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POLITICAL RESOLUTION

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FORCE OF APRIL
TAKING THE INITIATIVE,
WITH THE WORKERS AND THE PEOPLE
DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

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Chapter 1

Developments in the international situation and the struggle of the workers and the peoples

The developments in the international situation are characterised by great instability and uncertainty with, in general, a substantial overall worsening.

The essential tendencies and aspects of the situation are marked by the structural crisis of capitalism and by imperialism's exploitative and aggressive offensive, which seeks to counteract the relative decline of the United States of America (USA) and other capitalist powers of the G7, and to safeguard their hegemonic domination in the face of a continuing resistance and struggle by the workers and peoples and of a broad process of realignment of forces on the world stage.

The situation has seen dangerous developments, namely with imperialism's escalation of confrontation and war; with the promotion and advancement of reactionary and fascist conceptions, projects and forces; with the exacerbation of international tensions and with growing threats of a worldwide conflict of catastrophic proportions.

In this context, it is of the utmost importance to develop the peoples' struggle in defence of their rights and sovereignty, for peace, for social progress; to strengthen the Communist parties and their cooperation within the framework of the world Communist and revolutionary movement; to bring together diverse forces in a broad anti-imperialist front that can stop and reverse imperialism's designs and that can pave the way for a new international order ensuring peace and justice in the relations between the peoples.

1.1.

Capitalism, a system in crisis that does not solve Humanity's problems and yearnings

The international situation's evolution confirms that capitalism is incapable of solving Humanity's main problems, which are themselves a consequence of the nature and contradictions of this system. Despite the huge ideological operation on a mass scale seeking to conceal it, the social, economic, political and cultural reality proves the **exploitative, oppressive, aggressive and predatory nature of capitalism** and the need to overcome it in a revolutionary way.

The development of capitalism and the imposition of imperialist domination, namely as a result of the disappearance of the USSR and the socialist camp in Eastern Europe, furthered the concentration and centralization of capital, exploitation, the unequal distribution of income between Labour and Capital, the processes of privatisation, mergers and acquisitions, the funnelling of public resources to big capital and its speculative activities, the worsening of social inequalities and injustice.

Increasing exploitation, its consequences in the deterioration of the workers' labour and living standards and in deepening social problems that affect the overwhelming majority of the world's population; the instability and succession of crises in the main capitalist economies; the great disparities in development between countries; the con-

trasts in demographic trends; extensive migratory movements; deepening environmental problems; growing instability and international tension; the dramas that affect refugees; the promotion of reactionary and fascist forces; the systemic nature of corruption and organised crime – these are elements that, among others, confirm capitalism's irreconcilable contradictions and that highlight a structural crisis, which is expressed on the economic, social, political and cultural levels, thus highlighting the historical limits of this system.

Contrary to the neo-liberal theses about an "emergence" from the 2008 crisis, marked by a new period of growth and expansion of the main capitalist economies of the G7, and even taking into account the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, what can be seen is an almost two decades-long trend of anaemic growth or stagnation, accompanied by processes of relocation of companies and of de-industrialization, by profound changes in international trade and value chains, by an increase in public and private debts, as can be seen in the main capitalist powers, particularly in the USA and within the European Union (EU). At the same time, an increasing concentration of wealth is taking place.

The capitalist system has found it difficult to relaunch significant growth cycles and to counter the downward trend of the rate of profit, a reality that the ruling classes attempt to overcome through the intensification of workers' exploitation; through an attack on rights; through privatizations; through the curtailment and destruction of the social functions of States; through the attempt to create new lines of capitalist reproduction and accumulation, namely in the field of the so-called "green economy" and "digital economy"; through the commodification of spheres of social life; through an incessant financialization of the economy and through support for monopoly groups, particularly financial ones; through the promotion of a "war economy".

Unable to counter the underlying trend, this course exacerbates problems, as can be seen in the consequences of the strategy of confrontation and war in Europe, namely in the "blowback" effect of the sanctions policy, or in the consequences for the US and EU economies of the ongoing technology-related economic war targeting China.

The concentration and centralization of capital has reached such a scale, and the degree of dominance by financial capital is such, that measures that had been used in the past to relaunch cycles of economic growth, if momentarily adopted, today have an increasingly limited impact.

The relative reduction in the installed productive capacity of the capitalist powers of the G7 is clearly evident in the changes in supply chains and in their diminishing overall relative weight in the world economy, thus impacting the process of realignment of forces on a worldwide level.

Humanity, in its historical process, is currently making remarkable **scientific and technical achievements**. As a whole, these developments represent a new leap in the scientific and technical revolution, particularly in the areas of artificial intelligence, computing, data processing, storage and use, communications, robotics, nanotechnology, genetic engineering or synthetic biology.

Such achievements of human knowledge induce a significant increase in the social productivity of Labour and could, and should, represent extraordinary advances in the living standards of the workers and peoples, namely in the key issue of reducing working times.

However, their private appropriation and use for the benefit of big Capital, including in the development of the arms industry, not only prevents such achievements from being used to overcome problems, inequalities and injustice as, in a contradictory way, it limits

the potential for scientific and technological development, accentuates the tendency to decrease the rate of profit and also affects the scale of crises of overproduction and of capitalist over-accumulation. Instead of responding to human needs and promoting social progress, these achievements are used by big Capital as a form of blackmail and a pretext to increase exploitation, for new attacks on the rights of the workers and peoples and on their organized struggle, and for new threats in the economic, social, democratic and sovereign levels, particularly in the media and communications.

Global awareness of the serious and deepening **environmental problems** has grown, but it is not yet grasped on a mass scale that this reality to a large extent stems from the incompatibility between the capitalist mode of production and the need to preserve natural resources, ecosystems and the environment, to mitigate climate change and to effectively fight the causes of these problems.

The concept of "green economy", one of the new dogmas of capitalism that instrumentalizes and seeks to distort real and legitimate concerns about the environment, has in reality other goals, namely: the financialization of environmental issues and their use for capitalist accumulation; the commodification of nature and its resources; the imposition of renewed forms of economic domination on an international level, the attempt to maintain the supremacy of the imperialist powers in the field of raw materials and energy production technologies; the attempt to hold individuals accountable for problems that are systemic; the use of the perverse concept of "the polluter pays"; or the exploitation of environmental issues as a pretext for attacks on rights, sovereignty and democracy and to subordinate labour and workers' rights.

The facts highlight the growing **responsibilities of social democracy** as an instrument of Capital and imperialism in a wide range of countries, as can be seen in its convergence

with policies that serve monopoly capital and oppose the workers, in the EU's process of neo-liberal, federalist and militarist integration, or in NATO and its aggressive worldwide strategy.

