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Summary: The economic and political crisis of Africa today — especially in Angola, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and South Africa — is connected to ruthless exploitation by Euro-US and Middle Eastern capital, to the rise of fundamentalism, and to the migrant crisis in Europe - Editors

Political Crises in Africa and the Globalization of Racism

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Recently, on Sept. 25, 2015, world leaders at the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the goal to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. This is a follow up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which in September 2000 rallied the world leaders around a common agenda to reduce poverty by 2015.

Here we are now facing another reality. We have been reminded that economics is not only about statistics but human beings who have to eat, work and live a decent life. Even when looking at some of the statistics, the huge obstacle that will be needed to make the Millennium Development goals achievable will without a doubt require a political transformation that will change the African continent beyond recognition from today's perpetual political repression and economic exploitation.

It is said that hunger in Africa is due to among many things—wrong economic policies, political conflicts, climate change and poverty. According to *Hunger Notes*, “Sub-Saharan Africa actually had the largest proportion of its population undernourished, an estimated 30% in 2010, compared to 16% in Asia and the Pacific (FAO 2010). Thus, almost one in three people who live in sub-Sahara Africa are hungry, a far higher level than any other region of the world, with the exception of South Asia.”

And according to a UN report in 2012, more than 40% of the population lives on less than \$1.25 a day.

It is believed that the sharp decline in economic growth in 2015 in this part of the world, after 15 years of growth and hope, is expected to be even more severe in 2016. This is partly due to the fall of commodity prices, especially oil prices, and the serious draught in Southern and Eastern Africa. New financial conditions introduced by international finance institutions have also been named as among the conditions that will contribute to the further decline of economic growth in Africa. Capital investment (Foreign Direct Investment [FDI] especially in Africa has declined, a truth that has been partly blamed on the global economic crisis. However, reading statistics without a serious investigation will never give you a clear picture and understanding of the magnitude of poverty and hunger that millions of Africans are finding difficult to cope with. In its fifth annual report on Foreign Direct Investment in Africa, Earnest & Young, stated:

FDI projects in Africa fell 8.4%, but remained well above pre-2008 levels. However, capital investment into the continent surged to US\$128 billion, up 136%. And FDI created 188,400 new African jobs, a 68% increase. Spurred by a handful of megadeals, the average investment increased to \$174.5 million per project, from \$67.8 million in 2013. Africa's share of global capital investment and job creation

hit an all-time high in 2014. Only the Asia-Pacific region attracted more FDI funds than Africa last year. Africa attracted more FDI funding than North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Europe, which historically draw significantly higher FDI flows than Africa. (*Ernst & Young Attractiveness Survey of Africa 2015*).

The US is still the leading investor in the continent and it has recently been noted that capital investment by the US in Africa is increasing. According to the same report noted above, US capital investment in economic projects since 2007 amounted to \$52.7 billion—spread around to over 700 hundred economic projects across the continent. After a drop of investment in 2013, the following year, 2014, saw a new surge in US direct capital investment. It now accounts for 13.8% of total direct capital investment in the continent.

Chevron, an American multibillion dollar company that prides itself for doing business in Angola for six decades, recorded that its subsidiary in Angola—Cabinda Gulf Oil Company Limited (CABGOC)—produced last year from its Angolan wells a daily average of 110,000 barrels of crude oil and 55 million cubic feet of natural gas. Introducing its readers to the activities of Chevron in the continent on its website, it said:

The continued development of Africa's energy sector is a critical factor in contributing to the continent's growth potential. Through Chevron's major investments in several

African countries, we are building on our existing assets and pursuing new opportunities—as we’ve done in Africa for more than a century. Today, we’re the third-largest oil producer in Nigeria and one of its largest investors. We rank among Angola’s top petroleum producers. And in both countries, we’re investing billions of dollars in major energy projects. Other areas on the continent where the company holds interests include Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco and Republic of the Congo.

