

# Imperialism and the Coup d'États in Africa

*Proletarians of all countries, unite!*

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On Tuesday the 21st of September, Sudanese state media reported that an attempted coup had been thwarted. The putschists were identified by the Sudanese officials as supporters of the former regime of Omar al-Bashir, which was toppled in a coup back in 2019. Had the attempt not been thwarted, it would've been the fourth successful coup this year in a continent that has so far seen 208 coups and coup attempts since 1955.

The persisting and reoccurring coups and civil wars in the oppressed nations are symptoms of bureaucratic capitalism, the backward capitalism on a semi-feudal basis that is developed by imperialism in its colonies and semi-colonies. Coups and civil wars are natural occurrences in bureaucratic capitalism, which is fundamentally flawed by the conditions of its existence that is, on the basis of the semi-feudalism corresponding to medieval times and imperialist oppression, the social, political, etc., superstructure of these countries is built upon. The landlord-bureaucratic states in the service of imperialism, where one becomes the main one as the case may be.

On the other hand, they are often orchestrated directly by imperialism as means of indirect intervention, i.e. through internal forces under its control but less antagonistic than direct intervention or military intervention with occupying forces, by the sharing out of colonies and semi-colonies which imperialism, in collusion and struggle, uses in times when the struggle for spheres of influence is sharpening but collusion remains the main thing (see quote from Chairman Mao in this same article).

On the other hand, they are often directly orchestrated by imperialism as less antagonistic means of struggle for the repartition of the colonies and semi-colonies that imperialism, in collusion and struggle, utilize in the times when collusion is the principal.

In this characterization of the general situation in the countries of bureaucratic capitalism, we refer to the description of the conditions in China before the 2nd World War, as outlined in the book *The Socialist Transformation of the National Economy in China*, where the country is described as being "... a battle-ground where the imperialist nations ... haggled over spheres of influence and waged sharp struggles against each other."

Although the extent of imperialist involvement in each coup varies and is sometimes unknown, we don't have to look far to find out: (1) Which imperialists the various sections of the comprador bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie garner their political or logistical support from in the struggle among themselves for a greater piece of the pie, (2) which particular imperialists' interests are at play, and as follows (3) which imperialists benefit from the rise and fall of the particular regimes.

### **The Rise of Chinese Social-imperialism in Sudan**

Since formal independence, Sudan has been witness to shifting regimes and multiple coups, but from 1986, British imperialism – the country's former colonial master, had a solid foothold in the country through the regime of President Ahmad al-Mirghani and Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi.

In return for his loyalty, al-Mirghani was rewarded by the British imperialists, as revealed by the "Panama Papers", with an offshore company worth several million dollars at the time of his death, as well as with tax evasion through the tax haven The British Virgin Islands, and a bank account for the company in the UK, of which al-Mirghani was the sole authorized signatory.

The foothold of British imperialism would however slip when the al-Mirghani regime was ousted by the 1989-coup led by Omar al-Bashir. The al-Bashir regime quickly made moves to subjugate Sudan to Chinese Social-imperialism, who very soon became the principal imperialist in the country.

Throughout its 30-year reign, the regime proved itself to be loyal lackeys of Chinese social-imperialism and a textbook example of a Chinese semi-colony. According to statistics from the Bank of Sudan, China accounted for 76% of Sudan's exports and 22% of imports from 2005 to 2009. The regime were persistent in providing the Chinese imperialists with concessions in the major industries of the country, especially in the oil sector, and invited the *China National Petroleum Corporation* (CNPC) to set up offices in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, in 1995.

The shares of Chinese imperialism in oil concessions in Sudan (1999-2008):

Total oil investment	47.3%
Upstream oil investment	43.8%
Downstream oil investment	56.9%
Oil pipe lines	47.6%
Oil refinery	50%
Petrochemicals	95%
Oil refinery and petrochemicals	51%

Oil marketing, industry and manufacturing	12.5%
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*Data from Sudan Ministry of Energy and Mining.*

Both Chinese state-owned and privately-owned monopolist oil corporations acquired major shares in the various companies operating within the oil industry in Sudan. Throughout the years the oil projects of the Chinese imperialists would expand even further, with the construction of major infrastructure for extraction and transportation.

During the time of the Chinese imperialists' principal domination of Sudan, they consistently used the classic imperialist push-and-pull tactic; Granting loans the country cannot possibly repay, and then essentially forcing them to sign their predatory deals of «debt relief» to further entangle them in their claws.

### **The Fall of Chinas "Prodigy Semi-colony"**

In addition to carrying the enormous debt on its shoulders, the economy of Sudan was still limping from the subsequent depression of the global cyclical crisis of 2008. Then, the economy of Sudan would deteriorate even further, in late 2017, as the crisis of bureaucratic capitalism worsened exponentially. Roughly a year into the crisis, in September of 2018, inflation rose to 68%, among the highest in the world. Many cash mashines ran out of banknotes and as follows people were unable to get their wages. General food shortages and a severe increase in the price of bread caused long lines outside of bakeries.

On September 9th, al-Bashir dissolved the government, fired many of the state functionaries and appointed new ones. The state introduced emergency austerity measures, devastating the living conditions of the masses even further, in a desperate attempt to halt the rapid acceleration of the crisis. This of course was to no avail, and in December, inflation rose even further, to 72%.

The roar of the masses shook the country, and Sudan lit up like a mighty prairie fire. All over the country, the masses took to the streets in fierce struggle. True to its nature, the state utilized the military in the harsh repression of the protests, but their killings could never extinguish the flames.

Having roused and acquired the rage and hatred of the masses even more than before, the native big bourgeoisie was now trembling with fear. Faced with the decay of bureaucratic capitalism and the biggest popular rebellion the country had seen in his 30-year reign, al-Bashir took steps to introduce fascism in the beginning of 2019, as he declared a one-year state of emergency, dissolved central and state governments, and halted constitutional amendments.

