

## **Declaration of the MLPD on the death of Hugo Chávez Friás**

On March 5, 2013, the Venezuelan State President Hugo Chávez Friás died after a long and severe battle with cancer. With his passing, Venezuela, Latin America and the entire world have lost a courageous, militant, charismatic and popular political leader with strong ties to the masses. He openly defied US imperialism and for many people he symbolized the renaissance of the anti-imperialist spirit in Latin America. Millions of people in Venezuela and in the entire world mourn for him, which shows the great recognition he enjoyed among progressive people. The MLPD honors and highly respects Hugo Chávez life work. It condemns the hypocrisy of the German government, part of which only several hours after Chávez death declared its demand for a reactionary new beginning in Venezuela. The MLPD declares its solidarity with the struggle of the Venezuelan people for social and national liberation as an important part of the preparation of the international socialist revolution.

When Hugo Chávez took office in 1998 this was a signal of the trend to the left in Latin America. Under his leadership the anti-imperialist government of Venezuela took up the struggle against the domination of international supermonopolies. It made efforts to achieve anti-imperialist independence, especially from US imperialism. Under the Chávez government, for the first time in the history of the country, the rich oil resources were used to improve the social situation of the broad masses of people. In the 15 years of his term, highly visible progress was made in the struggle against mass poverty, in building up the health-care and education systems, in the sphere of culture, with a notable housing program and in many other spheres. This also gave rise to the hatred of all reactionary forces in Venezuela and of the western imperialists. They never forgave him for putting limits to their immeasurable enrichment at the cost of the people and for demanding that the people get control over the country's resources. They initiated a number of bloody attempts to overthrow Chávez, which failed because of the resistance of the people's masses under his leadership. Even in their obituaries they defamed justified measures against reactionary terror and the manipulation of opinion of the reaction as allegedly "undemocratic, autocratic measures". The MLPD rejects these reactionary attacks and is firmly on the side of the Venezuelan people.

For years Hugo Chávez promoted the policy of uniting progressive and anti-imperialist governments of Latin America and of an economically independent development of the countries of Latin America. For example, he countered the free trade zone of US imperialism from Alaska to the Firelands successfully with the project „Alba“ („Bolivarian Alliance for the people of our America – trade agreement of the people“). He based this on the liberation struggle of Simon Bolivar against Spain and his vision of a free and united Latin America. This made him become the victim of angry attacks of US imperialism, which in an imperialist manner continues to regard Latin America as the backyard of the USA.

Chávez was a glowing and courageous fighter against US imperialism. The attempt of the Venezuelan government in the past years to fight against US imperialism with the help of the EU, Russian and Chinese imperialism or with friendship with fascistic governments such as Iran, however, leads to the dead end of reactionary alliances and new neocolonial dependencies. Mao Zedong always reminded and warned how in various states „the wolf went out the front door, while the tiger came in through a back door.“

Chávez demanded and promoted internationally coordinated anti-imperialist activities, mass mobilizations and a „new internationalism“ and revolutionary enthusiasm. He was a glowing supporter of the liberation of women having close ties with the masses of women and young girls in Venezuela. In this spirit he also supported the idea of the World Women's Conference of rank-and-file women in Venezuela 2011 for a while. Chávez spoke positively of the idea of socialism, had the writings of Marx and Lenin be spread among the people, also in order to fight against the bureaucracy in the country. His concept of the so-called „socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century“ and the 5<sup>th</sup> Internationale, for which he was striving at for a while, dissociated itself, however, from the experiences of the successful socialist construction in the Soviet Union and

the former socialist camp. No revolutionary should fail to regard the necessary historical analysis of the betrayal of socialism and the restoration of capitalism through a degenerated bourgeoisie in all former socialist countries. Bits and pieces of revolutionary, revisionist and Trotskyite views and methods will always form a conglomerate lacking principles and can never be the basis of the action of the revolutionaries of the world. In the book "Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution" the MLPD points to this: "*A socialist international cannot be limited to anti-imperialist activities with goals confined to the politics of the day. Its decisive basis must be the unification for the strategic goals of the international revolution, for the victory over the imperialist world system.*"(p. 557)

The death of Hugo Chávez will undoubtedly put the discussion about the further path of Venezuela, Latin America and the revolutionary people's masses worldwide on the agenda again. In September 2013 is the 40th anniversary of the fascist Pinochet putsch against the anti-imperialist Allende government in Chile. In this putsch the illusion of the peaceful way to socialism without the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus was suppressed in a bloodbath of the people.

Chavez thesis of a gradual transformation of a *repressive* state apparatus to a *liberating* one while the international monopolies remain untouched – as for example in the auto industry – corresponds to the illusion of a peaceful road to socialism.

The MLPD thinks that in Venezuela too there can be no parliamentary path to socialism and that the decisive step still lies ahead to overthrow the state apparatus with its diverse dependencies on the old exploiting classes and on international finance capital through revolution and to set up a new people's democratic power which takes the path toward socialism. Only the revolutionary struggle of the working class and the people's masses in Venezuela will allow that the achievements of the Chávez government be defended and that the path of the struggle for national and social liberation be taken successfully. The working class and the people of Venezuela will be facing angry reactionary attacks. We are sure that they will oppose these in the spirit of the visions of Hugo Chávez, that they will meet the new challenges and take up the path to the struggle for socialism.

The revolutionaries and all progressive people in Germany will accompany this struggle with solidarity and sympathy and regard it as their own. For this the MLPD will intensify its cooperation and support of progressive, revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist organizations and parties in Venezuela. The most important driving forces of the worldwide struggle for the international socialist revolution is the further construction of the revolutionary world organization ICOR, the international coordination of revolutionary parties and organizations.

**Long live the struggle of the Venezuelan working class, the Venezuelan people and the people of Latin America for national and social liberation!**

**Workers of all countries, unite!**

**Workers of all countries and all oppressed, unite!**

**Onward with the construction of ICOR!**

**Onward with the preparation of the international socialist revolution!**

**Central Committee of the MLPD**

**8 March 2013**