Developments in the social and political situation of the capitalist powers prove the thesis that capitalism's development in its imperialist phase, and in particular neoliberalism, calls into question **freedom and democracy**. The imposition of neoliberalism and the single mindset that accompanies it – in which the right-wing and social democracy converge – with its ensuing consequences, enhances the reactionary and anti-democratic aspects in the systems of bourgeois political representation, including in the promotion by the ruling classes of reactionary and fascist conceptions, projects and forces, which today marks the reality in various countries. As History proves, the far-right and fascism are instruments to which capitalism and imperialism resort whenever they consider it necessary.

Along with **confrontation and war**, resorting to fascism is part of the strategy of big Capital to try to safeguard its interests, to strengthen its instruments of domination and to impose its goals of exploitation and oppression. This strategy is pursued **ideologically** with an intense and continuous offensive against democratic and humanist values, against critical thinking and the right to information, and by the promotion of individualism, lies, censorship, obscurantism, fear, conformism, xenophobia and racism, chauvinism, war, hatred, anti-communism and the rewriting and falsification of History. A strategy in which the control of the mass media, of information agencies and centres and of new information and communication technologies, in particular of "social networks", by gigantic oligopolies plays a fundamental, deeply manipulative, demagogic, anti-democratic and reactionary role.

The structural crisis of capitalism and the ongoing process of realignment of forces at the

world level, with the relative weakening of the role of imperialist power structures (IMF, World Bank, WTO, G7, Davos Forum, Bilderberg), exacerbate **contradictions** between the main imperialist powers. At the same time, the strategy of hegemonic domination adopted by the US is implemented based on an iron-clad **imperialist concert** around the goals of confrontation and economic war, with its associated war propaganda and ideological offensive. This is reflected in the submission of the capitalist powers of the G7 and the EU to the interests and strategy of US imperialism.

1.2.

The strategy of confrontation and war promoted by imperialism is the greatest threat to the peoples of the world

Imperialism seeks to use all means available to impose its hegemonic domination, to counteract the ongoing process of realignment of forces and to halt the struggle of the workers and peoples.

This offensive pursues the goal of destroying economic, social, political and cultural rights. It stigmatizes and criminalizes labour and social struggles. It tries to impose regressions in the awareness of the peoples regarding their legitimate rights and aspirations and in their sovereign capacity to decide their future, namely by concealing the nature of capitalism and the alternatives of development and social emancipation that the communist ideal and project represents.

Militarism and the accelerated construction of a “war economy” are promoted under the pretext of fictitious permanent threats, and are instituted through operations of blackmail and conditioning of the popular will. These aim to impose the acceptance of increased exploitation and impoverishment in the name of a supposed defence of freedom and, on the other hand, to conceal the real imperialist interest in planetary domination to control markets, technologies, trade and

energy routes; to take over raw materials and natural resources; to impose neocolonial relations; and to contain processes of sovereign and progressive affirmation of the peoples.

The **USA**, with its allies, advances militarism and the arms race, instrumentalizes and promotes fascist and terrorist forces, generalizes hotbeds of tension and destabilization, foments interference, aggression and war, disrespects and brutally attacks the rights and sovereignty of peoples, in a strategy that represents the most serious threat to world peace.

The results of the 2024 US presidential election are an expression of that country’s acute crisis and of the discredit of the Biden Administration among large sectors of the population. Notwithstanding differences and even divisions within the ruling class regarding domestic policy measures and how to counteract the relative decline of the United States, the election of Trump, with his profoundly reactionary agenda, not only continues, but steps up, the policy at the service of economic and financial groups and the strategy of confrontation, interference and aggression, with all that it represents as a threat to peace, sovereignty and the rights of peoples.

NATO, with its successive enlargements and its global intervention, accounts for over one half of the world’s military expenditure. It is the most dangerous instrument of imperialism’s aggressive offensive under US hegemony. The increasingly clear assertion of the EU’s militaristic path, as the European pillar of NATO, does not represent a counterpoint to US imperialism, but rather its embodiment as an ally in the imperialist strategy of oppression, exploitation and neo-colonisation.

The **European Union**, aligning itself with the strategy of the United States and NATO, is promoting an increase in military expenditures and in its own arms industry, is increasing militarism and is taking steps

towards its transformation into a new military-political bloc complementary to NATO, at the expense of peace and of the rights and living standards of the workers and peoples.

Confronted with the enormous dangers that imperialism's aggressive strategy poses to Humanity – namely, the arms race; the escalation of conflicts; acts of destabilization and interference, including in electoral processes; the intensification of a policy of sanctions and blockades; permanent attempts to instrumentalize or attack the United Nations; and the growing disregard for the principles of International Law, which is being subordinated to a so-called "rules-based world order" dictated by imperialism – it is particularly important to ensure the struggle for peace; for a general, simultaneous and controlled disarmament; in defence of the principles of the UN Charter; against the militarisation of the EU; for the dissolution of NATO and the creation of a system of collective security.

Blatant manifestations of imperialism's strategy of confrontation and war are the growing tensions and provocations against China, which is singled out by the US as the main strategic target, and which has among its expressions the creation of new military blocs and centres of coordination such as AUKUS (Australia, USA, UK) and QUAD (Australia, USA, India and Japan), or the provocations regarding Taiwan; the strategy of encirclement and confrontation with Russia – including NATO's enlargement to Eastern Europe, the 2014 coup d'État in Ukraine or the long-prepared war in that country – which is not constrained by the fact that [Russia] is a capitalist country, with its resulting class options; or the ongoing genocide in Palestine and the escalation of war in the Middle East, including with the encirclement, destabilization and aggression against Syria, leading to its fragmentation and destruction as a sovereign and secular State.

The ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people at the hands of Israel is particularly

serious, as is the escalation of war that the latter promotes in the Middle East, with the invasion of Lebanon and the attacks on Iran or Yemen, counting on the support and protection of the USA and the other powers of NATO and the EU. This shows how far imperialism is willing to go in order to impose its intentions.

To the current worrying situation in Europe and the Middle East, and to the instigation of confrontation in Asia-Pacific, must be added the profusion of manoeuvres of external interference and destabilisation by imperialism against countries in Africa, or in Latin America and the Caribbean, notably against Cuba and Venezuela.

The struggle for peace today is a struggle for sovereignty, for democracy, for economic and social development, for a future.

The imperialist offensive, which is undergoing dangerous and rapid developments, threatens all of Humanity. It is in itself an expression of the nature of the capitalist system. However, the resistance and struggle of the workers and peoples, as well as the process of realignment of forces on a world level, are showing that imperialism does not have its hands totally free to impose its intents.

1.3.

The world-wide process of realignment of forces and the struggle for sovereignty, development and social progress

The development of a vast **world-wide process of realignment of forces** continues. Its fundamental features are the relative decline of the USA and other imperialist powers gathered in the G7, and the economic, social and scientific-technical advances achieved by China, with its international affirmation and its resulting and important impacts and broad repercussions.