## **Riding the Wave**

While the country was in a state of chaos, and the al-Bashir-regime was too busy with their attempts to stifle the popular rebellion in the country, a group of putschists led by army generals Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Ahmed Awad Ibn Auf seized the opportunity on April 11th 2019. They initiated the coup that would put an end to the 30-year reign of the al-Bashir regime.

Ibn Auf resigned from his position as provisional head of state after a day to pave the way for al-Burhan to assume the position. In unscrupulous and vain attempts to acquire support from the masses for his coup, al-Burhan had previously met with protestors to "listen to their demands". But the masses are not fooled so easily, and when news of the coup d'état reached them, they reacted with spite.

The junta immediately failed in their measly attempts to maintain the mask of being "saviours of the masses". Confirming what the masses knew already, al-Burhan proved himself to be yet another vile lackey and ruthless tyrant. Hoping to relish in riches in return for subjugating Sudan to "western", principally Yankee imperialism, these greedy dogs could not risk losing face in the eyes of the "western" imperialists powers as "competent and reliable compradors".

Therefore, the junta naturally continued the repressive measures of the previous regime to try to quell the rebellious mood of the masses. This culminated in what would be known as the Khartoum massacre on June 3rd, 2019, when the army and paramilitaries viciously attacked masses staging a sit-in protest. Over 128 people were killed, with bodies seen scattered in the Nile river. Over 650 people were injured, and over 70 men and women were raped in the streets by the army. In response to this, millions all over Sudan carried out a general strike starting on June 9th.

A country with general strikes and savage massacres does not exactly seem like a promising and viable investment destination, and so al-Burhan did not exactly manage to portray himself as competent in the eyes of "western" imperialist powers.

Attempting to maintain a semblance of an image as the world bastion of "freedom and democracy", Yankee imperialism had to symbolically condemn the actions of the Sudanese government. But with Sudan being incredibly rich on natural resources, the Yankee parasites could of course not turn away this opportunity that came with the new government, to gain dominance in the country and to ruthlessly exploit it.

## **The Rise of "Western" imperialists, principally Yankee imperialism**

Encouraged by the Yankees in the hope of establishing stability, the regime pledged in August of 2019 to initiate a five-year transition from military junta into a "civilian"

government. Abdalla Hamdok, a more reliable and “civilized” lackey, or in the words of the U.S. Department of State a former “international civil servant”, was appointed Prime Minister and Head of Government, while al-Burhan remains the President.

The country is still deep in crisis, and in early 2021, inflation was reported by Sudan’s Central Bureau of Statistics to be at more than 300%. The combative spirit of the masses has remained unwavering. Thursday September 30th, Reuters reported that 20,000 people demonstrated against the regime in the capital, Khartoum. In light of this, the first priority of the “western” imperialist powers, principally Yankee imperialism, has been to establish order and stability in the country.

According to Investment Monitor, The U.S. State Department said that a number of Yankee corporations had made enquiries about investing in Sudan in 2019 and 2020, but it advised them to proceed with caution, citing the instability in the country and the subsequent inefficiency of the regime of the comprador faction of the big bourgeoisie. Western imperialist powers has however endorsed the regime politically, with the Yankees removing Sudan from it’s list of “State Sponsors of Terrorism” after 27 years, in December of 2020. Especially in 2021, “western” imperialist powers made moves to subjugate Sudan economically.

In January of this year, the Yankee state-owned ‘Export-Import Bank’ made plans to implement their “EXIM financing” in Sudan, guaranteeing Yankee economic dominance in the country by making things more convenient for Yankee corporations. In March, the Corporate Council on Africa hosted a webinar called the ‘U.S.-Sudan Business and Investment Forum’. This year, Yankee imperialism also pledged to “help clear” \$1.055 billion dollars of debt arrears Sudan has with the World Bank, so that Sudan can acquire new loans.

At the “France-Sudan Business Forum”, on May 17th, French imperialism announced the “cancellation” of \$5 billion out of the \$60 billion dollar debt Sudan “owes” France. The Yankee, German, British and Norwegian imperialists have also made plans of “debt-cancellation” with the regime. The “compassionate Samaritans” of French, Swedish and British imperialism has been “kind enough” to grant Sudan new loans, so that it can repay its debt to the IMF and African Development Bank. In June, the IMF announced “debt relief” to the country, as well as funding of \$2.5 billion over the span of three years.

### **‘A Battle-Ground of Imperialism’**

The 2019-coup d’etat and the subsequent fall of its semi-colonial foothold in Sudan was a major blow to Chinese social-imperialism in Africa. Since then, decades of permeate Chinese economic domination and political influence in the country has been uprooted by the new regime. Chinese social-imperialism,

with its offensive plans for the expansion of its spheres of dominance, would naturally not sit idly by while this all occurred.

Roughly three months after the coup that ousted al-Bashir, in July of 2019, the new regime announced that it had foiled a coup-attempt made by some officers and soldiers in the army. Little information about the attempt was disclosed, although it's likely that the putschists were loyal to al-Bashir and to the Chinese imperialists.

Later the same month, the Sudanese military announced that it had thwarted yet another coup-attempt. This time explicitly claiming that the arrested putschists, an unspecified number of senior officers from the army, were plotting to restore the al-Bashir regime.

In April of 2020, there was a failed assassination attempt against Prime Minister Hamdok. His convoy was attacked and hit by a bomb in Khartoum. Sudanese authorities describe the attempt as "professionally plotted". A previously unheard-of group calling itself 'Sudanese Islamic Youth Movement – Sudan Taliban' claimed responsibility for the attack, but parts of Sudanese authorities blamed the attempt on certain 'top generals colluding with former officials from the al-Bashir regime'.

This brings us back to the foiled coup-attempt that occurred just weeks ago. Again, the putschists were linked to the former al-Bashir regime, and being the loyal lackeys that they are, can naturally also be linked to Chinese social-imperialism. We don't know the extent of Chinese involvement in, and the backing of, the conspiracy of the officials and generals of the old regime. The intensity and frequency of the conspiracies, as well as the interests that are at stake, can however give us a good indication.