The company boasted of owning a 36.4% interest in the 5.2 million-metric-ton-per-year Angola liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Soyo 3, and its ambition to invest more money in oil and gas wells across the continent is no hidden secret.

What has not been spoken about in this report is the rampant and organized corruption in Angola that must have prompted Quaresma Dos Santos, in a recent article, to question the endorsement by Chevron’s president of the recent appointment of Isabel Dos Santos by her father as the head of Sonangol, a para-state corporation that oversees petroleum and natural gas production in Angola. He also questioned the claim of Chevron to have invested \$215 million US dollars in programs to support the health, education, environmental, and social needs of millions of Angolans. He wrote:

As anyone who has visited the Cabgoc ‘enclave-within-an-enclave’ in Cabinda knows, it has certainly invested millions in creating a slice of California, separated by barbed wire from the remainder of Cabinda which shows little evidence of material benefits in health, education, environmental or social needs from such oil company benevolence... (*All Africa.com*)

Interestingly, capital investment from within the continent, mainly from South Africa and Nigeria, are in competition with the UK and Europe as the second largest investors in the continent. Much has recently been made of Chinese capital investment in the continent, but according to the same above source, Chinese investment in the continent is estimated at \$6.1 billion, thus occupying seventh position among foreign investors in Africa.

Little has been said about the capital investment in Africa from oil rich Middle Eastern countries, but according to the fifth annual report by Ernst & Young, capital flows from the Middle East to Africa is on the rise. The UAE is now the fourth largest investor in Africa. Its companies are pouring in more money in the continent than any other at the moment. Saudi Arabia increased its direct capital investment from three projects in 2003 to 13 today. Companies from the oil-rich Arab states have increased their direct capital invest to 9.1% in 2014. It is interesting to see what these companies are investing in. We know for certain that oil and

gas investments are an attractive avenue for many of the foreign investors. Take the US company GE: its main activities are to a great extent in infrastructural development, mostly in connection with the energy and mining sector, and it has won contracts in Nigeria, Algeria and Angola. It announced in 2014 that it will invest \$2 billion more after a successful 2013, when sales rose to \$5.2 billion. In the same year, leading American companies, including Coca-Cola, the Blackstone Group and Carlyle Group, announced more than \$14 billion in investment money for Africa (*Ernst & Young Attractiveness Survey Africa 2015*).

Foreign Direct Investment has been and is still seen as a blessing for the continent. There is this belief that it can serve as a potential force in job creation and economic prosperity for the ordinary African. It was projected that in 2014, FDI projects would create 188,400 jobs in Africa, 76,200 more than in 2013 (*Ernst & Young Attractiveness Survey Africa 2015*). With this level of job creation and keeping in mind the high percentage of unemployment in the continent, it will take a much greater amount of effort to have any impact on its unemployment statistics. Even taking into account investment in the tourist industry, it is important to note that it creates employment for only half of the year in many countries because of its seasonal nature.

The European investors, the Chinese, and the rich Middle Eastern and African investors are investing in diverse areas

such as technology and media. Much of these investments are geared towards the gas and oil industry, as well as tourism. Certain African countries have been singled out as attractive destinations for foreign capital investment, such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Cote d'Ivoire, which are expected to enjoy a high level of economic growth in the coming years while a slump in oil prices negatively impacts investment in oil rich countries like Angola and Nigeria.

LABOR VS CAPITAL, Blood and Tears

What befell the liberation struggle in Africa was beautifully summed up by Raya Dunayevskaya:

The tragedy of the African revolution began so soon after the revolution had succeeded because leaders were so weighed down with consciousness of technological backwardness that they turn to one of the two poles of world capital. The isolation from the masses deepened so that the new rulers began to look at them as mere labor power. The result was not only that wages dropped—the rise directly after independence proved a temporary feature—and that the aid they received from both nuclear titans decreased, but also that leaders and the masses began to speak different languages (Philosophy and Revolution, p. 218).