Also noteworthy is the growing economic and political weight of **developing countries** and their capacity for initiative on the

international arena, developing bilateral relations and partnerships, as well as creating arenas for cooperation and integration on a multilateral level, with different objectives and scopes, such as BRICS (created by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and in the meantime expanded to other countries with the prospect of further enlargements), or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in addition to the existence of other important regional cooperation structures, such as the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP).

These relationships, partnerships and arenas involve cooperation of a diverse nature, configuration and stability, with contradictions that result from the different paths and economic and political realities of the countries that take part in them. But they seek to converge, among other aspects, in resisting subordination to imperialism's domination and dependence on the institutions that it commands.

Developments in the situation of several countries, namely in Africa – where several States are seeking to free themselves from dependence on imperialist powers – and the important multilateral forums of developing countries and their growing role – such as the G77+China – reveal the increasing expression of the need and aspiration for a world freed from unequal relations, from neocolonialism, from the imposition of sanctions and blockades, from the blackmail of debt and the dollar, as well as the demand for a new, more equitable international order, based on the sovereign equality of States, on the right to development, on mutually advantageous cooperation.

In this context, it is of particular importance that a number of countries question the dollar as an international reserve and exchange currency, in particular by making payments in their own national currencies, or by seeking to use new trading systems on a bilateral and multilateral level.

This is a positive trend in the development of the international situation, which imperialism seeks to counteract at all costs.

Using powerful political, economic and military means, and media manipulation, the USA, with the support of the other major capitalist powers, promotes all kinds of pressure, threats and manoeuvres, including instrumentalizing the international financial system and applying coercive measures in the economic, commercial, financial or technological fields. They thus seek to impose the political and economic isolation of countries and peoples, to impede sovereign options for development and in international relations, and to continue, in old and new forms, their exploitation, their plunder of natural resources, and their domination over these countries.

Despite efforts to impose its policy of confrontation and war in international relations, imperialism has had to face resistance from several countries that choose to normalize international relations in compliance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and of International Law. The proposals advanced at the global level by China constitute a significant contribution to this effect.

In this worldwide process of realignment of forces, an essential role is played by China – which aims to build socialism, advances social progress, has a mixed economy, defends peace and cooperation in the world. This process has the participation of countries that are targetted by imperialism's attempt to isolate and hinder their development. Without delusions regarding the different interests involved, it opens up space for the assertion of each country's sovereignty concerning the paths that they choose.

Not sharing certain conceptions of a multipolar international framework – either those that reduce the process of realignment of forces to an inter-imperialist competition or those that underestimate the nature of the socio-economic systems of some of

its actors – the PCP considers that the present process requires, as in all situations, the initiative and appropriate strategy and tactics by the forces that retain the goal of the revolutionary overcoming of capitalism by socialism, based on the assessment of concrete situations and on the clear definition of the main threat.

This process of realignment of forces on a worldwide scale can create alternatives for countries that want to free themselves from economic dependence, from the plunder of their resources, from the fate of underdevelopment and poverty, which are imposed by imperialism's interference and predatory action. The future evolution of this process is objectively inseparable from the struggle for peace and against war, from the rapprochement and articulation between those who resist imperialism, from the struggle for sovereignty and the right to development, from the promotion of relations of friendship and cooperation, from the development of the struggle of the workers and peoples.

1.4.

The struggle of the workers and peoples for their rights and for social and national emancipation

In a context of **resistance and accumulation of forces at the world level**, the international situation demonstrates that, while serious **dangers** arising from imperialism's exploitative and aggressive offensive persist, the action of the workers and peoples continues, with the **potential** to develop the struggle for progressive and revolutionary transformations. Resistance and struggles continue in the most differentiated conditions, taking on various forms and with diverse concrete and immediate goals.

The current situation underlines the importance of the **national question** and its interconnection with the **class question**. It confirms the national framework as a decisive field of struggle and the assertion and exercise of national sovereignty as a condi-

tion to defend and achieve rights, to promote economic and social development, to move forward processes of transformation.

The convergence of **the struggle of the working class and of the workers** with the **struggle of other anti-monopoly classes and social strata** and the **struggle of the peoples** in defence of their rights and sovereignty and for peace are fundamental factors to broaden and diversify the forces that can, objectively, converge in the resistance to imperialism's designs.

Reality demonstrates the need for strong, organized **Communist and revolutionary parties**, rooted in the working class and the popular masses; linked to their national realities; with political, ideological, social influence; with their class ideology and independence; with their communist identity and revolutionary project; with their internationalist cooperation and solidarity.

It being necessary to strengthen the unity, cooperation and solidarity of the **world Communist and revolutionary movement**, experience shows that the fulfilment of the national task of a Communist Party is not only its own *raison d'être* but also constitutes its main contribution to strengthen the international Communist and revolutionary movement and to advance the struggle for social and national emancipation on the world level.

Confronted with the violent political and ideological offensive of the ruling class – in which, among other aspects, anti-communism, the persecution and banning of Communist parties and other progressive and democratic forces, and operations to falsify history and reality abound – we continue to see situations that demonstrate solidity of analysis, firm positioning and persevering activity, but also liquidationist and social-democratizing conceptions and practices – with the abandonment of the ideological references, organisational principles and revolutionary project that characterise

a Communist Party – as well as dogmatic and sectarian conceptions and practices, which point to the imposition of single models of social transformation, to the seizure of power as an immediate universal task, to organizational centralization and political and ideological homogenization in the Communist movement.

Dogmatic and sectarian conceptions and practices introduce factors of misunderstanding, mistrust and division that delay the necessary advances in strengthening the cooperation and solidarity of the world Communist and revolutionary movement, as well as in the relationship with other progressive and anti-imperialist forces, namely in the development of unity in action against the common enemy.

Reality continues to prove that the problem does not lie in differences of opinion or even disagreements – which are all the more natural in view of the complexity of the international situation and the diversity of national realities – but in methods of action that do not respect tested principles of relations between parties, such as equal rights, mutual respect, autonomy of decision, non-interference in internal affairs, mutual solidarity and frankness. It is necessary that relations at the bilateral or multilateral level between Communist parties may contribute to a more profound acquaintance and mutual understanding, to the fraternal discussion of common problems and differences of opinion, to an appreciation of what unites, thus contributing to cooperation, mutual solidarity and unity in action.

On a European level, there is a need to deepen dialogue and for common and convergent action of Communist parties, as well as between them and other progressive forces that do not surrender to neoliberalism, to militarism, to the attacks on sovereignty and democracy, to anti-communism – which are promoted within the EU. At the forefront must be the issues most felt by the workers and peoples and the struggle for a Europe

of peace, cooperation between sovereign States with equal rights, social progress.