### **The Coup d'État in Guinea and the Country's Significance for the Imperialists**

Earlier the same month, another coup-attempt took place on the other side of the continent, in Guinea. Contrary to the coup-attempt in Sudan, the coup in Guinea was successful. Guinea's Ministry of Defence reported at one point that the incursion had been defeated, but soon after, photos emerged of President Alpha Condé held captive by soldiers from the special forces.

The initiators of the coup, first and foremost the Special Forces Group (GFS), seized control of state television, and the protagonist of the coup, Colonel Mamady Doumbouya revealed himself and announced to the country that the government, the national assembly and the constitution had been dissolved, declaring that a new government would eventually be formed.

Guinea, one of the poorest countries in the world, has the world's largest reserves of bauxite –the globe's primary source of aluminium. The former French colony is believed to possess from one third to half of the world's bauxite reserves

and hosts one of the world's largest untapped iron ore deposits. This makes Guinea of vital importance to the imperialists, and as follows the coup infused them with fear and uncertainty.

Subsequently, stock market prices for iron ore and bauxite rallied, reaching it's highest point in a decade. The various imperialists, including the Yankees, the French, the Chinese, the British, as well as the EU and UN all rushed to condemn the coup, and the imperialist mining companies demanded reassurance that their mining interests be left untouched.

The Chinese embassy in Guinea urged Chinese citizens to stay alert and keep indoors. The Chinese government, who has close ties with the now ousted president Alpha Condé, demanded his release. The embassy also required all Chinese companies operating in the country to launch emergency plans and improve security awareness.

After a meeting between the ousted government officials and the putschists, Doumbouya reassured the imperialists that the sea borders would stay open so that mining products could be exported, and that the mining sector would be exempted from the nation-wide curfew. As a result, the prices of bauxite and iron ore on the stock market bounced back to normal.

### **The Rupture with Eco, the Imperialist Dream in West Africa**

The Condé-led government originally had close ties to the western imperialists, and the country was part of the imperialist project "*Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*" or "*Economic Community of West African States*" abbreviated ECOWAS in English – a regional political, economic, and military union in West Africa.

ECOWAS is mainly divided along the classical colonial partitions, with most of the former French colonies as well as former Portuguese Guinea-Bissau belonging to the French lackey sub-union UEMOA (*Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine/The West African Economic and Monetary Union*) and the rest, mainly former British colonies, making up the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ).

The long-term goal of ECOWAS is to integrate and fuse these two sub-organizations and to introduce a single common currency called Eco. There has been plans to introduce Eco for two decades now, but its issuing and development has had a troublesome process.

Most of the former French colonies use the currency West African CFA Franc, stemming directly from colonial rule, which has a fixed exchange rate to the Euro and is guaranteed by the French Treasury. Originally the plan was that Eco would be an independent currency, but this wishful thinking on the part of some African heads of states was quickly squashed, prompting complaints from some that the French had hijacked the project.

On the 22nd of December 2019, it was announced that Eco would

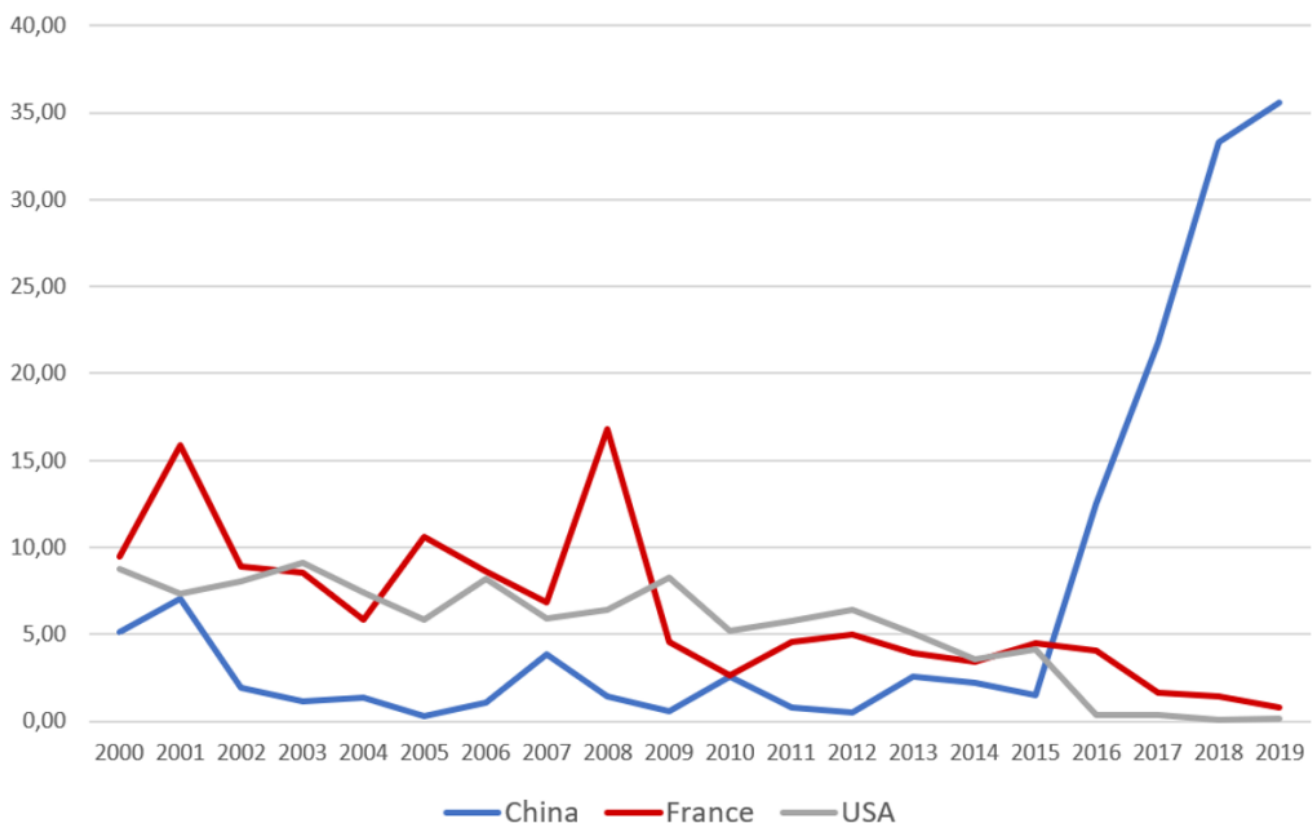
replace the CFA Franc and that it would, conveniently enough and not surprisingly, have a fixed exchange rate with the Euro. On January 16th, 2020, however, five English-speaking ECOWAS-countries; Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia and The Gambia, as well as Guinea, announced their rejection of Eco.

