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## *Integration, sovereignty and socialism in Latin America*



**Sources:** Rebellion

*Latin America needs to resist the domination exercised by US imperialism and the economic dependence that has been generated with China.*

Such combined action is indispensable to underpin development, improve popular incomes and reduce inequality in the region. They are two battles of different kinds, but they go through the same construction of an autonomous regional framework.

Such a link would serve, above all, to recover sovereignty. Latin American in the face of Washington's imperial interference. But It would also facilitate the development of the area, in front of the Productive regression generated by the agreements of each country

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with Beijing. Become fully aware of both goals and look for ways to Combining their achievement is a central objective of the regional unit.

Without eradicating the covert presence of the *marines* and the Lead interference by Yankee ambassadors, Latin America does not You can make the decisions you need, to reshape your economy. But without reversing the signing of the agreements balkanized with China that enhance the dispossession of resources Nor can the underdevelopment of the region be eradicated.

### **NEGOTIATING AS A BLOC WITH CHINA**

There are already strong indications of the adversity that entails for the region, the current scheme of relations with China. In front of those Evidence, only suggestions, exhortations have multiplied. or calls to correct setbacks, but without proposals to correct the problem. It is not enough with calls to develop "triangular strategies", to reposition autonomously to Latin America in China's dispute with the United States. Those Calls are merely formal, if they continue to be divorced from some measure to make that call effective.

Such a concretion implies creating the conditions for a Economic negotiation in bloc with the Eastern giant. Only that Counterweight would make it possible to balance the agreements that favour Beijing, reversing the transfer of income to a great creditor, investor and client of the entire area.

It is clear that the current treaties accentuate primarization, extractivism and dependency and that should be transformed into reverse agreements. Only when they facilitate investment production, reindustrialization and technology transfer will be favorable to Latin American development. But that Reorientation, will never be achieved with the scattered negotiations that develop the unguarded Latin American economies, versus China's centralized power.

A Latin American rethinking should register the change in progress on the world stage. The uniform globalization he commanded The United States at the beginning of the new century has been replaced by a clash of projects, currently embodied in the confrontation of *the Alliance for Economic Prosperity of the Americas* with the *Silk Road*. China not only underpins a global design alternative, but one that advances, penetrates and undermines initiatives American. Washington seeks to respond with military pressure and New economic bets, agreed with its powerful allies of West and East. Instead of continuing to be subject to U.S. geopolitical mandates and priorities China's trade, Latin America can rethink in shape Drastic his relationship with the two powerful of the planet. Need recover its real independence from the dominator of the North and

reorder agreements with Beijing, taking advantage of the flexibility of those treaties. The *Silk Road* has just emerged, it has no Previous bases in any of the associated countries and is subject to to what its participants can demand.

Latin America has not explored any of these alternatives because Maintains passive behavior, which simply validates business agreed with Beijing by the dominant capitalist groups of each country.

The only body assigned to collective bargaining is the CELAC-China, which limits itself to recreating protocol agendas with little Impact on the future of the region. Without forging a block of Unitary negotiation, the region will continue to be cornered in the current format of Free Trade Agreements and could not To enjoy the changes in these agreements.

### **ANOTHER FTA SCENARIO**

The adversities generated by FTAs explain their continued Challenge in many parts of the world. That resistance is It checks in particular in the agricultural sectors, affected by the Destruction of small property. The *Vía organization Campesina* promotes a movement of Enduring rejection of trade opening agreements, which provoke the dispossession of farmers, the increase in the concentration of land and the growing dominance of exports to the detriment of the Local sourcing. The important actions against FTAs in Asian countries (Geum-Soon, 2021) or Latin Americans (Pastrana; Castro 2020) illustrate the validity of that resistance.

But on a global scale Movements of the same weight as in the decades are no longer verified Precedents. These mobilizations led to the emergence of the Forum Social Mundal, as an area of denunciation of globalization capitalist. They also underpinned regionalized resistance, who had a first success in the defeat in Europe to a unrestricted free trade trial (MAI in 1998). A second Crowning that sequence was the South American victory against FTAA (in 2005). That trail of protests subsequently subsided. until the incidence of the past is lost today.

The consolidation of FTAs has had a significant influence on that ebb. The pace of signing these agreements skyrocketed In recent years, despite the brake registered in the globalization. While trade ceased to increase above From production, exchange agreements continued to thrive.

This divorce was maintained even in the two moments of great paralysis of the economy, imposed by the crisis of 2008-09 and the pandemic. The level of productive activity was

impacted by those two events, but the FTAs survived and were They spread in the midst of both collapses.

