

Spanish shipyard workers denounce complicity of PSOE-Podemos government in Gaza war

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Amid mass protests across Europe and the world against the Israeli state's genocidal war against Gaza, workers at Spain's Navantia shipyard have denounced the dispatching of Spanish warships in a US-led battleship group now patrolling off the coast of Israel and Gaza. They demanded the immediate return of the warships, which were built by Navantia, and the ending of all commercial and diplomatic ties with Israel. ?

The statement, issued by a local of the anarchist General Confederation of Labor (CGT) union at Navantia, exposes the pseudo-left Podemos party. Since this summer's elections, it has been part of the acting government together with the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) that ordered these warships to sail against Gaza. This completely exposes the hypocritical claims of Podemos party to oppose the Israeli government's genocidal war in Gaza.

The CGT union local's statement noted that the Spanish frigate *Méndez Núñez* and military supply ship *Patiño* are part of the battle group of the USS *Gerald R. Ford* aircraft carrier. The carrier is currently steaming in the eastern Mediterranean as part of US support for the Israeli war in Gaza and US threats to bomb forces in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq or Iran that might seek to intervene militarily to assist Gaza against the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). The CGT local at Navantia in Ferrol stated:

This is cause for shame. It is not enough that the Spanish state voted at the UN for a resolution (supporting a cease-fire) that will remain a dead letter due to the US veto. It is not enough that the government is proposing a peace conference in six months. We must stop the massacre now.

Both the *Méndez Núñez* and the *Patiño* were built

in our factory. But the workers did not build them so they would collaborate in a genocide.

The CGT believes, and will propose in the works council, that we must mobilize ourselves as workers of Navantia-Ferrol to demand that this government cease being complicit in genocide:

1. Immediate return of the *Méndez Núñez* and the *Patiño*.
2. Cancel all collaboration of Navantia with Israeli businesses.
3. Break diplomatic and commercial relations with Israel.

This statement and another adopted by the CGT local at Navantia in Galego point to the enormous potential to stop the Gaza genocide by mobilizing the working class in Spain and internationally, to halt weaponry and military support going to Israel. It again exposes the national union confederations in the imperialist powers—United States, Germany, Britain, France and Spain—which are taking no action in this regard. By their inaction, they are complicit, as the CGT local statement shows, in the genocide in Gaza.

It might be added, in relation to the CGT local at Navantia-Ferrol, that appeals placed inside the works council to Navantia management are very likely to fall on deaf ears. The critical question to halt the genocide against Gaza is mobilizing the industrial power of the working class in Spain and internationally, in strike action against the genocide.

The statement also illustrates another key political fact: Such a struggle can only be waged in opposition to pseudo-left parties like Podemos and its political allies—the Democratic Socialists of America, Germany's

Left Party, Britain's Jeremy Corbyn or the Unsubmissive France party. While these parties occasionally make verbal criticisms of the war, they are in fact deeply embedded in the capitalist states and national union bureaucracies that are abetting the IDF genocide in Gaza.

As hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of Madrid, Barcelona, San Sebastian, Santiago de Compostela and other Spanish cities to denounce the Gaza genocide, Podemos tried to protect itself from mounting popular outrage by posturing as an opponent of the conflict. But at the same time, the PSOE-Podemos government sent its warships against Gaza. It further played a critical role in the war on Gaza by agreeing to an unpopular deal to host several of the US warships now being sent against Gaza at the naval base at Rota.

This exposes the arguments of Podemos leader and acting Minister of Social Rights Ione Belarra, who repeatedly took to X/Twitter to verbally criticize the genocide. In one Tweet towards the beginning of the war, she declared on video:

In Podemos, we are not indifferent to the atrocious suffering that the Palestinian people have been experiencing for decades. Today we want to raise our voice to denounce that the State of Israel is carrying out a planned genocide in the Gaza Strip. ... (T)he US and European Union are not looking the other way or acting in a neutral manner, they are encouraging the State of Israel in its policy of apartheid and occupation that seriously violate human rights.

In another Tweet, several weeks later, Belarra posted a video on X/Twitter in which she said:

After this hellish night in Gaza, I have a very simple but very important message for European leaders: Do not make us complicit in genocide. Act. Not in our name.

There is no doubt that Belarra and the other capitalist government officials in Podemos are very concerned and afraid of working class anger mounting against the genocide in Gaza. But their feelings and intentions, to be blunt, do not carry weight amid the horrific mass

slaughter of innocent men, women and children now unfolding in Gaza. The political reality is that, by sitting inside a government that is abetting Israel's genocide in Gaza, the Podemos officials have made themselves complicit in genocide.

This also exposes the political fraud of the joint petition for peace being circulated by members of Podemos, LFI members including Manon Aubry, and Joana Mortagua of the Portuguese Left Bloc. It is not a part of a genuine struggle to mobilize the working class to halt the genocide. Rather, it is one of the political maneuvers of a layer of corrupt, pseudo-left parties that are trying to hide their political complicity in the Gaza genocide.

Workers taking strike action against the Gaza genocide must be warned: Despite their posturing as friends of Gaza, Podemos ministers are bitter enemies of the working class. They have sent police to savagely assault steelworkers striking for protection measures against COVID-19, a nationwide truckers strike, and the mass strike for higher wages by metal and aerospace workers in Cadiz. They would no doubt prove bitter enemies of a strike movement in defense of Gaza.

Moreover, Spain's principal trade union bureaucracies, the social democratic General Union of Labor (UGT) and the Stalinist Workers Commissions (CCOO) are politically affiliated to the PSOE and to the Sumar electoral coalition of which Podemos is a party, respectively. And, indeed, the UGT and CCOO bureaucracies have predictably done nothing to mobilize workers against the genocide in Gaza and the complicity of the PSOE and Podemos.

The struggle against the genocide in Gaza can only proceed via a rebellion of the working class against the union bureaucracies and pseudo-left parties of the affluent middle class like Podemos, a coalition of Stalinist and petty-bourgeois Pabloite forces. This requires the construction of rank-and-file committees in the working class to unite struggles in Spain with other workers' struggles against the genocide that are unfolding internationally, in order to block the flow of supplies and military aid to Israel and stop the mass murder.



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