## A Change of Masters

In the case of Guinea, this has to be seen as part of a larger trend, in a wider context of development. In past decade, Guinea, like several other African countries, has slipped more and more from the hands, the claws of the “western” imperialist powers, and has been grasped by the claws of Chinese imperialism. In the case of Guinea, this has meant the decline of the influence and domination of principally French imperialism, but also Yankee, Spanish, Belgian and German imperialism, among others.

In 2019, Chinese goods amounted for 39% of Guinean imports, making China it’s main import partner. Over the latter half of the past decade, China has quickly risen to become the country’s principal export partner, with 35.5% of the country’s exports going to China. In fact, Guinean bauxite is the source for 50% of China’s aluminium.

The chart below shows the percentage of Guinea’s exports (2000-2019) to China, the current principal imperialist of the country, France, the former principal imperialist, and the US – the worlds sole hegemonic imperialist superpower.



Data gathered from *The Observatory of Economic Complexity*



(OEC).

A total of 14 Chinese state-owned and private companies are involved in the bauxite businesses in Guinea, according to aluminium industry research firm Antaika. Chinese companies have also invested heavily in the iron ore extraction in the Simandou mountains.

On September 6th, 2017, China granted Guinea a \$20 billion loan over 20 years in exchange for bauxite concessions. The loan guaranteed Chinese companies an alumina refinery, a bauxite mine as well as other bauxite projects. The deal also stated that Chinese firms will build multi-sector infrastructure, including road networks. In February of this year, the Guinean and Chinese governments signed two economic and technical deals, "writing off" Guinea's \$23 million debt.

On the 10th of June 2020, a consortium owned by Chinese, Singaporean and French investors obtained a 25-year concession, acquiring the mining rights to two blocks in the north of Simandou worth \$14 billion.

In 2020, encouraged by Russian imperialists and supported by the Chinese, Condé enacted a new constitution that changed the maximum term limit for the time he could serve as president. This in turn ignited the masses and sparked fierce protests, which the Condé regime responded to with bloodshed, killing many protestors.

During Condé's rule in the latter years, the Russian imperialists were also given advantages in Guinea's mining sector. Among the Russian mining companies operating in Guinea are Kindia Bauxite Company, the Dian-Dian Bauxite Company, Friguia complex and Norgold.

### **A Good Dog Obeys Its Owner**

It is in this context as described above the coup d'état in Guinea must be understood.

The supposed reasons for the coup, claimed by the putschists, is the regurgitated but true accusation of corruption that all native big bourgeois are guilty of at some level. The second supposed reason is Condé's repression against the masses, which in fact the putschists, being in the Special Forces Group (GFS), had a leading role in.

Although our knowledge of the reasons for the coup and how it was organized is limited, we can see potential implications based on the background of its main protagonist: Col. Doumbouya.

Doumbouya, returned to Guinea in 2018 to lead the GFS. Until then he served as a mercenary in the French Foreign Legion where he rose to the rank of master corporal. He went to the French École de Guerre military academy, and he has a master's degree in Defence and Industrial Dynamics at Paris's Pantheon-Assas University. He has also received extensive military

training in Israel, Senegal and Gabon.

Throughout his career he has served the French imperialists well by fighting for them in Afghanistan, the Ivory Coast, Djibouti and the Central African Republic, as well as serving in close protection missions in Israel, Cyprus, the UK and Guinea.

In an article by Guinean newspaper *Friaguinée*, critical to both Condé and Doumbouya, they raised questions on the immense wealth of Doumbouya:

“Taking advantage of his position and the privileges attached to it, he has now become the owner of an important real estate heritage. In Conakry, he has a three-storey building in Landreah ... an eleven-storey building ... a building in Kankan, a villa being finished in Dubreka. These goods were acquired in such a short period of time that one can get an idea of the extent of the race for illicit enrichment ... How could this officer who receives a monthly salary of less than five million [] manage all these buildings?” (Our translation)

The same article, published roughly two weeks before the coup, also describes Doumbouya falling out of favour with Condé. Although little is known about this, *Friaguinée* reports on Doumbouya being placed under what seems like house arrest in the town of Forécariah and under surveillance by Directorate of Territorial Surveillance (DST) and General Intelligence. If this is the case, this could indicate that Doumbouya was acting of his own volition in carrying out the coup, as a result of greed-based internal contention in the comprador faction.

France initially condemned the coup in Guinea, but whether this will change, and what implications the coup will have for French and Chinese imperialism in Guinea, time will soon reveal. But so far throughout his life, Doumbouya has been a loyal mercenary and lackey of the French imperialists, whom he has received extensive military training from.

A well-trained dog obeys its owner. It doesn't bite the hand that feeds it. Considering Doumbouya's record, it's highly likely that the junta will cater to the interests of French imperialism, however one can never know for sure with mercenaries and compradors.

After international pressure, especially from ECOWAS, the Doumbouya junta gave into the demands of initiating a transition to a “civilian government”. A ceremony was held where Doumbouya was sworn in as Transitional President. The majority of foreign diplomats based in Guinea attended the ceremony. Although the Doumbouya-led coup ousted a loyal Chinese lackey, representatives of Chinese imperialism also attended the ceremony. So did representatives of French and Russian imperialism, among others.