Capitalism's worsening structural crisis and the corresponding violent imperialist offensive reinforce the need for greater articulation, cooperation and unity in action among the patriotic, progressive and revolutionary forces, within a broad **anti-imperialist front** that can halt imperialism's offensive and open the way to building a new international order of peace, sovereignty and social progress. Imperialism's offensive, promoted by the US and its allies – particularly in NATO, the EU, the G7 – represents the most serious threat confronting the workers and the peoples. In order to stand up to it, it is essential that, within a context of very different and sometimes contradictory situations, there be a confluence of the countries that, headed by Communist parties, state the goal of building socialism; of the countries that, headed by progressive forces, assume as fundamental the defence of national sovereignty and independence and the option for paths of development and social progress; of the countries that, headed by politically and ideologically diverse forces, objectively contribute to confront imperialism's designs, even if with contradictory elements or in a momentary or restricted way; of Communist and other revolutionary parties; of the class movements and trade union organizations that fight to defend workers' rights and interests; of the progressive and patriotic forces, which embody the defence of their peoples' interests; of the movement for peace and solidarity; and of other mass movements with different expressions and goals, which – not being divisive or disaggregating – are part of progressive dynamics.

The international communist and revolutionary movement has a special responsibility in building social and political alliances that can contain and push back the most reactionary and aggressive sectors of imperialism and defeat the attempts at hegemonic domination by US imperialism and its allies. This goal underlines the need for

rapprochement, for strengthening ties of solidarity and for the development of cooperation among the Communist parties and other revolutionary forces – with the assertion of their own goals and without diluting their identity – with other peace-loving, patriotic, democratic, progressive, anti-imperialist forces, contributing towards unity in action around immediate goals of struggle in defence of peace, sovereignty and the rights of peoples.

1.5.

Socialism, the alternative to capitalism

Capitalism was not the initial system, nor is it the terminal system, in Humankind's History. Its revolutionary overcoming and the construction of a new society, without exploiters or exploited, are a requirement of the present and of the future, which takes on increasing importance in the struggle of the workers and peoples.

Socialism is a necessity of our time. The extraordinary growth in the concentration and centralization of capital; worsening social inequalities and scourges; capitalism's increasingly acute and irreconcilable contradictions; its inability to respond to the problems and aspirations of Humanity despite the extraordinary potential of scientific-technical development; the conflicts that it instigates and the wars that it foments in different parts of the world – all contribute to the ripening of objective conditions for the development of revolutionary processes that aim at socialism, with the phases and stages and the forms that they may come to take, in accordance with each country's concrete situation.

The October Revolution, with its profound transformations and extraordinary historical achievements and its worldwide impact that endures to this day, was a historical experience of universal scope and inaugurated a new epoch in the history of Humanity, the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The disappearance of the USSR and the defeats of socialism in Eastern Europe, which weighed negatively on the emancipation path of the peoples, and the systematic anti-communist campaigns aimed at denigrating the reality of the construction of socialism and what it represented in those countries, will not make us forget the extraordinary political, economic, social, cultural and scientific achievements and their role as a powerful factor of progress and world peace.

The contribution of the USSR to the great revolutionary and national liberation advances in the Twentieth Century, as well as its decisive contribution to the victory over Nazi-fascism, constitute an expression of the superiority of socialism that cannot be erased.

The evolution and today's situation in the world show the relevance of the communist ideal and project and the need and possibility of building a new society. This goal is indicated by several countries. Millions of human beings are committed to it, and it represents the most solid prospect for the future of Humankind.

The historical process of overcoming the capitalist economic-social formation by the socialist one is not automatic. It requires:

the struggle for concrete and immediate goals; the struggle for workers' demands; the struggle of the populations in defence of their rights and aspirations; the struggle in defence of freedoms and for a more profound democracy in its fundamental aspects – economic, social, political and cultural; asserting national sovereignty and independence; the struggle against war and to defend peace. These struggles are not contradictory, but rather part of the struggle for the more general and strategic goal of building socialism.

a policy of alliances of the working class with other anti-monopoly classes and so-

cial strata, in accordance with the tasks of each phase and stage of the process of social transformation.

the organization and creative intervention of the working class and of all workers, of the popular masses, as protagonists of the entire process of social transformation.

the essential condition of the existence of a revolutionary vanguard force capable of, in each country, leading the struggle of the workers to take power.

the establishment of a revolutionary power, bearing in mind that the question of the State is the central question in every revolution.

the creative application of Marxism-Leninism, a materialist and dialectical conception of the world, an instrument of analysis and a guide for action, which is indispensable in interpreting the world and for its revolutionary transformation.

The historical experience of struggle – with its multiple aspects and teachings both in successes and achievements and in mistakes

and defeats – reveals the extraordinary complexity, irregularity and harshness of the process of social emancipation of the workers and peoples. It also demonstrated that the paths of revolution, while being diversified and following different phases and stages in different countries, obey scientific and general laws, which reality has confirmed, regarding the role of the working class, workers' power, the nature of the State, social ownership of the main means of production, planning and, above all, the creative intervention by the popular masses.

Bearing in mind the experience of the international Communist and revolutionary movement and the experiences of the construction of socialism, it is from the concrete Portuguese reality and the Portuguese Communists' own experience that PCP indicates the path to socialism and the fundamental characteristics of the socialist society in Portugal. Its fundamental lines – which are inseparable from the particularities that mark the history of the Portuguese people, the social reality and the international insertion of our country – are systematized in the PCP Programme "An Advanced Democracy – The Values of April in the Future of Portugal".

Chapter 2

The Portugal in which we live and act

Portugal is not a poor country. The country has human potential and material resources that must be put at the service of development focused on the national interests, geared to asserting its sovereignty and raising the people's living standards.

The country is not detached from the world around it, from the international trends of development, from the alignment of world forces and economic arenas. Self-assertion requires broad, diversified and mutually beneficial political and economic relationships. Portugal has a future, all the more so if it frees itself from foreign conditioning and from right-wing policies and undertakes a different course, anchored in the achievements and values of April.

2.1.

Right-wing policies

– confrontation with the values of April

Half a century after the April Revolution, the evolution of national affairs is strongly marked by ever deeper right-wing policies and by the process of EU capitalist integration. The counter-revolutionary process is characterized by a policy of monopoly restoration. It confronts the Constitution of the Republic, the values of April, the interests of the workers, of the people and the country. It increases exploitation, the concentration of wealth, inequalities and injustice, foreign dependence and subordination.

Successive PS, PSD and CDS governments, committed to big capital, pushed Portugal into a protracted crisis, with negative economic, social, cultural and political impacts and with consequences for the democratic regime itself, for the environment, for its structural deficits – productive, scientific,

technological, energy, capital, demographic –, for national independence and sovereignty.