The present crisis in Burundi, which has an ethnic dimension, the rise of al Shabab in Somalia and Kenya and

Boka Haram in Nigeria, the coldblooded murder of South African miners in Marikana in 2012, and the ever increasing aggressive nature of Western imperialism are posing new challenges as they expose the brutal character of the violence that is unprecedented in the history of political brutality in postcolonial Africa.

Crispen Chinguno, in an article on the South African miners' strike of 2012 wrote,

Violence at Marikana was about the contestation of orders (workers versus capital in collaboration with the state and the union). The workers engaged in violence to overcome fragmentation and to challenge an order of inequality that characterizes the new South Africa. In extreme cases, they set up underground committees for meting out violence. Police violence was about restoring state-capital order and an otherwise crumbling industrial relations order. Violence is thus a means of defending and contesting different orders (*Global Labour Column*).

On August 16, 2012, a special elite unit of the South African police force opened fire on mineworkers, killing 34 and wounding at least 78. This marked another page in the history of violence against South African workers in post-apartheid South Africa—a norm that was well accepted in the apartheid era and which the comrades of these miners sacrificed their lives and families to abolish. The massacre happened with the liberation movement holding political

power. This is not an accident but the logical outcome when a revolutionary mass movement not only lost its bearings, but was hijacked with the help and collaboration of the leadership of the liberation movement. Today the ANC has not only lost its spirit but also its soul. The violent character of the apartheid era has no doubt left deep scars in the minds of ordinary South Africans, and the post-apartheid era did very little to address the issue. It only deepened the decadence, with devastating consequences—as shown by the economic crime rate and domestic crime rate, such as rape and violence against women. We saw it too in the xenophobic attacks that have resulted in the deaths of innocent African migrants.

Julius Malema, a controversial figure who is a product of the opportunism of the ANC leadership, raised a critical question and demanded an answer for it from the political powers in South Africa. He asked how can jobs be stolen by migrants from other parts of Africa given that there are no jobs to be stolen. The failure of the ANC government is not unknown to the majority of South Africans. The few misguided, who came out in the streets murdering innocent migrants were not carrying any political message rooted in the economic realities of ordinary South Africans, many of whom have found themselves evicted from their homes and forced to live in hostels. The thousands in South Africa who came out in the streets of Johannesburg and Durban in

support of the African migrants were at the same time challenging those African leaders who came out to condemn the Xenophobic attack, to put their own house in order. This because in Angola, hundreds of migrant workers were rounded up and subjected to organized police brutality. Addressing the situation in Angola, it was stated:

Immigrants in Angola, especially people from West Africa, have been subject to repeated attacks, stigmatization and violations of their human rights. The arrests may be linked to ethnic and religious discrimination, since the main group targeted is largely composed of Muslims from Guinea, Mauritania, Mali and Senegal. Witnesses reported that Mosques were surrounded by the immigration services on December 19, 2014. Faced with this situation, our organisations would like to remind the states of their responsibility for respecting the principles of equality in dignity and of non-discrimination as enshrined in all human rights' international organs (*FIDH – International Federation for Human Rights*).

In Ivory Coast too, the term “Ivory-ivoirite” was coined out to incite nationalist feelings, which was partly responsible for turning the well-known hospitality of the Ivorian society and people into something barely recognizable. The new rulers' campaign was to evoke nationalist feelings for certain political gains that could only help to divide the people. Hundreds were said to have died

in the unfolding events. The tragedy consolidated the political divide that gave way to external intervention in the end; and still that nation is struggling to reconcile with its past. It was not only about Gbagbo losing or winning the elections (depending on who you talk to). Rather, the crisis brought out deep-rooted motives, of which anti-migrant sentiments were part.

The neoliberal African leaders are in close collaboration with the very exploitative mechanism that is robbing Africans of their very humanity. They have a class interest in the global capitalist economic order and are doing all they can to serve and defend it, while the majority of our people continue to live in perpetual poverty, hunger and humiliation. The level of poverty and marginalization is at such a level that it takes a serious mind to see some resolution at the end of the tunnel.