This contrast is particularly striking, if you look at the huge State intervention in both situations. The rescue of Banks and sustaining publicly funded enterprises were strikingly contradictory actions with deregulation. that promote free trade agreements (Ghiotto, 2020).

It is true that the protectionism reintroduced by Trump curbed the scale of such subscriptions, but only on a transitional basis and in the area of agreements promoted by the United States. The Western partners of the first power continued to conclude agreements and China gave an unprecedented rhythm to the negotiations. The *Silk Road* crowns and articulates that advance of the treaties, through a global transport and communications network.

The block challenge to FTAs by the movements Social faces a new scenario. The Liberals continue promoting them, but the Trumpist ultra-right questions them, with flags that idolize protectionism, exalt chauvinism and They denigrate immigration. That reactionary opposition to FTAs It complicates the positions of the left, which at the beginning of the new Siglo was the only relevant objector to those treaties.

During the rise of the World Social Forum, the most Radicals commanded the battle against FTAs and achieved victories that still persist. They generated international campaigns that continue impacting the whole world. Allegations of exploitation of African children in the mines or brutally workers exploited in Bangladesh (*Clean Clothes*) exemplify the vitality of these questions (Hernández; Ramiro, 2016).

But the great mobilizations against the Summits of the G7, which annually transformed different cities of the planet in large areas of street resistance. That decline of the Alter-globalist radicalism has increased the incidence of international trade union apparatuses and moderate NGOs, which always objected to the frontal battle against FTAs, hoping to improve their operation with the introduction of social clauses (Ventrici; Dobrusin, 2018). These approaches encouraged forms of international negotiation, in tension with the employer's claim to self-regulate their conduct, with the vague rules of private auditing. With the screen of the "Corporate Social Responsibility", the firms avoided For a long time any negotiations or agreed to adjust them to a global framework, without any leading presence of States National.

After numerous struggles, negotiations have become widespread. of several parent companies with the trade union federations international, who usually discuss wages,

working conditions and guild rights. These discussions unfold without no mobilization from below and in the usual framework of the lobby that They promote the union leaders. Transnational trade unionism projects outside the borders of each country the same behavior as It operates on a national scale and privileges pressure institutionalized to strikes or street mobilizations (Antentas, 2012).

Companies often shy away from granting concessions significant, take advantage of the outsourcing of their activities in countless subcontracting firms and continue to profit from the International differentiation of wages. But they must deal with a Unpublished context.

### **INNOVATIVE NEGOTIATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES**

The new scenario generates surprising results and what happened with the USMCA from Mexico, the United States and Canada is very striking. That agreement succeeded NAFTA in a limited framework resistance, compared to the withering defeat suffered by the FTAA (Ghiotto, 2016).

Unlike this outcome, the USMCA was consolidated in the hemisphere North, but with modifications in its initial format of mere tyranny businesswoman. Pressure from U.S. unions allowed the introduction of certain wage increase rules (La Jornada, 2022) and the right of union for workers Mexicans (Cano, 2022).

This change illustrates a very different context from that prevailing in the Last decade, when only collective actions of the anti-globalization movement against FTAs (Botto, 2014). Same mutation affects the movement that brought the FTAA to its knees. The background of the The problem is that there is no longer a single dominant project. driven by the United States, which unleashes the convergent opposition of Latin American movements, unions or governments.

Washington is testing multiple and contradictory initiatives to rebuild its domination of the region, while China has become the main promoter of FTAs, with the consequent effects of this incidence in Latin America.

Asian investments in mining, fuels or Agro-exports are generating similar adversities in the working conditions and the environment, which processes sponsored by American, European or Japanese firms. The The same applies to the levels of exploitation prevailing in the factories managed by Beijing. It is imperative to question these abuses and demand protection clauses, extending to the contracts with China, the same kind of lawsuits that began to take effect in the USMCA with the United States.

The generalization of these correctives could be conceptualized as an introduction to the principles of *Bandung* on the *Route of the Silk*. It is the proposal that some analysts have

suggested in discussions on this project (Mohanty, 2022). The ideas of social emancipation that were present in the 50s, in the Conference of the leaders who commanded the Independence of Asia and Africa, could be updated in the new format of the framework China-sponsored global economic system.

A project merely focused on free trade principles, Competitiveness and profitability could find its counterweight of Popular demands, whether social movements, governments Radicals and left forces underpin this remodeling. Latin America could play a leading role in this rethinking, if it consolidates its own format of anti-imperialist unity.

This direction requires recomposing, above all, the areas of gestation of The regional unity below, which began to emerge in the decade passed in the "Summits of the Peoples". In actions against the FTAA, the Alterglobalist Social Forums, the confluences of UNASUR and the ALBA meetings emerged those alternative dynamics.

