

French students support December 10 IYSSE rally for an international anti-war movement

Our reporters
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On Saturday, December 10, at 7 p.m. Central European Time, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) and the World Socialist Web Site are hosting a webinar to start the construction of a global anti-war movement against the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine. In recent weeks, members of the Socialist Equality Party have campaigned amongst students across France to build for the event.

French imperialism has fully subordinated itself to the US-led war. This includes the decision to end Russian natural gas imports, demanded by NATO and the US at the beginning of the war, which leaves the French population facing major power cuts this winter. For now, the French ruling class is willing to subordinate itself to Washington's demands, hoping for a share of the spoils of a successful war against Russia, including access to its copious natural resources.

As millions of French people face power cuts and striking workers are told there is no money to increase wages amid crippling inflation, the Macron government has joined the US, UK, and other EU powers in sending aid and arms to the Ukrainian state and its far-right militias to conduct the war. So far, the French government has spent over €2 billion on this.

To build for the meeting teams of SEP members campaigned among students in the Paris region, Amiens, and Aix-en-Provence.

Asked about a call to build a youth movement against war, Rupasri, a literature student at Paris VIII university, said: "A call like this must be made to young people because they are the future of society."

She explained the impact of the NATO-Russia war in Ukraine on the French population, which is facing the prospect of regular power cuts this winter, "The people

who live here, and the small businesses, are very much already impacted in terms of the price of electricity. There are even some buildings already facing shutoffs because the price is so high for gas and electricity that the management turns off heating and hot water. You start to realize that, if there is a power cut at home, you can't go anywhere else."

Referring to the EU's voluntary embargo of Russian gas, she added, "I think it's a shame that the population is impacted by a choice that is made by the European governments. It's a pity that France didn't use its veto power."

When asked who she principally blamed for the war in Ukraine, Rupasri replied: "Personally, I would say it's NATO. It was they who rushed to put their ships in the water and take their position. If the problem had been left to be settled between Russia and Ukraine without NATO's scheming, Russia and Ukraine might have been able to calmly agree to conditions that NATO would not accept."

In Amiens, WSWs journalists spoke to three first-year law students, Lucie, Sarah and Alice, at the University of Amiens Jules Verne. Asked about the call for a youth movement, Sarah, said, "Frankly I think it's great, it brings a lot of people together, it brings the war to the fore. Especially the risk of nuclear war. We fear that the war will get bigger and that it [a nuclear strike] will happen."

When asked about the people impacted by the war in France, Lucie said, "It's us! It's basically a commercial war. The rich want to hoard the resources, but the ones who suffer the consequences are us."

Sarah also pointed to the impact of the war on inflation in France: "Inflation impacts us all directly. If they don't start a nuclear war, we may have some future, but it's not a good one, because with inflation,

we're the ones who are going to pay back the debts that the country is making now. It is us, our generation, who will end up having to pay it all back."

Asked about the IYSSE's appeal to youth in every country, including in both Russia and Ukraine, Sarah added, "We cannot be enemies with them, no, we cannot, we must not. And we must get together precisely to avoid a war. If we are not united, that is what leads to war."

A successful struggle against war ultimately requires the mass mobilization of the international working class for a socialist transformation of society. The IYSSE's webinar, which will be subtitled in French and other languages, will give students and young people across the world a revolutionary political perspective to construct such a movement. The SEP calls on young people and students in France and other Francophone countries opposed to war and inflation to attend Saturday's international webinar and take the decision to play an active part in the construction of a student and youth movement against war.



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