandhi» to a province near the borders with Pakistan.

vi. In January 2005, in northwest Kenya, more than 20 dead people were reported in conflicts between the communities of Kikuyu and Masai. The reasons of the conflicts were the water and the pastures. Until the month of July the dead had reached 90, while 2000 had been forced to leave their homes.

vii. In 2006, in Ethiopia 12 people were killed and 20 wounded in clashes between breeders and farmers in an area near the borders with Somalia.

viii. In 2007 thousands of farmers in India caused damages to the HiraKud dam area, protesting against the diversion of water to the industry.

4.3 Water as a Sensitive Military Target

i. In 2001 in Afghanistan the US imperialists bombed the hydroelectric Kajaki dam in the province of Helmand cutting off the electricity in the city of Kandahar.

ii. In 2003, during the second invasion of the U.S. and its European allies in Iraq, many systems of water supply and irrigation as well as many dams became the targets of the invaders.

iii. In the period 2003-2007 during the civil war in the Darfur region of Sudan, many wells were either destroyed or their water was poisoned.

iv. In 2006, according to a complaint of the Government of Lebanon, the Israeli raiders caused damage to the water distribution system throughout southern Lebanon, including water tanks, water pipes, pumping stations and facilities along the river Litani.

4.4 Water as a Mean of Pressure

i. In 2000 Kyrgyzstan cut off the flow of water to Kazakhstan until it delivered the first coal to the first. Uzbekistan also cut the flow of water to Kazakhstan for the non-payment of its debts.

ii. In 2001 in FYROM the flow of water was cut of in Kumanovo for 12 days due to clashes between armed forces and the local Albanian-Macedonians ethnic group.

iii. In 2004 the U.S. imperialists stopped two development programs for water management in the Gaza Strip as a punishment to the Palestinian Authority (that is to say against the Palestinian people) for an attack that occurred against a U.S. diplomatic motorcade in 2003!

4.5 Water as an Object of Socio-political Confrontation

i. In 2000 in the city Cochabamba of Bolivia massive, episodic demonstrations against the privatization efforts of the drinking water occurred.

ii. In 2003 in Colombia a wave of protest rose against the privatization of the drinking water of a large area. A bomb explosion in a drinking water treatment station in Cali that counted for three dead was combined with these protests.

iii. In 2004 in the municipality Phumelela of the State of South Africa, insufficient water and sanitation services led to several months of protests as well as major disasters.

iv. In 2008 in Nigerian Nyanna and Abuja, there were violent protests because of the high price of water, with the use of force against sellers of water.

The final conclusion from the above reference is obvious: The management of water, which is a basic resource for life, nature, pro peoples development, will be implemented within the imperialist system with aim to make profits and fortify geo-strategic positions under inter imperialist contrast. The problems identified above will not be limited but expanded and enhanced.

4.6 The Lack of Sufficient and Clean Water – Source of Serious Diseases

According to data from the website http://mountains-rivers.web.auth.gr, on which this section is mostly based, the "diseases related to water" are the most serious health problem in developing countries, while it has significantly alleviated in developed countries. The WHO estimates that each year 250 million new cases emerge. It is estimated that the deaths reach 5-10 million a year, a number significantly higher than that shown on the website 'thw' par. 2.5.

The water related diseases are usually divided into four groups:

a. Waterborne diseases

Water diseases are those where the water is the carrier of the infection. Namely, they are transmitted directly through drinking water because of the waters high concentration of pathogenic factors (bacteria, viruses, vorticella). The symptoms are mostly diarrhea and dysentery (cholera, gastroenteritis, giardiasis) and intestinal fever (typhus, paratyphoid, polio). It is estimated that currently about 2.000 million people are affected by these diseases. Improving the quality of drinking water is the key way to drastically reduce the incidences. In the U.S. in the early 20th century, 28,000 people died each year from typhoid fever, a number reduced drastically after the modernization of the water system.

b. Diseases caused by washing

These diseases are the result of insufficient hygiene or contact with contaminated water. Like the Waterborne diseases, they can be prevented only by the use of clean water. This group includes skin diseases (typhus exanthema) and eye diseases (conjunctivitis). They also include diarrhea which can be passed from person to person.

c. Diseases stemming from the aquatic environment without direct contact

These diseases come from hosts (namely animals that are carrying the pathogen without however being affected by it) that live in the water or they are needed as a part of their cycle of life, except for the insects which constitute a distinct and different group. These are essentially snails ("schistomiasis", caused after contact with them) and zooplankton ("dracunculiasis", caused after ingestion). It is estimated that "schistomiasis" has infected 200 million people in 70 countries.

d. Diseases from the aquatic environment passed through insects

These are diseases transmitted by insects, as hosts, which grow and multiply in water. They are not necessarily infected. Among them we have malaria (a protozoan pathogen), the yellow fever (a virus pathogen), the dengue fever (also a virus) and a form of encephalitis (from the West Nile virus). Malaria, transmitted by mosquitoes, is the worst disease of this group (in terms of fatalities). It is estimated that over 300 million people are infected and that 2.000 million people in 100 countries are at risk of infection. It is estimated that in these countries, malaria accounts for 20% -30% of child mortality.

5. The International Watercourses and prospects

The main principles of the WFTU for the management of water resources for the benefit of humans and the environment are arising from the critical presentation of the "General Comment No.15" of the relevant UN Committee and the "Declaration of Dushanbe" as well as from our introductory statement.
There is only one more issue we have not yet discussed about which concerns the management of the international watercourses, this means those rivers that flow through more than one countries before they reach their final destination (a large lake or the sea).
The problem is extremely serious because it does not only concern the fair utilization of the water of those rivers, the conditions of a common and stable service of the people's interests, but also other issues such as:

- The optimized confrontation of the problem of the floods.
- The confrontation of the possible cross-border pollution
- The maintenance of the good status of the water of those rivers.

For this issue, the United Nations General Assembly on 1997, with the decision 51/229 adopted the "Convention of the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of the International Watercourses".
Despite the fact of the will of each country to ratify this Convention or not, the WFTU estimates that many provisions of this Convention can become the basis for the formation of bilateral or multilateral agreements between countries that are connected with the same river or rivers.
This will result in the mitigation of the interstate controversy, the optimization of the management of the waters, in the increase of the number of the benefited communities, in the reduction of the bisectional role of the imperialist forces.

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