There began the elaboration of proposals for unity Latin American with radical profiles, anti-imperialist senses and anti-capitalist aspects. That trajectory begins to be resumed. for the initiatives of CELAC Social. The Boiling that accompanied the first progressive wave, but it was multiply the signs of a resurgence of this tradition, around the Convergent programme elaborated by the popular movements of the region.

That platform denounces the scourge of inequality, proclaims the need for a progressive tax policy, demands the increase in minimum wages and the establishment of A common income floor for the entire area. It also promotes, Initiatives to generate productive work, with specific measures to eliminate child labour, protect migrants, improve pensions and reducing working hours.

This path also requires the recovery of financial sovereignty, undermined by the IMF's indebtedness and control over the economic policy of numerous nations. It implies imposing the General audit of those liabilities and the suspension of payments in the more committed countries, to lay the foundations for a New Financial Architecture. It also means moving towards sovereignty. energy, constituting large interstate entities, to Complement country resources and start now The creation of a Latin American state-owned lithium company.

The maturation of these projects could be the contribution Latin American to the development of a global alternative against the neoliberal capitalism, which currently prevails on the planet. The Profile of this model can be glimpsed by evaluating the options in debate.

## **PLURIPOLARITY VERSUS MULTIPOLARITY**

All critical conceptions of the current system agree on similar diagnoses of the tragedies incubated by the Capitalism, on the terrain of social oppression, devastation war and environmental catastrophe. But the most common visions they believe that these misadventures could be corrected or mitigated, with the only dispersion of world power. They estimate that the loss of the U.S. supremacy and greater equilibrium it will in itself alleviate the contradictions of the capitalism. This view inspires the calls to forge a multipolar world.

But very similar expectations were belied in the last century by the devastating periodic crises, generated by the own operation of the current system. The financial meltdown 2008-2009 was the most recent illustration of those unsolvable imbalances.

State relief postponed the consequences of that tremor, but the Capitalism immediately potentiated the effects of the calamity natural generated by the pandemic. That sequence confirmed that the battle against this system is unavoidable, to create a project of collective well-being.

This long-awaited option requires resuming the strategic goal of socialism, together with innovative transition courses to achieve that objective. Such a horizon was outlined by Chávez, when postulate a scenario of pluripolarity, as the most favorable framework for a post-socialism passage (Tricontinental, 2023).

This model of pluripolarity promotes counteracting the destructive power of the imperial system commanded by the United States. But no restricts the battle to a simple contrast between options multipolar and unipolar. Nor does it merely formulate counterpoints. Between the progressive multipolarism of the South and the multipolarism of the South conservative of the North.

The pluripolar thesis questions the capitalist system that underlies all these aspects and postulates a socialist path of eradication of this regime, through transitional mediations that it enunciates of tentatively manner. Proposes a course to weaken domination imperialist forging at the same time the pillars of a future post-capitalist.

A convergent policy approach with this proposal emphasizes the centrality of the struggle against imperialism, denouncing the new Cold war that the United States has unleashed against Russia and China. He points out that the first power is committed to restoring its primacy, with aggression against all governments that do not accept their demands (Manifesto, 2021). It also highlights the centrality of the confrontation against the far right and aptly describes, how social democratic adaptation to neoliberalism has allowed the regressive channeling of discontent.

Other views with points of agreement propose to shore up the gestation of an alternative international horizon, recreating old organisms (such as the Non-Aligned Movement) or giving birth others (such as the Progressive International), in a direction that does not simply replace capitalist unipolarity with capitalist multipolarity.

A conceptual foundation of the pluripolar strategy is the pointing out the great diversity of hegemonies that has prevailed Throughout history and the consequent generation of gaps in Global domination, which facilitated the emergence of courses alternatives (Kagarlitsky, 2014: 1-14)

But what essentially distinguishes a project of pluripolarity Socialist of the merely multipolar approach, is the emphasis on a Radical-revolutionary program of anti-capitalist transition. That Platform implies sponsoring the decommodification of resources basics, the reduction of the working day and nationalization of banks and digital platforms, in order to create the foundations of a more egalitarian economy.

The second substantial difference with the multipolar approach is the protagonism assigned to popular subjects in all Proposed transformations. The pluripolar thesis bets on strength of resistance movements, underlining the relevance of that battle. This approach contrasts with the looks exclusively focused on geopolitical events.

The most common multipolar view assumes that transformations Progressives will emerge as a mere result of tug-of-war between powers or governments. The alternative view adopts another criterion and underpins a construction located in the universe of the exploited, the dispossessed and the fighters.