What makes matters worse is the continuing and unprecedented attack on labour and any force challenging worsening political and economic development in the continent as we have seen in Marikana:

Unemployment and labor relations continue to pose challenges for South Africa. Unemployment remains high at 24.1% overall, and 64.8% for young people between the ages of 15 and 24. The government's newly launched employment tax incentive aims to address this challenge by encouraging private sector absorption of youth by

subsidising the salaries of newly recruited workers aged between 18 and 29. However, the overall labor market remains constrained and continuing labor unrest has reduced South Africa's output in 2013, especially in agriculture and manufacturing. Furthermore, output potential is constrained by a skills shortage, and calls are being made for further investment and reform of the poorly performing education system (*African Economic Outlook*, by Wolassa Lawisso Kumo, Jan Rieländer, Babatunde Omilola).

Over many years many things have been said about the South African economy and the benefits it will bring to the citizens of South Africa. The Black economic empowerment program saw former leading ANC militants becoming very rich while ordinary South Africans continued to live in poverty. The failure of the ruling ANC economic program to create jobs is at times blamed by academics and the ruling class on labor unrest agitating for better pay and better working conditions. At other times it is blamed on ordinary people, on African migrants, who are said to be taking jobs away from South Africans. The Marikana miners knew very well that economic growth meant the exploitation of their labor and further marginalization. After the brutal murder of 34 miners, Malema insisted, "Marikana is a true reflection of what South African mineworkers go through. Honor them by demanding what you deserve."

Not only there, some few months back, Sheriff Dibba, the leader of the Gambia transport Union, died under mysterious conditions while under detention in the Gambia. This came as result of the over 100% tariff increase for Senegalese transport goods transiting the Gambia. The eventual closing of the border between the Gambia and Senegal by the Senegalese transport union received solidarity from their counterparts in the Gambia.

Not only the Gambian workers, but also the thousands of youths who have experienced being unemployed, are so marginalised that for them migrating to Europe has become the only hope they are left with. The heightening political tension in the country has caught the attention of both the UN and the ICC, especially after the murder this year of a youth leader who led a peaceful demonstration demanding electoral reforms. The Gambian president, a self-proclaimed Pan-Africanist, had declared unilaterally that the country is an Islamic State—without any consideration to the constitution.

“BACK WAY” TO EUROPE

Hope for African youths is beyond the boundaries of the continent. In 2010 a Ghanaian academic, Adams Bodo, found out that the African diaspora remitted \$51.8 billion to Africa, a far greater amount than official development assistance to Africa. True, in certain Sub-Saharan countries three meals a day is beyond the reach of the ordinary

working class, let alone the unemployed. The ruling elite and their enablers have a very stable economic life, sustained by a well-organized corruption network affecting every aspect of the society. Those families with a family member in Europe or America are those who are guaranteed daily meals and are meeting their daily needs, such as paying education bills for their children, medical bills etc. This is the reality that is forcing African youths to take the dangerous journey to Europe and now the US through Latin America.

The loss of many precious young African lives in the Mediterranean Sea in their effort to migrate to Europe will count as one of the most brutal tragedies of postcolonial Africa. The actual number of young migrants who died in the desert on their way to Libya and at sea will never be known; but what can be counted so far is disheartening. According to the BBC “More than 1,700 people are believed to have died this year so far, compared with 96 deaths up to the end of April last year. As many as 800 migrants are feared drowned after the boat they were travelling in capsized in Libyan waters south of the Italian island of Lampedusa on Sunday “ (*BBC News*, April 22, 2016).

The thousands of African youths who risk their lives migrating to Europe will soon find out that their lives in Europe will not easily get better. The high expectations from families and friends back home will put a great number of

them in difficult situations. Young girls are often forced into prostitution and young men are often forced to become drug peddlers. This vicious circle of lawlessness and crime becomes a source of anti-migrant sentiments and brutal racist attacks.