The Chinese and Russian imperialists are likely gauging the

situation to see if the Doumbouya-junta will turn away "eastern" imperialism in favour of "western", principally French imperialism – or if they will maintain the course of a "classic semi-colony", prostituting the country to the highest bidder, with "equal opportunity" for all the imperialists. If, and as long as they can continue their business as usual, the Chinese, like all other imperialists, are more than willing to be "friends".

Having suspended Guineas membership following the coup, all the ECOWAS-countries boycotted the ceremony. Representatives from Mali did however attend. Mali was suspended from ECOWAS as well earlier this year, due to yet another coup.

### **The Context of the Coups in Mali**

Mali, like many of the countries in Africa, has been the scene of multiple coups throughout the years. The coup in May is the third one in a decade, and the second one in just a year. Mali is Africa's 8th largest country by area, but is the continent's fourth largest producer of gold. In 2020, gold comprised 80% of the country's national exports. Mali is incredibly rich with natural resources, and as follows, has been an epicentre of inter-imperialist contradictions.

In the past two years, especially this year, the inter-imperialist contradictions have been sharpening in Mali. Still, it is important to emphasize once again, that the inter-imperialist contradiction always develops in collusion and struggle, and that at this moment, collusion is the principle. The various imperialists in collusion are pinning down the people of Mali while they are ruthlessly exploiting them.

So intense has the anti-imperialists mass struggles grown to become in Mali, that in order to have some semblance of control over the masses while they exploit the country, the imperialists have mobilized a multinational force of 13,289 U.N. troops and 1,920 international police to keep the masses in check. The multinational force consists of police and military personnel from 66 different countries, including from various imperialists like the Yankees, Chinese, Germans and British, as well as lackeys from various regimes. On top of that a force of 5,100 French troops occupies the G5 Sahel region.

With Mali and most of the other countries in the Sahel region being former French colonies, French imperialism has maintained a strong presence there. The French imperialists has in fact spearheaded the oppression of the masses in Mali through the imperialist war of aggression that began under the name "Operation Serval", which continued under the name "Operation Barkhane" and expanded to encompass and subjugate the masses in other former French colonies in the Sahel, specifically Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad.

### **The French Imperialist War of Aggression in the Sahel region**

Burdened by the heavy weight of the three mountains oppressing them, namely imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and semi-feudalism, the hatred of the masses in Mali against the regime grew. This culminated in 2012, as multiple groups initiated armed struggle against the rotten regime. This would be the start of a civil war that still goes on till this day.

The initiating groups were in large part comprised by various ethnic minorities, like the Tuareg people, who comprise the majority of the *National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad* (MNLA), and other groups who fought or are fighting for the self-determination of an area they call Azawad. Also engaged in the armed struggle were various ethnic minority-dominated Islamist groups.

The various organisations carrying out armed struggle unified and advanced rapidly. In a short time span, the rebels seized large swaths of land from the comprador and country-selling regime, and very soon controlled two-thirds of the country. As the advance of the rebels started to become a threat to the capital, French imperialism – the country's principal imperialist – initiated a war of aggression on Mali on January 11th 2013 through "Operation Serval", shifting the principal contradiction in the country from masses-feudalism to nation-imperialism. The various other imperialists chimed in by committing to a multinational force of U.N. troops to keep the masses in check.

Here we refer to what Chairman Mao wrote on such situations, in *On Contradiction*:

**"In such a case, foreign imperialism and internal reaction are placed, without the slightest concealment, at one pole, and the broad masses of the people are grouped together at the other, and thus the main contradiction is formed, which determines or influences the development of the other contradictions."**

The alliance of the various original rebel groups would however start to break up, as inter-ethnic contradictions were further antagonized. The French imperialists are no strangers to the colonial tactic of divide and conquer, like can be seen perhaps most explicitly in the Rwandan genocide, although in fact all of colonial history is a history of pitting different ethnic groups against each other, whipped up by the colonialists. This is a manifestation of the general tactic of the reaction of pitting masses against masses.

The Islamist armed groups and the MNLA would become enemies, and the leadership of the MNLA would capitulate and become running dogs for French imperialism, fighting alongside French and Malian government troops. While the various rebel groups split multiple times, the war of aggression only served to increase the combative spirit of the masses tenfold, as new groups were formed, resulting in a myriad of different rebel groups.

The imperialist war of aggression fuelled the flames. The

masses took to arms not only in Mali, but also in neighbouring Niger and Burkina Faso. The region became a prairie fire, turning the Sahel hotter than the Sahara for the imperialists. In attempts to quell the spread and rise of the armed struggle, the French imperialists expanded their war of aggression to encompass the broader region and so "Operation Serval" was replaced with "Operation Barkhane".

The deep masses are permeated from head to toe, imbued to the bones, to the heart, with hatred for imperialism. They are throwing themselves into combat. They are rushing to get their hands on arms so that they can make a flaming hell for the imperialists and their lackeys. The problem is that we are not there to lead them, and so just like what was the case in Afghanistan, the struggle of the masses is being fought under reactionary banners. The just struggle of the masses is being misled and they will eventually be betrayed by reactionaries, as long as it does not have the leadership of the Communist Party. This is due to our transitory shortcomings. But we have the ongoing people's wars, which despite their problems and difficulties are a beacon and guide for the struggles of the peoples of the world. What we need is for them to develop further so that they express their full transformative force not only in their own countries but internationally. This, together with the new people's wars, which are in the midst of being born in the midst of labour pains, will have a decisive influence on the development of the subjective conditions of the new democratic revolution in Africa, in and as part of the world proletarian revolution. Once again the law laid down by Chairman Mao that the victorious development of the revolution in one country or more will serve as a powerful impetus for the development of the subjective conditions in the different countries of the world, mainly the constitution/reconstitution of the Communist Party, will be fulfilled. This is what the renegade and treacherous rats of the revisionist and capitulationist ROL, headed by Miriam, in Peru, the revisionists like Avakian and Prachandra and all sorts of incorrigible rightists deny. The development of the subjective conditions of the revolution also as the objective situation or development of the revolutionary situation, like all material processes, also takes place in conformity with the law of uneven development. It is and will be as Chairman Mao pointed out: **"It was through the Russians that the Chinese found Marxism. Before the October Revolution, the Chinese were not only ignorant of Lenin and Stalin, they did not even know of Marx and Engels. The salvos of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism. The October Revolution helped progressives in China, as throughout the world, to adopt the proletarian world outlook as the instrument for studying a nation's destiny and considering anew their own problems."**