The confrontation that opposes those who aspire to complete the counter-revolutionary process and those forces which resist, anchored in the values of April and in the Constitution, will mark and determine the country's evolution in the near future. The struggle to break with right-wing policies, to halt the counter-revolutionary process and to pave the way to a patriotic and left-wing alternative, is a key issue for the country in which we live and act.

2.2.

The power of the economic groups and multinationals and a policy that worsens national problems and jeopardises the future

Portugal is today a country dominated by the power of the economic groups and multinationals. The difficulties that mark its life and constrain its development and the scale of inequalities and injustice that it highlights are, to a large extent, the direct expression of this domination. The growing involvement of big capital with its instruments of domination – in particular the large corporations in strategic sectors, political power, the State apparatus and the means of ideological domination – determines much of the course of national affairs, of economic policy guidelines, of Portugal's integration within the world. It configures the institutions to its goals.

The class domination by big domestic and foreign capital over the country's affairs is a consequence of the process of capitalist and monopoly recovery, which also includes submission to the EU and, in general, to imperialism. It is a class domination reflected

in the power that big capital enjoys, with its decision-making centres and connections. It has in right-wing policies an instrument with which to act outside, and against, the Constitution.

This domination is exercised in almost every sphere of national life. It pursues the goal of intensifying capitalist accumulation, supported by a political power that is essentially captured and at the service of this strategy. Essential traits of the class domination by big capital in our country are: confrontation with the Constitution of Republic; the restoration and reorganization of monopoly capitalism's socio-economic structures; the reconfiguration of the State to serve big capital and the attack against its social functions; an intensification of exploitation, which is sustained by the offensive against labour rights, by job insecurity and by the persistence of low wages and pensions; the perversion of the democratic system; the promotion and restoration of obscurantist, backward and reactionary values; the option for the domination by foreign capital over the economy; the constraints on national sovereignty and independence.

Developments in Portugal's economic situation are marked by growing **monopolist domination**. The organization of big (national and foreign) capital in economic groups with enterprises of various sizes that dominate and control entire sectors of activity, markets and value chains, that use their dominant power over the rest of the business structure (predominantly micro, small and medium enterprises), whether to impose prices to various suppliers and consumers or to pressure and condition wages and workers' rights, affects the entire productive and service network and exerts a huge influence in Portuguese society. It serves to drain the wealth that is produced in the country.

Domestic production has been neglected. Structural deficits have consolidated, promoting profound asymmetries and territorial

imbalances, enhancing foreign dependence, with an excessive weight of the service sector in economic activity. The domestic productive apparatus in industry, agriculture or fisheries, is not geared towards satisfying the country's main needs, thus causing a chronic imbalance in the exchange of goods. High foreign indebtedness – both public and private –, although less visible outside cyclical crises, largely results from disdaining the key role of national production.

Portugal has been relinquishing important instruments of its **economic sovereignty**. First of all, those related to its monetary and budgetary sovereignty, but also those resulting from the process of privatization and liberalization of the economy, which have transferred important levers of the national economy to foreign capital (among others in banking and insurance, in the extractive and processing industries, in energy, in transports and communications, in agriculture). Constraints on budgetary decisions are growing, clashing with the country's pressing needs in terms of public services, wages and the functioning of State structures. The limited public and private investment that has taken place for over 20 years – which is inseparable from joining the Euro – falls short of basic needs for infrastructure and equipment and even in preserving what currently exists, as in the case of Public Administration, which is more dependent and conditioned by the scale and goals of [European] Community funds.

The rapid recovery verified after the deep recession caused by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, has not changed the trend of clearly insufficient economic growth which the country has been experiencing. That recovery was for a time accompanied by a significant increase in inflation, which had serious impacts on the lives of the Portuguese people. Deprived of monetary sovereignty, the country found itself confronted with an interest rate policy – determined by the ECB [European Central Bank]

and to which the governments in Portugal have submitted – that counters the national interest.

There is a glaring and enormous frailty in the low-productivity economic fabric – for which capital is responsible – under the control of monopolies and where companies are deprived of capital. Over 600 thousand micro, small and medium-sized companies, which represent 98% of enterprises, are confronted with the power of monopolies and the policies at their service. The presence and influence of **foreign capital** – which controls over 50% of large companies – extends beyond direct ownership (with the increasing role of so-called investment funds) and is one of the main reasons for the intense transfers abroad of capital. The loss of domestic control in strategic sectors, areas and companies – a consequence of privatizations and of EU integration – has placed fundamental instruments of the national economy under the control and interests of foreign capital, and is a very powerful constraint on the country's development. The State is put at the service of big capital with the use of public private partnerships (PPP), tax benefits, the sub-contracting of services, the commodification of public services, the capture of Community funds and other assistance, including through the State budget and Social Security. Corruption and the assault on public goods, promiscuity between public and private interests, the subordination of political power to economic power, have established themselves in the country's political and economic life. They are inseparable from the nature of capitalism and from the ongoing right-wing policies.

Right-wing policies and the capitalist European integration push the country towards an **economic model** based on low-value-added and export-oriented productive activities and processes, such as tourism. This means little diversification of economic activity, narrower foreign trade relations and greater dependence on the big capitalist

powers. This model is, in the current framework of international division of labour, a factor of dependence that constrains the full use of the country's potential.

The national scientific and technological system falls prey to the lack of public investment and to its capture by the interests of big capital. The enormous economic, social and cultural potential created by the ongoing Scientific and Technical Revolution is under the command, guidance and instrumentalization by monopoly capital, namely by the big technological companies. In these circumstances, its application helps to worsen exploitation and inequality, instead of responding to the needs and well-being of the people, to asserting national sovereignty, to cooperation and peace between peoples.

Industry, whose weight in the GDP has been stagnant for over a decade, reveals serious structural weakness because important basic and strategic sectors have not recovered and because there are no industrial lines to make use of our natural resources (liaising the extractive and processing components). The loss of decision-making centres and know-how continues. There is no progress in our production of investment and durable consumer goods. The industrial fabric, despite some positive developments (productivity and specialization profile), still has great strategic instability and external vulnerability.

In **agriculture**, after decades of [EU] Common Agricultural Policy, we are witnessing the development and consolidation of an agrarian capitalism, with strong financial penetration, examples of which are the irrigated areas of Alqueva, the new export-oriented crops and forested areas. Policies are pursued that do not guarantee the goals of ensuring food sovereignty; of increasing farmers' incomes; of moderating food prices; of the necessary settling of the population in an increasingly depop-

ulated rural world; of a balanced use of resources, in particular water and soil. There is an increasing concentration of land and growth in the average area of agricultural holdings, that are associated with intensive and super-intensive monocultures. There is growing use of immigrant labour, often in near-slavery conditions. The destruction of small and medium-sized farms and family farms continues.

