

Russian Imperialism and the Coup d'État in Burkina Faso

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

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On January 24th, the army, led by lieutenant-colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba and other high-ranking military figures, seized power in Burkina Faso. President Roch Marc Christian Kabore was put under arrest, and representatives of the putchists announced the coup on state television. A nighttime curfew was imposed, the constitution suspended, and the government and parliament dissolved.



Image collage: From left to right: Wagner Group Mercenary, Coup-leader Col. Dambia, Owner of the Wagner Group Yevgeny Prigozhin (Big monopolist and close affiliate of the Russian state) together with Vladimir Putin in 2006.

The coup was quickly condemned by Yankee imperialism, the world's sole hegemonic superpower, French imperialism, the so-far principal imperialist in the country, the United Nations, as well as the principally French-lackey West African union ECOWAS. On the contrary, Russian imperialism has not condemned the coup. In fact, "Communauté des Officiers pour la Sécurité Internationale (COSI)", a front for the Russian mercenary "Wagner Group", offered the putschists their hand. At the request of bourgeois journalists inquiring about the position of COSI on the coup, a letter by COSI-head Alexander Ivanov was published saying:

"People started to take to the streets demanding the resignation of the country's administration and better material support for the soldiers and their families. As a result, the army announced on television the overthrow of the president, the dissolution of the government and parliament and the closing of the borders in order to control the situation in the country. Their aim is to defeat terrorism and protect their people. It is a good cause and society agrees with the military. [...] I believe that if Russian instructors are invited to train the army of Burkina Faso, they will be able to do it effectively."¹ In an interview, Ivanov elaborated by saying "I believe that this coup, which took place because of the deteriorating security situation in Burkina Faso, was nothing more than a 'peaceful' rebellion."²

Reportedly, putsch-leader and quisling Dambia had inquired twice to former lackey president Kabore on the question of inviting Russian imperialist intervention through the Wagner Group. Denying the second inquiry was reportedly one of the last actions of Kabore before his ousting.³ In an interview, a

Yankee Department of State spokesperson said: “The Department of Defense is aware of the allegations that the Russian-backed Wagner Group may have been a force behind the military takeover in Burkina Faso”⁴ but did not want to comment on their position on this question.

For almost a decade, French imperialism has been waging war of aggression in the Sahel-region to maintain their presence and subjugation of the country. The war of aggression is directed at the just struggle and heroic resistance of the masses against imperialism, at this moment being fought under reactionary banners in the absence of a proletarian leadership, represented by a militarised Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Communist Party. However, just like the imperialist military intervention in Afghanistan, the intervention in the Sahel-region has also become quicksand for the imperialists, consuming ever more troops and resources. In the period from 2015-2020, armed actions doubled every single year in the Sahel. This is characteristic of the strategic defensive of imperialism – it is in an advanced state of decomposition, and correlating to this we find ourselves in the strategic offensive of the World Proletarian Revolution, while a new great wave of the world proletarian revolution is developing and we are entering a new period of revolutions, within the period of 50 to 100 years when Chairman Mao foresaw that imperialism and reaction will suffer defeat at the hands of the iron legions of the proletariat which is continuously being formed and strengthened.

In June last year, French imperialism was forced to admit a relative defeat in their war of aggression in the Sahel-region, and announced a drawdown of their troops from 5,100 to 2,500-3,000 by the first quarter of 2022. Recently, a military convoy en route from the Ivory Coast to Mali was met with fierce resistance from the masses in both Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali. In our article “Annotations on the International Situation” we write: “The regime of the big landlord-

bureaucratic state in Burkina Faso shut down the internet for several days to prevent the masses from exchanging information and to prevent masses elsewhere along the route of the convoy to be inspired. The French army responded to the civilian blockades with bullets". Moreover, *A Nova Democracia*, reported that 3 million people protested against French imperialism and ECOWAS in Mali, mid-january of this year.⁵

The big bourgeoisie in Burkina Faso is trembling at the wrath and fury of the masses oppressed by the three mountains; imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudality. Infused with fear by the defeat faced by French imperialism, a faction of the big bourgeoisie lost faith in French imperialism and their abilities to keep them safe while they embellish in riches at the expense of the masses. Consequently, in light of the defeat faced by French imperialism, this section of the big bourgeoisie is looking elsewhere to safeguard and maintain their position as parasites on the backs of the people. This is expressed in the ambitions of this section of the big bourgeoisie of a change of master, from French to Russian imperialism, in the hopes that they can continue living their parasitic life in return for prostituting Burkina Faso to Russian imperialism. It is this group of one faction of the big bourgeoisie, colluding with Russian imperialism, that the putschists are acting in the interests of and on behalf of.

This must be seen in the context of the inter-imperialist contradiction, which develops in the midst of collusion and struggle, and how it operates in the oppressed countries by managing the internal inter-reactionary contradictions – which, too, develops in collusion and struggle between factions and groups of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords – and the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations, the latter being the main contradiction in the world today. The inter-imperialist contradiction is expressed in the struggle between the imperialist powers for the partition and repartition of the colonies and semi-colonies, the very reason

why they are fighting for world hegemony; they are currently preparing for a third world war, which will take place when they are in a position to do so, as we have explained in "The World Scene".⁶ But we maintain that imperialism is not just one, there are a handful of imperialist countries struggling for world hegemony, to be the one, to share the spoils, this contradiction is developing in collusion and the struggle is absolute and the collusion is temporary and relative, and at the moment the collusion is the main aspect.