Several of these armed groups, the "Islamists", have committed massacres against civilians. In many cases, this is a result of the tense inter-ethnic divides that are so prevalent in the former colonies, in the oppressed nations. In 2020, an estimated 2,440 civilians were killed in Burkina Faso, Mali

and Niger. That year, in Mali, the regime were responsible for more civilian deaths than the Islamist groups.

## **A Great Victory for the Masses – A Bitter Defeat for French Imperialism**

The anti-imperialist sentiment only grew and grew among the masses, and in the beginning of 2020, there were huge protests against French imperialism. “Many Malians believe that the Western presence has no other purpose than the exploitation of raw materials” said Boubacar Salif Traore, the general director of Malian consulting firm Afriglob. French president Macron summoned his lackeys in the G5 Sahel and demanded that they deal with the mass protests against the French imperialist war of aggression, threatening the withdrawal of French troops.

The regimes of the landlord-bureaucratic state in service of imperialism, in this case mainly French imperialism, have little to no base. The regime in Mali would succumb to the armed struggle of the masses if not for the imperialist troops occupying the country. The big bourgeoisie knows this very well. Although the French did not want to leave the region, they know full well that these lackeys only care for their own power and wealth, their own position, and that they would therefore take such a threat seriously. Later that year, however, the French sent even more troops to the region, prompting even more protests.

In the period from 2015-2020, armed actions doubled every single year in the Sahel. As the armed struggle of the masses grows increasingly as a response to the imperialist war of aggression, it consumes increasingly more of the imperialist troops and resources. Just like Afghanistan, Sahel became a quicksand for the imperialists. The Yankees, who the French occupational force depends on for intelligence and logistics, has been considering a drawdown of their forces in the Sahel.

In June of this year, the French imperialists announced a drawdown of their forces in Mali, saying that their presence is “no longer adapted to the needs in the area.” They announced their plan to reduce their troops stationed in the country from 5,100 to 2,500-3,000 by the first quarter of 2022, and to shut down their military bases in Timbuktu, Tessalit and Kidal.

Make no mistake, this marks a defeat for French imperialism in particular and for imperialism in general. Let this be yet another sign that underscores the fact that we are living in the strategic offensive of the proletarian world revolution, that we are living in the era where imperialism is in its last, rotting and dying phase. We see again and again that the imperialist wars of aggression, fails to achieve the foothold that they once did, and instead becomes quicksand for the imperialists, consuming more and more of their forces, engulfing their war of aggression in the flames of resistance.

But French imperialism is by no means withdrawing from the region. Instead this marks a tactical retreat. The French imperialists intend to relocate the bulk of their forces deployed in the region to the border area where Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger meet. The French intend to continue their operations in the region, but in the form of low-intensity warfare and the training of the armies of the landlord-bureaucratic states in service of imperialism. The French imperialists have also made plans to establish a French-led European force to support the armies of its semi-colonies of the G5 Sahel, and are trying to get the Yankees and the other European imperialists countries to play a bigger role. This is the context in which the coups in Mali must be understood.

### **The 2020 Coup d'État**

In the summer of 2020, the wave of protests grew and was more firmly directed against the government of Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, a loyal lackey of French imperialism. Capitalizing on the anti-regime sentiment among the masses, riding the wave, like in Sudan, like in Guinea – a group of putschists saw their chance and seized the opportunity.

On August 18th 2020, soldiers stormed a military base in the town of Kati and seized control of the armoury. Soon after, tanks, armoured vehicles and military trucks rushed to the capital. There the putschists seized control of government buildings and arrested president Keïta as well as a handful of other ministers. The borders were closed and a night-time curfew was imposed as the putschists announced the country in a TV broadcast.

Both the French and Yankee imperialists were quick to condemn the coup. The African Union suspended Mali's membership, and the Yankees and the EU suspended training of the Malian army. ECOWAS condemned the coup and shut down the member states' borders with Mali. In addition, the French lackey ECOWAS sub-union UEMOA blocked Mali from using the CFA Franc. With CFA Franc being the currency of Mali, this essentially stranded Mali from international trade, illustrating the choke-hold France has on its former colonies through the CFA Franc.

The leaders of the coup were:

Colonel *Malick Diaw*, the deputy commander of the Kati military base. According to some reports, he was the logistical leader of the coup. Shortly before the coup he returned from Russia after having spent a year there while attending the Higher Military College in Moscow.

Colonel *Sadio Camara*, former head of Mali's military academy. Together with Assimi Goïta, he is believed to be the organizational leader of the coup. He has received training at the École militaire interarmes in France. Camara also attended the Higher Military College in Moscow for a year before the coup, together with Malick Diaw.

Colonel *Assimi Goïta*, one of the principal leaders of the

coup. Goïta has throughout his career received military training from various imperialists including the Russian, French, German and Yankee imperialists. In 2018 he attended the same Yankee-led military training programme in Burkina Faso as Doumbouya – the coup leader in Guinea.

In addition to the principal leaders of the coup, multiple of the other members of the junta had received military training in Russia. The Prime Minister the putschists would later appoint, Choguel Maïga, said it himself that “Many military and civilian experts were trained in Russia”. After the coup, the putschists initiated a strengthening of diplomatic ties with the Russian imperialists, and in turn, Russia has been supplying the Malian army with military equipment.