Continuous monoculture forest areas are increasing, especially of eucalyptus, and the problems of **forest** planning and management still do not have responses. Agricultural and forest land, including with protected species, is being replaced by photovoltaic panel installations.

A similar reality – constraints imposed by the EU, in particular by the Common Fisheries Policy – has hit the **fisheries** sector, with an ever-shrinking role in the national economy as a whole, despite the country's enormous potential. We are witnessing the economic and social devaluation of fisheries, a fall in the income of fishermen and companies, increasing restrictions in access to resources, the decline of fishing communities. At the same time, the country's vast marine resources are increasingly under the gaze of the interests of foreign powers and transnational capital.

In **trade and services**, the weight of large-scale distribution and its policy of imposing prices on consumers and producers, through predatory mechanisms, is growing. Tourism's role in the national economy is increasing, and has had a significant and unregulated growth in recent years, but without any national strategy of development or for upstream productive activities. This results in increasingly negative impacts on various aspects of national affairs. The outsourcing of services – administrative, accounting, legal, cleaning, security, IT, etc. – by companies and sectors is growing in size and tends to impact the core activities of com-

panies. There are also significant companies for hired labour.

In **transports, mobility and communications** – activities that are indispensable for the well-being of communities, for territorial cohesion, for the environment and the country's development – the processes of liberalization and privatization – of highways, railways, civil aviation, maritime and river transport, telecommunications, postal services, among others – are blocking the possibilities for investment and modernization. This has consequences on mobility and on ensuring universal access to fundamental services. The absence of a public transportation network covering the entire country leaves part of the population dependent on individual transports or affected by isolation. The monopolization and lack of public operators in telecommunications and in data management and storage, is reflected in higher prices, greater foreign dependence and a drop in investment, namely in Research and Development (R&D) in this area. The postal service, which was also privatized, has become more expensive, with less coverage, frequency and quality. The path to making these services free, which is necessary for the country's development, has been thwarted by the interests of capital.

Territorial inequality and imbalances are growing. There is a growing contrast between densely populated coastal or metropolitan areas and vast areas of the country's hinterland, that are affected by a process of depopulation. Swathes of territory are emptied of productive activity. Impacted in different ways, they face the constraints resulting from a lack of investment and of public services, in particular in healthcare, education or transports. In metropolitan areas, the problems of access to housing, gentrification and planning have special impact, with consequences on the over-occupation of land, on the environment, on security, on access to public services. This degrades the communities'

quality of life. In the autonomous regions, inequalities and imbalances stemming from the same political choices are also evident, and are aggravated by their ultra-peripheral conditions. Instead of the necessary capacity for economic planning and public execution, the country is increasingly in the hands of profit-maximizing market “anarchy”, to which is added an expansion and accumulation through the commodification and privatization of new areas of the country’s affairs – environment, healthcare, etc. – and the financialization of the economy, expressed in land concentration and speculation – both urban and rural.

Environmental degradation is expressed in the loss of biodiversity, in the destruction and fragmentation of habitats, in soil degradation and erosion, drought and the contamination of water bodies, in the degradation of air quality, in coastal erosion, forest fires, unregulated extraction of mineral resources and their impacts, in pollution in multiple forms. Climate change generates effects and has consequences in multiple aspects. We are witnessing the manipulation by capital of concerns about **environmental** degradation and climate change, not to respond to the necessary balance between human beings and nature, of which they are part, but to open up new areas for business.

The predatory nature of the capitalist mode of production is evident with the increase in an irrational consumption of resources, with negative consequences for populations and the environment. Current policies facilitate the predation of natural resources in the interests of economic groups and do not solve, but rather deepen, environmental problems – with the weakening of State structures; the commodification and lack of investment in nature conservation; the promotion of consumerism, along with the creation of new taxes on consumption; the consolidation of speculative instruments, such as the carbon market; the planned obsolescence of products; the liberalization of trade; along with a

controlled energy transition at the service of big business.

On a **social level**, the country’s evolution is marked by a policy of greater exploitation, by attacks on the social functions of the State and by the degradation of public services, which are increasing injustice and inequality.

The reality faced by millions of workers is marked by **low wages and attacks on their rights**, with negative impacts on living standards, pensions and Social Security, on territorial occupation, demography and the national economy. There is a continuing policy of curbing wages that leaves millions of workers unable to meet their needs, with figures far below those of the Eurozone and EU average, namely when compared to neighbouring Spain.

Vast sectors have seen their purchasing power eroded by significant price hikes. Successive changes to the labour legislation have weakened collective bargaining; promoted individual labour relations; facilitated redundancies, which were made cheaper; devalued careers and professions; reduced overtime pay; promoted precariousness; deregulated working hours; increased the retirement age; and attacked trade union action. The number of those who do shift work, work at night, over the weekend, on holidays or with other atypical working hours, such as double jobs, is growing. This has profound impacts on health, occupational accidents and diseases, on family assistance, on the quality of life and employment. Unemployment persists and is linked to precarious jobs, periods of inactivity and low levels of social protection, which penalise workers, who are impoverished throughout life, and in the value of their pensions.

New forms of business organization associated with intense technological developments – digital platforms, teleworking, application of artificial intelligence, among others – bring

new problems to the workers, which are as always based on exploitation.

There is a significant ongoing change in the composition of the labour force in Portugal. Low wages have a profound impact on **migrations** in our country. On the one hand, every year tens of thousands of people continue to leave the country, in particular young people, including those with higher education and in sectors of skilled labour, in search of a better life. On the other hand, the economic model that is imposed requires large amounts of low-cost labour, which ends up being ensured by workers from a wide range of nationalities, who are subjected to high levels of exploitation – including with the involvement of [human] trafficking networks. The impacts of these changes – with a growing presence of immigrants in the entire workforce in Portugal – place new demands on the struggle against human trafficking, discrimination, racism and xenophobia, for regularization and social integration, in terms of public services and the State's social functions. These require ensuring labour rights to all workers, regardless of their origin or nationality.

The increased participation of **women** in various areas of society is a reality, although still marked by persisting inequalities and discrimination and by limitations in important rights at work; in the family; in motherhood; in access to healthcare, in particular in sexual and reproductive health; in political participation; in culture; or in sports. Women continue to face various forms of violence, including domestic violence and exploitation in prostitution. Inequality and discrimination against women are rooted in the same policies that promote low wages, precariousness, the degradation of public services and the exploitation of those who work. In fact, a double exploitation based on class and sex persists, despite the propaganda surrounding so-called gender equality policies. This context is dangerous for wom-

en's rights, as a result of right-wing policies and the reactionary agenda that attacks important aspects of the rights that have been won in the meantime.