The current media sensationalism will do little to bring about a political reaction to resolve or even slow the process. What we are witnessing now is not confronting the source of the problem. Rather, the reactive measures that are in place or are being discussed by European politicians are aimed at buttressing “Fortress Europe.” The rise of the far right movement and anti-immigrant political parties is also part of the media sensation, misrepresenting facts and fear mongering. The fact is also that Europe cannot have it both ways, if Europe prefers to empower and collaborate with dictatorial regimes in Africa for its economic interests then it must be prepared to take its responsibility in dealing with such unwanted developments. It cannot play a leading role in the exploitation and marginalizing of a whole continent and yet still close its doors in the name of immigration control. Our national governments don’t have the political will to resolve their internal political and economic problems. Rather, they are convinced that such is not in their interests or in their political and economic power. Policymakers in Europe must look beyond their national governments to find an answer to the marginalization of

ordinary African people. The empowering of African people will without a doubt lead to fundamental change in how society functions.

The hundreds of young and resourceful Africans dying in these hazardous migrations are not just a loss for Africa but also for humanity. The daily struggle of the African man and woman to reach the shores of Europe is for a dignified and prosperous life. This should not be beyond any human understanding.

If conscience is the reason why Europe will save African migrants from drowning and dying a painful death, then that same conscience should form the basis of their national policies with regards to these migrants. The way forward is to be in solidarity both practically and politically with the struggle of the African people for a better and dignified life.

THE RISE OF RADICAL ISLAM AND TERROSIM

The grounding of the African revolutions have produced tragic “mishaps” that not only continue to challenge the humanity of those who paid with their blood, tears and sweat for a victory that was to bring a new momentum. They find themselves in a perpetual state of fear, poverty and uncertainty— and having at the helm a national state that was neither willing nor able to move the nation state to new levels. As Fanon insisted, “Such a static society, clinging to a rigid context, can of course sporadically generate episodes

of religious fanaticism and tribal warfare” (*Wretched of the Earth*, p. 67).

North Africa is the hotbed of radical Islam, with Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Libya at the centre. We know very well that it has more to do with bad governance than hunger and poverty that drove thousands of Arab youths into this path. The authoritarian rulers in these countries cemented their political powers through outright manipulation and the brutal use of force, driving political opponents underground and allowing their cronies to loot the national wealth with impunity.

In Algeria, the National Liberation Front (FLN), failed in its duty and spirit to deliver what it promised during the liberation struggle that mobilized the Algerian population in a bloody war against French imperialism. The postcolonial economy became heavily reliant on oil, accounting for 90% of its exports and more than 50% of its national budget. When oil prices collapsed in the 1970s, the one-party authoritarian state came face to face with massive youth unemployment and poverty. The developing social and economic crisis became a feeding ground for radical Islam. Many have argued that the reason many Algerians, including war veterans, were attracted to the Afghan War was because of the close ties between the Soviet Union and the Algerian government, which they saw as their oppressor. However, the return of these war veterans forever

transformed the political environment in Algeria and forced the ruling National Liberation Front to change the constitution and introduce a multiparty system. This move saw the birth of the first legal Islamic radical party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). When FIS won local elections in 1990, it started becoming more and more clear to the Algerian people that their desire for democracy and freedom seemed to have taken a new turn. Questions began to be asked with regards to their fundamental human rights—especially when the FIS-ruled local councils began introducing strict Islamic codes affecting the daily lives of the ordinary people, such as dress codes for women workers in municipal councils. Though the FIS won the general elections the following year, it won far fewer votes than in the municipal councils. This might have given the military the feeling that it was a timely moment to intervene. They annulled the election results, banned the FIS, arrested its leaders and forced the movement underground. It opened the door to a bloody civil war that resulted in the death of thousands of Algerians.