ECOWAS pressured the junta to initiate a transition from military to “civilian rule”. An interim government was appointed, consisting of 121 ministers of which only 22 were from the army. The transitional period was expected to be completed in March 2022. A group of 17 electors appointed Bah Ndaw as President, and Goïta as Vice President.

### **The Various Factions of the Native Big Bourgeoisie as Avatars of the Imperialists in the Internal Power Struggle**

During his career Ndaw, a retired army officer, has served as Deputy Chief of Staff of the Malian National Guard. In 2003 he became the Chief of Staff of the Malian Air Force. When he was young soldier, in 1974, he was sent to the social-imperialist Soviet Union to receive helicopter training. In 1994 he graduated from the École de Guerre military academy in France – the same Guinea’s Doumbouya attended.

Ndaw previously served as Minister of Defence from 2014-2015 in the former French lackey regime of Keïta. During his time in office he signed a major “defence agreement” with France. When sworn in as interim President he pledged to uphold previously made international agreements.

ECOWAS proclaimed their support for Bah Ndaw as they put forward the ultimatum that they would only lift the embargo they had imposed against Mali if a “civilian Prime Minister” was appointed by Ndaw. Considering which imperialist the majority of the ECOWAS-states are lackeys of, their eager and firm support for Ndaw should come as no surprise.

Moctar Ouane was appointed as Prime Minister by Ndaw, as announced on Malian state television on 27 September 2020. Ouane has a long career as a lackey with close ties to western imperialism. He was Mali’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1995 to 2002, during which he serves as President of the UN Security Council in September 2000 and December 2001. He served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2004 to 2011 under the government of Amadou Toumani Touré. During this time, French imperialism had a strong military presence in the country through French-led joint military exercises and the training of officers at the “Peacekeeping



School". He also worked several years for UEMOA.

On May 24 this year, president Ndaw initiated a cabinet reshuffle without consulting vice president Goïta. In the reshuffle some of Goïta's loyal ministers were removed from their position, including Minister of Defence and coup-leader Camara. On the afternoon that same day, several sources, including the Yankee embassy, reported an increase in military activity in the country. In the evening Ndaw and Ouane were detained and taken to Kati military base, after which they were placed in house arrest.

The relations with French imperialism, which had already deteriorated since the 2020-coup, now deteriorated even further. The French imperialists, the Yankees, the UN and ECOWAS immediately condemned the coup, with ECOWAS suspending Mali. The French imperialists suspended all "joint military operations" but resumed them a month later. Shortly after however, the end of Operation Barkhane was announced.

A week after the coup, a cabinet had been appointed by Goïta with Camara reinstated as Minister of Defence. The cabinet also included several other new ministers, including Shogel Kokalla Maïga as Prime Minister. Maïga studied in Russia and speaks Russian. In a recent interview with Russian state-owned news agency RIA Novosti regarding arms deals and international relations, Maïga paid lip service to Russian imperialism:

"If we want weapons from a number of states, but they block, blackmail, interfere in our internal affairs, it means we will cooperate with a country that does not blackmail, does not interfere in our internal affairs, respects our sovereignty, respects our people. Today we can say that Russia is a reliable partner that we can reckon with." (Our translation)

## **Russian Imperialism and the Wagner Group**

In September, reports surfaced claiming that the government in Mali was engaged in discussions with Russian imperialist mercenary *Wagner Group* over a possible military deal. The spokesperson for the Ministry of Defence did not deny the reports but said "We haven't signed anything with Wagner, but we are talking with everyone", while according to Reuters, they are very close to a deal.

The Wagner Group is a so-called Private Military Company (PMC) with close ties to the Russian state. It is running the errands of Russian imperialism and has been involved in Libya, Syria, Ukraine, Mozambique, Venezuela, Madagascar, Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR).

According to some sources, the deal would pay Wagner Group around \$10.8 million a month for around a thousand mercenaries to train the Malian military and provide protection for senior officials. The Russian imperialists have already signed military agreements with several Sahelian countries. It is becoming clear that Russian imperialism is filling cracks in

the sphere of influence of French imperialism.

ECOWAS and the French, Yankee, British and German imperialists all strongly condemn the deal. Yankee and French imperialist officials tried to dissuade the Malian government from moving forward with the deal for weeks.

It is becoming clearer and clearer that the Malian state is run by a certain breed of lackey dogs – a faction of the native big bourgeoisie loyal to Russian imperialism. If the same intervention model used by Wagner in the CAR was to be applied, the specified mandate would not prevent Wagner mercenaries from directly engaging against the armed struggle of the masses alongside Malian soldiers. In the CAR, the Russian imperialists are given control of important mining deposits in turn for ensuring the survival of the regime led by President Faustin-Archange Touadera.

Exploiting the opportunity the defeat of Operation Barkhane brings, these unscrupulous quislings are inviting Russian imperialism to intervene in the country to save their own skin from the armed struggle, the wrath of the masses oppressed by the three mountains. They are exploiting this opportunity to prostitute their country to Russian imperialism, in turn for personal enrichment.

*Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA)*, a coalition of the “rebels” who capitulated and became running dogs for French imperialism, has now suddenly had their “rebellious spirit” awoken again as they pledge to take up arms again if the Malian state makes a deal with the Wagner Group.

According to another interview with RIA Novosti, Prime Minister Maïga claims French troops have occupied an enclave in Kidal where Malian troops are forbidden to enter. Maïga claims that the French imperialists have been using the enclave for the training of “terrorists”. Although faced with a defeat, French imperialism has clearly not given up on Mali.

The contradiction between lackeys of French imperialism and lackeys of Russian imperialism is a contradiction that has manifested not only in Mali, but also in Chad, where as previously mentioned – the Wagner group has played a role. This precise contradiction is a determining factor in the events that led to the coup that took place in Chad this year.

### **Wagner, the Coup in Chad, and imperialist nepotism**

On the election day in Chad, April 11th this year, armed group *Front for Change and Concord in Chad* (FACT) attacked a border post of the Chadian army. This would mark the start of a month-long struggle between FACT and the Chadian state, as the group embarked on an offensive throughout Chad, heading for the capital N’Djamena.