The **youth** face increasing curbs on their autonomy and personal fulfilment. An increasingly elitist education has gained strength, in particular with the ever earlier and more significant referral to vocational education, rather than the valorization of the general path, and the profound changes in higher education through the Bologna process. There is a contrast between low wages and precariousness and the high cost of living, especially in housing costs, which delay emancipation. Access to culture and sports is not guaranteed. Young people's capacity to transform is conditioned by growing limitations on their democratic rights – at school and in the workplace –, by the growing pressures of life and by the very strong ideological offensive targeting the younger generations, which promote divisions, individualism and consumerism.

An integral development is not assured to most **children** in Portugal. Their situation reflects an overarching reality of society – in terms of wages, working hours, maternity and paternity rights, unemployment, housing, public services – that is inseparable from the living conditions imposed on most workers and that perpetuates high levels of child poverty. The construction of a public network of kindergartens integrated within the educational system has yet to be implemented. There are restrictions in access to pre-schooling and various shortcomings in public education, especially for those who need special learning assistance and for those who do not have Portuguese as their mother tongue. Important dimensions of children's rights, including the right to play, to participation, or autonomous mobility, are neither recognized nor guaranteed.

The vast majority of **old-age and other pensioners** and the **elderly** are faced

with low retirement and pension values, in a context of rising prices for essential goods and services. This affects their living conditions and explains the poverty rates that affect them. Their weight in society as a whole (about a quarter of the population) is growing. The number of situations of isolation, and also of neglect or mistreatment, demand adequate responses in terms of healthcare, assistance for autonomy, in culture and leisure. The absence of a public network of equipments, care homes and other support services divorces the State from its responsibilities and creates a whole business sector profiting from increased longevity, including the existence of illegal and inappropriate care homes. The increasing life expectancy is not accompanied by measures that can meet the resulting needs, namely ensuring a dignified life.

The difficulties experienced by **people with disabilities** (motor, sensory, organic or intellectual) and their families contrast with the possibilities that society already has and should provide. Successive governments have shown a profound indifference to the situation of children with special needs. There is a lack of support for life projects and employment with rights for many of these young people who finish compulsory education, and a shortage of assistance for situations of deep disability. The country does not have a State policy that guarantees access to public services and equipment, that promotes autonomy and lifelong assistance and that fights against the persisting social exclusion.

Poverty is not a historical or cultural fatality, but a consequence of political choices. It continues to mark the country's reality. The focus often placed on the serious situations of extreme poverty – including thousands of people who are living on the streets – and which is centred on a vision of charity and benefactors, does not change, but rather conceals a broader and deeper reality of poverty or severe material deprivation. The risk of poverty or social exclusion in Portu-

gal has persistently remained above a rate of 20% of the population (21.1% in 2023).

Within a context of deepening social problems, the attacks against public services have also contributed to weaken the structures that fight **drug dependence, alcoholism** and other addictions. This has negative consequences for a response to these realities with prevention, risk reduction and minimization of harm, treatment and reintegration, as well as in terms of combating drug trafficking in an integrated way.

Despite progress in the legislative sphere, **discrimination and prejudice** of a diverse nature persist in society – in particular as relates to sexuality issues. This has negative consequences for the lives of thousands of people. This reality is inseparable from exploitation, from injustice and inequality, from the promotion of factors of division and from reactionary conceptions that serve big capital. To oppose and overcome these discriminations it is necessary to fulfil the rights enshrined in the Constitution and to make this struggle part of the struggle to break with right-wing policies and for a fairer society for all.

The attack on the **social functions of the State** is a core element of the offensive against the democratic regime. What is ongoing is a strategy that aims to deny equality and universality of access to constitutional rights in areas such as healthcare, education or social security, paving the way for their privatization. This goal is achieved by reducing public investment and public expenditure below what is needed, by abandoning public services as a general structuring network that implements rights, by transferring responsibilities to local authorities and by devaluing the wages and professional status of their workers.

The situation that is being created in the **National Health Service (NHS)** is particularly serious. It results from a strategy

that is coordinated between political power and economic power, to continuously devalue and erode it, and diverting professionals – doctors, nurses, technical staff – and resources from the public service to private economic groups.

The NHS remains the guarantor of universal access to healthcare. Diverting funds from the NHS budget to the private sector, resorting to PPPs [Public-Private partnerships], the lack of investment, a medicine policy that is strongly conditioned by the interests of the pharmaceutical industry, the privatization of primary health care and various hospital services, the promotion of health insurances, constraints on public management and organizational problems, low wages and the devaluation of careers – all this threatens to destroy this important achievement of April. As the weight of private healthcare groups in the country grows, the right of the Portuguese people to healthcare decreases.

We are witnessing the weakening of a policy for healthcare promotion and disease prevention, which is all the more necessary in the face of persistent and emerging economic and social problems, with various impacts, including on mental health.

The offensive against free and good quality **public education**, which is the most democratic and advanced model of organization of the education system, continues. There is a glaring lack of teachers and other professionals and a lack of investment in school buildings that need urgent, and in many cases substantial, maintenance. Instead of a perspective of universal access to all levels of education, the trend is towards it becoming more elitist. Instead of an inclusive education capable of integrating and taking into account the needs of each child and young person, with conditions to also deal with new realities, including the diversity of nationalities, we see increasing difficulties in providing responses. Instead of a participatory and democratic manage-

ment, the trend is towards a concentration of power. Instead of an education oriented towards the integral formation of the individual, the trend is towards poorer and narrower learning, in accordance with the interests of capital. Instead of promoting continuous assessment, the trend is to shape the school route through the selective logic of national exams. Instead of providing the resources necessary for a public, free and quality schooling, the trend is towards the growth and promotion of private education.

In higher education, tuition fees and other associated costs, such as accommodation, continue to be a barrier to its democratization. There are problems with the careers and precariousness of teaching staff. In financial terms, we are witnessing an increasing dependence on the institutions' own revenues, with their ensuing subordination to the interests of big capital. More than investing in private schools, big capital is today working within public higher education institutions – in terms of financing, curricula, management bodies, scientific research projects, various partnerships, student accommodation, in the ideological field. This situation is inseparable from the existing framework of the Legal Regime for Higher Education Institutions.

The logic of higher education, or even all public schooling, being oriented to meet market needs does not contribute to its quality and, even less, to the country's development needs. The **national scientific and technological system** is following this trend. The resources that scientific institutions lack – State laboratories, universities and polytechnics, various research institutes and centres – are channelled to tax breaks and other assistance for economic groups. Portugal has a scientific body marked by the precariousness to which thousands of research workers are subjected. In addition, there is no stable national scientific policy, linked to the country's needs, which

can contribute to fight the existing scientific and technological deficit.