In Libya, Moamar Ghadafi, who in his formative years tactically allied himself with the Islamists, broke ranks with them after consolidating power and then waged a bloody war against the Muslim Brotherhood. The return of hundreds of Libyans as Afghan War veterans laid the ground for the formation of the militant armed group, the

Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), in 1990. Ghadafi wasted no time in liquidating the group, but this victory against the militants was temporary.

The formation of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Algeria changed the face and geography of militant Islamist terror groups in Africa. When AQIM sought to expand beyond the boundaries of Algeria, its target was Sub-Saharan Africa. It succeeded in recruiting Black Africans within its ranks, a move that eventually revealed its racist nature and Arab supremacist views. The Black African members protested against open discrimination by their Arab comrades without much effect, and in 2011 a breakaway faction soon emerged, to be known as the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA). It had the aim of spreading jihad in West Africa. Though still loyal to al Qaeda, the movement identifies itself more with West African Islamic scholars.

During the 2012 Tuareg uprising, the movement made rapid progress in Northern Mali, seizing towns and villages, burning and looting historic places and monuments, and unleashing havoc on the civilian population, forcing many to seek refuge elsewhere. The National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, a Tuareg nationalist movement, heavily criticized for not taking clear stand against the terrorist group, was itself not spared by the violence of the terrorist group and was put on the defensive and forced to

abandon its liberated territories. The rapid military gains of the militant group raised international alarm and gave the pretext to the French military intervention in northern Mali, but even before that, the US had re-entered West Africa in 2005 with a military training programme called “Flintlock.” Military forces from Algeria, Senegal, Mauritania, Mali and Chad were trained by special US forces after the latter recognized that the Sahel had become a training ground for militant Islam.

In Ontario, Canada, speaking at a dinner organised by Marie-France Lalonde, the new Ontario Minister of Government and Consumer Services and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, the president of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina, insisted:

If you look at the confluence of factors—environmental degradation, high levels of joblessness and poverty—quite honestly, idle hands are the devil’s workshop. So it’s very easy for terrorists to move around rural areas in Africa, which have become zones of economic misery because there are no more economic opportunities left. If you do some mapping and look at where the terrorists are recruiting, you see that is where you have environmental degradation and poverty (*All Africa.com*).

He sees it as urgent for Western capital to invest in the continent and create jobs for the marginalized African youths and counter the rise of militant Islam. But it is too

late for the thousands of women, young girls and children who have been and continue to be brutally murdered, kidnapped and displaced by the terror of Boko Haram. This Islamic terrorist group is expanded its influence into rural northern Nigeria, recruiting thousands of Nigerian youths who have been marginalized and forced into chronic unemployment and decadence. Boko Haram is a reality and product of decades of misrule, corruption and environmental disaster that needs concrete actions to better the lives of millions of Nigerians if it is to be defeated.

Of the 276 Chibok schoolgirls who were abducted by the terror group two years ago, 219 are yet to be accounted for. It is said that some have returned as suicide bombers while others are forced into marriage with militants and or sold as sex slaves. The birth of the internationally known “Bring Back our Girls “ movement, which is demanding more action from the Nigerian government in finding the missing schoolgirls, is a natural response to the incompetence and unprofessional reaction of the Nigerian military to the crisis. In explaining the rise of Boko Haram in an article published by the Combating Terrorism Center, Dr. David Cook, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University, insisted:

Boko Haram has been able to project power over the Northeastern section of Nigeria, where the police and army have effectively lost control. They have not, however,

succeeded in going beyond their ability to impose terror upon the capital of Borno State, Maiduguri, into actually attempting to assume power. Yet Boko Haram has definitely been able to tap into discontent among northern Muslims, who have not been satisfied with the imposition of Shari`a during the years since 2000 (people expected that the draconian punishments would curtail corruption and crime; Boko Haram offers a more direct and violent solution).”

Its influence has now spread to Cameroun and Niger, even though the latest alarm in Ghana of possible terrorist attacks by home grown Islamist militants is being ignored. That is dangerous, as we have seen what the terrorists were capable of doing in the Ivory Coast.