A March 2021 report by the United Nations claimed that FACT was based in the Al Jufra military base in Libya, which is also used by the Wagner Group, who supposedly also trained the

“rebels”.

At this time Idriss Déby, a loyal lackey of French imperialism was President of the country. Idriss was a former military officer, and during the offensive of the “rebels”, he commanded troops on the frontline, during which he was killed. His son, Mahmat Déby – an army general, immediately initiated a coup by disbanding the parliament, to secure his place as his father’s successor.

Chad is situated in the centre of the Sahel region and as follows is an important strategic base for French imperialism to maintain domination in the region. As follows, French imperialism cannot tolerate a power vacuum in the country, especially during a civil war. The French imperialists, who the Déby-dynasty has close ties with, quickly realized that Mahmat’s coup was convenient for them as they sought to secure and maintain their established presence in the country. Subsequently, the French imperialists were quick to recognize the putschist government admitting it was “necessary for security” amid “exceptional circumstances”.

It should come as no surprise that contrary to what they did with regards to Mali, ECOWAS did not condemn the coup – illustrating their seemingly ambivalent and hypocritical attitude. It becomes obvious that they are not concerned with democratic principles, but rather that they are just lackeys being lackeys.

During the funeral of Idriss Déby, French President Emmanuel Macron was the only “western” leader to attend his funeral, as he sat in the front row next to Idriss’ son Mahmat. Right after, Mahmat was discretely received at the Elysée Palace.

## **In Synthesis**

Bureaucratic capitalism, the capitalism which imperialism develops in its colonies and semi-colonies, gives rise to unscrupulous governments of the various groups into which one or another faction of the native big bourgeoisie is divided according to its imperialist master, who without a shred of shame prostitute their land, their nation and their people to one or more imperialist powers. The various factions of the big bourgeoisie, be it the bureaucratic or comprador bourgeoisie, are impregnated with greed that is never satisfied, and as it follows they often fight each other like dogs for the prey thrown to them by their imperialist masters. This results in multiple coups and civil wars that are initiated of their own volition. This is part of bureaucratic capitalism: the fundamental fragility of so-called political stability in the oppressed countries. As often as these events come back to bite them, the imperialists use and initiate them as a means of indirect intervention to settle the feud among themselves over the spoils that are those oppressed countries.

We see that the oppressed nations are the battleground of the imperialists as they bargain for spheres of influence. Thus

they express two contradictions: nation-imperialism and the inter-imperialist contradiction.

Imperialism always exists in collusion and struggle, and at the moment we are in a time when collusion is the main thing. But the struggle is absolute and the bargaining for spheres of influence takes place through indirect interventions and in others through direct intervention or occupation. Instead of the direct confrontation for the division of the world through direct war between the imperialists until the imperialist world war – which characterises the moment when the struggle becomes the main aspect between collusion and struggle.

We see Russian imperialism and Chinese social-imperialism, mainly Chinese social-imperialism, advancing in Africa. We see that Chinese social-imperialism is exploiting the cracks of the hegemony of the US imperialism, the single hegemonic superpower. We see Russian imperialism advancing in the Sahel region, exploiting the cracks in the sphere of influence of French imperialism, an imperialist power, but not a superpower.

We defend the successes of the masses in the Sahel, aware that this is a struggle waged under reactionary banners, but nevertheless, they are part of the process of the world proletarian revolution. But, the masses need the leadership of the Communist Party and are clamouring for it, as long as they do not have the leadership of a genuine Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Communist Party, the masses will be orphans and their struggle can never result in a real victory of the new democratic revolution underway, they need to be guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, mainly Maoism. We rejoice at the defeat of French imperialism in the Sahel, mainly in Mali, while being very vigilant and firmly opposed to the advances of Russian imperialism, and we have no illusions about the reduction of French troops in the region.

But we celebrate this victory of the masses in Mali, in the Sahel, as we did with the victory of the masses in Afghanistan, because this shows us something very important. It shows us that instead of succeeding in establishing a solid foothold in the oppressed nations through their imperialist wars of aggression, the oppressed nations become quicksand for the imperialists, consuming more and more of their troops and resources as they get caught up in a rising tide of masses taking up arms against imperialism, this drives the development of the objective situation in the world and contributes to the development of the subjective forces on a world level and must be and is being for the very development of the subjective forces of revolution in each of these countries on the African continent. The people's wars in Peru, India, the Philippines and Turkey need to develop further, which, together with the new people's wars that will take place in any case, will be responsible for showing these masses the full transformative power of Maoism and the invincibility of people's war.

The series of wars of aggression and the other interventions of imperialism on the continent is a characteristic of the collapse of imperialism, it is part of the complex series of wars of all kinds of the collapse of imperialism. It is a symptom of the strategic defensiveness of imperialism and world reaction, it shows that imperialism is in its last and rotten phase, rotten to the core. Like a balance, the correlation of forces is shifting in our favour, and the strategic defensive of imperialism necessarily means the strategic offensive of the world proletarian revolution.

We see that the masses are fighting. Their fighting spirit is getting higher and higher. We see that the Third World is the centre of the storm of revolution, that the masses oppressed by the three mountains – imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and semi-feudalism – are fighting fiercely. As proclaimed in the Programme of Struggle against Imperialism (Peking Review, 25 May 1971): **“Countries want independence, nations want liberation and peoples want revolution; this has become an irresistible historical trend”**.

We live in what Chairman Mao defined as the last 50 to 100 years where imperialism and world reaction will be wiped off the face of the earth once and for all. Where the paper tigers will be turned to ashes by the mighty prairie fire of revolution and people's war, until the new dawn of shining communism. At this moment, our task, our duty as communists, is to unite with the national liberation movement in the Third World and place the red banner of Maoism at the helm of the proletarian world revolution. Today we are working for the successful realisation of the Unified Maoist International Conference and the birth of the New International Organisation of the Proletariat.

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