

SGP holds rally in Duisburg, Germany: Stop the war in the Middle East! Stop the genocide!

Our reporter
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On Saturday, the Socialist Equality Party (SGP) held a rally in the working class district of Hamborn in the city of Duisburg calling for an end to the war in the Middle East and the genocide in Gaza, which has now been going on for a year.

The Israeli government has extended the war and genocide in Gaza to Lebanon and is threatening a devastating attack on Iran. This attempt to subordinate the entire Middle East to the geostrategic and economic interests of imperialism is all part of the predatory redivision of the world, along with the US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine against Russia.

At the rally, two SGP members, Hakan Özal and Dietmar Gaisenkersting, counterposed an international socialist perspective to the deafening war propaganda and genocidal war drive of the coalition government supported by all the parties represented in the German parliament.

Hakan Özal opened his speech by recalling the rally held by the SGP at the same location on May 18 during the European election campaign. At the time, Özal said, “We warned that the Zionist aggression of the imperialist states would not be limited to the Gaza Strip.” The fact is German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and US President Joe Biden see the war of extermination against the Palestinians as a prerequisite for a much broader war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, Syria and Iran. This is now the case and threatens to plunge all of humanity into barbarism.

The response of the regimes in the Middle East to the genocide in Gaza and the attack on Lebanon is proof of the bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism, Özal continued. While some of these regimes, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, are important allies of the United States that support the Israeli genocide in Gaza and the colonial division of the Middle East, other countries

such as Iran have “repeatedly offered compromises to the imperialist powers in order to reach some kind of negotiated agreement that would secure them.” The reason is the fear on the part of these regimes of a mass mobilisation and the “revolutionary consequences of a serious struggle against imperialism.”

This also applies to Turkey. Erdoğan supported the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and has sided with the US and Israel in the war for regime change in Syria since 2011—and against President Bashar al-Assad, who is supported by Iran and Hezbollah.

Erdoğan has stated that “to remain silent, unresponsive or even neutral in the face of Israel’s actions is to be criminally complicit”—but this is pure hypocrisy, Özal said.

Although Erdoğan has officially ceased trade with Israel and toned down his rhetoric in the face of growing public outrage, “US-NATO bases in Turkey continue to support Israel,” he said. At the same time, Turkey continues to broker Azerbaijan’s important oil supplies to Israel. “There are even serious allegations that Turkey is conducting trade with Israel through Palestine.”

This contradiction—warning against Israel’s warmongering while at the same time supporting Israel—arises from the deep dependence of the Turkish bourgeoisie on imperialism. “The real fear of the Turkish ruling class is that a revolutionary movement of the working class against imperialism and Zionism threatens its own power,” Özal stressed.

What is needed is an international movement of the working class against capitalism, the root and cause of war and genocide.

In his speech, Dietmar Gaisenkersting, deputy chairman of the SGP, explained how this movement must be oriented. He explained how and why the

struggle against war must be linked to the struggle against social cuts, job destruction and wage cuts. “It is the deep international crisis of capitalism that is driving the imperialist powers to war,” he said.

As was the case in the First and Second World Wars, the hunt by big corporations and banks for profits, markets and raw materials can no longer be settled by peaceful methods.

Since the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine are part of a global struggle for the redivision of the world, “The only way to stop the wars and prevent a catastrophe is to mobilise the international working class against capitalism—that is, all those who create social wealth and will be hardest hit by the war policy.”

This also applies to the working class in Israel, Gaisenkersting emphasised. “They must take a stand against the Netanyahu government and side with the workers of Iran, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and the entire world.”

In conclusion, he outlined the principles of such a movement: It must be based on the working class, directed against capitalism, be independent of all capitalist parties and organisations, and international in character.

Many participants at the rally discussed this perspective with members of the SGP long after the speeches had ended. They bought a number of books by Leon Trotsky and, in particular, David North’s book *The Logic of Zionism: From Nationalist Myth to the Gaza Genocide*.



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