Long before the world woke up to the barbarism of Boko Haram, the Somali al Shabab reduced a whole nation to a failed state without a proper government for decades. The fall of the Said Barre military regime, which ruled Somalia from 1969 to 1991 as a tyrant who showed no mercy to his political opponents, forced opposition to his regime either underground or into exile. The end of his brutal regime led to decades long civil war, prompting the formation of a powerful Islamic militant group, “The Unity of Islam.” By the late 1990s the group was forced to flee by the invading Ethiopian forces and many of its militants moved to join the fight in Afghanistan. An internal faction within the group gave rise to an alliance with the hardliners within the Islamic

Courts Union (ICU). This deadly alliance saw the emergence of al Shabab, which did not only render Somalia ungovernable but forced millions to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, in Europe and other parts of the world. The involvement of African military forces in fighting the militant group has given the terror group an excuse to launch murderous attacks against civilians in countries such as Kenya and Uganda.

What is missing in much of these discussions is the role played by international capital, including international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. For decades, these institutions have been imposing economic structural programs that have seen the loss of millions of jobs, more national debt and negative economic growth, resulting in civil wars and unrest in almost all of the continent.

THE RISE OF RACISM

The influx of refugees into Europe is referred to in mainstream European media as “unprecedented.” Yes, it is for Europe and Europeans, but for the world—or let’s say humanity—it is not. Even now, of the total number of 65.3 million people removed from their homes in 2015, only 6% of these refugees are in Europe. Africa alone is a home for 26% of these refugees, while 39% are in the Middle East.

There is almost no country in Europe where racism is not on the rise. Before it was about foreigners coming and taking their jobs—this at a time when there are no “jobs to be stolen.” Now in addition to this fear, the Middle Eastern crises are forcing many to migrate. This has brought in the open the hatred of Muslims in Europe, thus giving political weight to far-right and anti-immigrant political parties and movements an unimaginable momentum. Even liberal politicians are unable to hide their long hidden hypocrisy with regards to migrants in their countries.

In Denmark, the worst is to come for ordinary migrant workers. In Norway almost every aspect of migrant life is being scrutinized. Some months ago, migrants who have been citizens in Norway for decades came out into the streets to stop a new law that would not recognize the birth place of naturalized citizens from certain Third World countries, mostly in Africa. Only their country of birth would be registered.

When the US Secretary of State visited Europe in the midst of the migrant crisis, he echoed the same sentiments as the anti-immigrant politicians, saying that migrants pose a threat to the culture and way of life of civilized Europe. This prompted an anti-immigrant politician in Norway to demand respect for Kerry’s views, which confirmed their sentiments. Now, not only the European Union but also individual member states are crisscrossing the African continent trying

to make a deal with the most fascistic leaders to guarantee the return of migrants in their respective countries. Recently, a social media alert revealed that certain Italian officials have travelled to Gambia to negotiate the return of thousands of Gambian migrants in Italy.

Not so long ago, Europe looked almost certain to have its first far-right President, in Austria. With a margin of a few thousands votes, it clearly spelled out the reality for migrants in that country. Today, far-Right and anti-immigrant political parties have become part of mainstream European politics, proudly authoring policies and laws that have the sole intention of dehumanizing the refugee. An example is Denmark, where the parliament passed a law that will allow the state to confiscate personal valuables from refugees as a precondition for receiving help from the state. And in Greece, the inhumane treatment of migrants and refugees is not a reflection of the fact that there is a radical party in power in the country.

The terror attack in Paris and Brussels has added more fuel to a burning issue. It is putting even the Left in Europe in a very difficult situation. Its refusal at times to take a clear stand against Islamic extremism is not making the situation better for them either. The rising unemployment, the continuing global economic crisis, and the attack on the welfare state have led parts of the European working class to identify itself with ideas that are in total contradiction with

its own culture and values. This must be confronted head on in the interest of the new society we are aspiring to build.