Thus, the oppressed nations of the Third World are battlefields, where the imperialist powers contend in various forms for spheres of influence. Lenin taught us that the change of the forms of the contest from peaceful to violent forms and back to peaceful forms, etc. does not change the class character of the struggle. In this inter-imperialist contest, the Third World is the spoils, and they wage this struggle by direct and indirect means, coup d'états being one of the latter. More concretely, the events in Burkina Faso must be seen as part of a wider trend in which Russian imperialism is trying to seize the initiative by offensive measures within its defensive position due to the encirclement being developed by the US imperialists and their "allies" against its own territory. Russian imperialism is thus exploiting the cracks in French imperialism's spheres of influence in West Africa.

The Wagner Group is currently operating in at least 12 countries, roughly half of them in Africa. Among the countries where Wagner has operated are two other Sahelian countries, namely Chad and Mali. In Chad, Russian imperialism utilized civil war as an indirect means in the struggle for repartition in contention with French imperialism through the backing of "rebel group" "Front for Change and Concord in Chad". It is the expression of its so-called "hybrid war", to respond to the "low intensity war" of US imperialism, which under the government of the genocidal Obama privileges indirect

aggression by establishing a large military base in Africa with a system of smaller bases in key countries and the use of mercenary commandos for its special operations and the training of native mercenary troops and extensive use of "drone warfare", a tactic that was baptised as "Obama's wars". In Mali last year, lackeys of Russian imperialism also carried out a coup, and very soon after these quislings invited Russian military intervention, which as mentioned, often maintains a covert profile through the so-called "Private Military Company" Wagner Group, supposedly only responsible for training and security. But as we have seen in the Central African Republic, the outlined mandates has not prevented these Russian mercenaries from fighting alongside the native lackey army, in return for control of mining deposits.⁷

A section of the big bourgeoisie in Burkina Faso, one of the groups into which the factions of the big bourgeoisie are divided, by taking over the representation of the big bourgeoisie and the landowners in the country, wants a change of imperialist masters in the hope of saving its own skin. We say: dream on! Their days are numbered. Deep down, they know. They are trembling. We can see unfolding before us a new high tide of national liberation struggle as part of the new great wave of World Proletarian Revolution and of the new period of revolutions we are entering.

That the imperialists in general resort, whenever possible, to indirect aggression through covert forms of aggression such as "low-intensity warfare", "hybrid warfare", "asymmetric warfare" etc., before their failures in direct interventions through occupation and rejection on their home front, which they have all reaped since World War II, demonstrates the great truth of Maoism, rightly and correctly repeated by Chairman Gonzalo, that the masses have stood up and will never again allow themselves to be stifled, thus showing that revolution is the main historical and political trend in the world today, that the main contradiction is oppressed nations-

imperialism, in the world today, that the nations oppressed by the weight of the masses are the basis of the world revolution, that the peasantry is the main force of the struggle against imperialism, of the struggle against the three mountains (against imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and feudalism), that this movement of the oppressed nations, together with the movement of the international proletariat, are the two forces which, led by the international proletariat through its Communist Parties, make up the world proletarian revolution. The international proletarian movement is the movement of the proletariat throughout the world and the national liberation movement is the movement of the oppressed nations. Lenin said that it is a movement that will make great contributions and cannot be marginalised. All this falls within the period of "50 to 100 years" when imperialism and reaction will be wiped off the face of the earth.

Chairman Mao said: "The world after World War II has a bright future. This is the general trend. [...] The world is progressing, the future is bright and no one can change this general trend of history. We should carry on constant propaganda among the people on the facts of world progress and the bright future ahead so that they will build their confidence in victory. At the same time, we must tell the people and tell our comrades that there will be twists and turns in our road. There are still many obstacles and difficulties along the road of revolution. The Seventh Congress of our Party assumed that the difficulties would be many, for we preferred to assume there would be more difficulties rather than less. Some comrades do not like to think much about difficulties. But difficulties are facts; we must recognize as many difficulties as there are and should not adopt a "policy of non-recognition". We must recognize difficulties, analyse them and combat them. There are no straight roads in the world; we must be prepared to follow a road which twists and turns and not try to get things on the cheap. It must not be imagined that one fine morning all the

reactionaries will go down on their knees of their own accord. In a word, while the prospects are bright, the road has twists and turns. There are still many difficulties ahead which we must not overlook. By uniting with the entire people in a common effort, we can certainly overcome all difficulties and win victory.”⁸

[1https://twitter.com/officierssi/status/1485975235321110530?s=21](https://twitter.com/officierssi/status/1485975235321110530?s=21) (Our translation)

[2https://news.myseldon.com/ru/news/index/266104219](https://news.myseldon.com/ru/news/index/266104219) (Our translation)

[3https://www.thedailybeast.com/burkina-faso-president-ousted-after-refusing-to-pay-wagner-mercenaries](https://www.thedailybeast.com/burkina-faso-president-ousted-after-refusing-to-pay-wagner-mercenaries)

[4https://www.voanews.com/a/us-aware-of-allegations-of-russian-links-to-burkinabe-coup-/6415668.html](https://www.voanews.com/a/us-aware-of-allegations-of-russian-links-to-burkinabe-coup-/6415668.html)

[5https://anovademocracia.com.br/noticias/17093-mali-mais-de-3-milhoes-protestam-contr-a-colonialismo-frances-e-rechacam-sancoes](https://anovademocracia.com.br/noticias/17093-mali-mais-de-3-milhoes-protestam-contr-a-colonialismo-frances-e-rechacam-sancoes)

[6ci-ic.org](https://ci-ic.org), “The World Scene – A Report on the International Situation in Relation to the “Ukraine Crisis”, February 4, 2022

[7https://ci-ic.org/blog/2021/11/10/imperialism-and-the-coup-de-tats-in-africa/](https://ci-ic.org/blog/2021/11/10/imperialism-and-the-coup-de-tats-in-africa/)

[8](#)Mao Tse-tung, “On the Chungking Negotiations”, October 1945