### **SOCIALIST TAKEOUTS**

Pluripolarity is conceived as a favorable scenario for to resume the battle for socialism, in a context very different from the second half of the last century. Currently the expectation of simultaneous or concatenated revolutionary processes, that accompanied all the moments of anti-capitalist triumph.

The context created by victories in Russia, China, Vietnam or Cuba It is not repeated yet in the new century. Along with the collapse of the USSR, Hope for a gradual geographical expansion also declined. of socialism from an already consolidated matrix. These shortcomings make more unpredictable, the direction that a trajectory of global eradication of capitalism.

But references to socialism have also reappeared in Latin America, through the blinded campaign it deploys the far right against the main goal of the left. Your spokespeople More reactionaries observe the presence of this project in countless currents, governments



or personalities of the region. They question the socialist drift of moderate officials and the communist contamination of any variant of progressivism.

That pathetic McCarthyite attitude has placed it back at the center. From the scene the meaning of a post-capitalist society. For that Unusual via all the concepts of the socialist lexicon have recovered an unexpected gravitation.

Anti-communist fury is not just another delirium of the Far right. In his fanatical defense of the current system he identifies to the main adversary of that regime. This opponent does not exhibit by Now the strength of the past, nor the ability to dispute primacy with the different strands of the ruling classes. But socialism continues to embody the only effectively opposed alternative to the regression promoted by the neo-fascists. They are not wrong in their perception of enemies.

Socialism persists as the only project substantially alternative to the tragedies that capitalism portends. It is the great Antidote to suffering, wars and the destruction of environment generated by the prevailing system. All attempts to social democratic heterodoxy to reform or humanize this The regime has failed, because the very dynamics of capitalism obstructs those reliefs (Katz, 2017).

The operation of the current system increases unemployment, Inequality and poverty, refuting all neoliberal fantasies about the virtues of the market. The communist ideal is much less utopian, than all the inconsistent illusions propagated by the liberal orthodoxy. It is based on the recognition of Irresolvable contradictions of capitalism, that heterodoxy Progressive dreams of making amends through greater intervention of the State.

Resuming political identity without shame, shyness or prevention Socialist is the starting point of any reformulation of a Alternative project. It is valid to object or renounce the objective But their mere ignorance leads to a sea of Confusion. This omission makes it impossible to know what is desired for the future. The ideas, symbols and names of the project Socialist include two centuries of history, whose oblivion makes impossible Forge another model for the future.

That is why it is important to make explicit the socialist goal. Don't shy away from That postulate, nor conform to the usual reluctance of progressivism to mention that goal. It has become very common to speak of "another world", of "another society" or "another future" other than capitalism, but without alluding to the alternative purpose embodied by capitalism. socialism.

This ideal faces the same difficulties in Latin America as it does. surround other radical projects. It is a goal that regained strength in the past decade with the experiences of Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia and ALBA and is affected by the withdrawal of these processes.

In none of these cases is the historical objective of a society of abundance, equality and common welfare was effectively gestated But along different paths the first steps were taken to build that purpose. There was always great awareness of character The prolonged struggle of that struggle and the course of events has corroborated that this feat is surrounded by complex advances and Kicks.

Cuba continues to provide a socialist horizon that would only charge Visible substance, at the confluence with processes of the same type A regional or global scale. Venezuela has suffered a grueling battle for survival, which overshadowed the sense of renewal imagined with the programs of socialism of the twenty-first century. In Bolivia that same goal It was reformulated in local terms, adapted to the gravitation of the original peoples and the plurinational model.

ALBA emerged as an alternative for economic coordination solidarity and anti-imperialist resistance. Contributed important Indications of the bridges to be forged between that regional link and the goal universal socialism.

Against this background, the region plays a decisive role in renewing the socialist ideal and in the strategies to achieve it. The new context of resurgence of the popular struggle, with electoral victories of progressivism and strong counteroffensive of the right anticipates the scenario of the next battles. There the outline of a future society of equality, justice and democracy will re-emerge.

## **SUMMARY**

The region needs to resist U.S. domination and negotiate in bloc with China, to recover sovereignty and reverse its economic regression. There are favourable conditions for introducing Both twists

The confrontation with Free Trade Agreements includes new Trails. Achievements in its regulations could pave a *Bandung* in the *Silk Road*, but it is necessary to strengthen the construction of Latin American popular unity.

An international strategy of pluripolarity is developed with programs radical-revolutionaries based on popular protagonism. Diverges with the mere multipolarity for the socialist horizon, which could to be propped up with the protagonism of Latin America.

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