The public **social security system** is confronted with various attempts at privatization. The high volume of resources that it concentrates and channels is the target of finance capital's greed. Its sustainability, which is called into question, is guaranteed by its universal nature and its dimension of solidarity. Its main source of revenue is the financing by workers' discounts and in recent years there has been an increase in revenues for Social Security. Despite this, the various social benefits that Social Security shoulders have not only fallen short of what is needed, as they have been restricted and limited in scope.

With a decisive role in the payment of retirement and other pensions, in the response to situations of unemployment, poverty, illness, disability, maternity, paternity and childhood, there are growing attempts to divert its resources to big capital, either by promoting so-called savings plans of banks or insurance companies, by accumulating debts, by undeclared work or the abusive and opportunistic use of furloughs. Manoeuvres are intensifying to reduce the value of contributions, especially from employers, thereby weakening the Social Security system.

It is also worth noting the existence of a group of associations and institutions that carry out activities in various social areas with increasing weight in economic life. In many cases, they are filling the void left by the State.

In recent years, the conditions of access to **housing** have worsened. This is the result of decades of public divestment, of the growing dominance of finance capital and real estate funds over this essential asset, of the liberalization of the rental market, of land policies, of the promotion of banking schemes and high interest rates, of the promotion of rentierism, real estate speculation and the pressure of external demand

– from tourism, tax incentives for non-residents, etc.

The impact of these options affects, although in differentiated ways, several strata of the population. Its consequences are high levels of deprivation, resulting from a significant part of the wages being taken up by housing expenses; the gentrification, loss of character and social reconfiguration of the main cities; increase in distances between home and work; difficulties in fixing workers in public administration and in various economic sectors; a breakdown of social and family ties; low birth rates; an increasingly elitist higher education; overcrowding and the sharing of houses; the stigmatization of populations; the return of illegal construction. The housing situation reflects the neo-liberal choices that turn it into a commodity, erasing its social function.

Right-wing policies impede the democratization of **culture** which the April Revolution had opened up. Underfunding and divestment by the State are combined with the growing influence of capital, seeking to commodify, make more elitist, appropriate and instrumentalize culture, at the service of the ruling classes.

The right to free cultural creation and enjoyment, in which thousands of artists and other professionals, as well as multiple organizations and entities such as local authorities, are engaged, is profoundly limited. There is inadequate support for the arts and the popular associative movement throughout the national territory, in the management, preservation and dissemination of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, in artistic education and in the role assigned to the Portuguese language, in the – generally precarious – working conditions of those dedicated to cultural production and creation. There are growing attempts to homogenize, based on standards and aesthetic conceptions imposed by the decision centres of big capital and at the service of the dominant ideology.

In **sports**, the effort and dedication of multiple entities – especially local government, the associative movement, athletes and their families – with their activity and participation, project sports and expand its practice. This stands in contrast to a policy that devalues it and divests – from school sports to high-performance sports – while commodifying, privatizing and neglecting the importance of physical education and sports in the development of children and young people, for the integral formation of the individual, for the health and welfare of the population.

In the **mass media**, there are growing impacts of the concentration of media ownership, together with the debasement and attack on the public service – particularly the threats to public radio and television service – with all the negative expressions that result from a drastic reduction of pluralism of information and opinion, from conditioning and manipulation, from the degradation of the working conditions of its professionals.

The offensive against **Local Government** and its autonomy continues. Delegations of power and the transfer of burdens to local authorities, presented as “decentralization”, articulated with cutbacks in autonomy and in financial resources and the privatization of services, is a particularly serious trend. It has consequences for Local Government and for the full exercise of what are its essential powers and competences. This process aims at debasing the State and at reducing investment and public expenditure, at the expense of community interests. It is an attack against the universality of Constitutionally enshrined rights and social functions, which is inseparable from the ongoing process of reconfiguring the State.

Centralising options, determined by right-wing policies, are expressed in disregard for the responsibilities of **regional autonomy**

in guaranteeing the principle of territorial continuity; in the use of decentralized structures to command regional policies, with Regional Coordination and Development Commissions taking on increasing powers; in the attack against the autonomy of Local Government (as in the process of abolishing parishes and refusing to reinstate them), together with the blocking of the constitutional requirement to create administrative regions.

The **Legal system** remains subject to an inertia that exacerbates existing problems, namely its slowness and the difficulties in access – including due to costs – for the vast majority of the population. There is a lack of human resources, premises are deteriorating, there are continuing problems with the careers of judicial officials, in registry and notary offices, in rehabilitation and prison services. Conditions for the professional practice of magistrates and lawyers are deteriorating. This enhances the class nature of access to justice. Incidents with actions by the judiciary are being used as a pretext to introduce negative changes in the functioning of the Legal system.

The **security of the populations** is conditioned by divestment in this area, by the refusal to create a single national police force (PSP and GNR) of a civilian nature and by continuing socio-professional problems. The alienation of State responsibility in issues of community security and tranquillity and the manipulation of these issues are growing, and being inserted within more profound and anti-democratic goals. Preventive and community policing has been neglected, with preference given to its reactive dimension. The extinction of SEF [Service for Foreigners and Borders] has had negative consequences for the country's border controls. The military nature of GNR and the subordination of the Maritime Police to the Navy are not consistent with the existing constitutional distinction between the Armed Forces and the security forces.

In conflict with the Constitution, the **Information System of the Republic (SIRP)** becomes a factor that perverts the democratic regime, with a status that makes it immune to legal and democratic oversight.

With the recent restructuring of **Civil Protection**, the system's bureaucratization and militarization has grown further. Shortcomings remain in the field of prevention and Civil Emergency Planning. This exposes the territory and communities to risks and weakens the ability to plan response scenarios and ensure backups in areas that are vital to the functioning of the State, should situations of greater stress occur. The role and rights of firefighters, who ensure over 90% of rescue operations, continue to be devalued.

The process of centralization and governmentalization of the **Armed Forces** has deepened with continued subordination to the interests of the militarist drive of the USA, NATO and the EU, on a par with the degradation in human, material and socio-professional resources and the absence of a dignified response to the problems of military personnel, including the situation of veterans.

2.3.

Political developments and their institutional expression

The national situation and its future prospects are inseparable from the political balance of forces and its institutional expression, as well as from the ongoing class confrontation. This confrontation is marked, from the onset, by the action of successive Governments that in recent years have had as essential axes the continuation and deepening of right-wing policies.

In the past four years, what is noteworthy is that both the PS Governments and the current PSD/CDS Government have pursued policies with essentially indistinguishable options favouring the economic groups.

The growing presence of other forces and parties with institutional representation creates more favourable conditions for these policies, broadens their political base and introduces factors of dispersion which blur the identification of responsibilities.

The evolution of the political situation is inseparable from the combination of three factors: the shared goals that unite PS and PSD on essential issues and their government and parliamentary activity at the service of the interests of big capital; the President of the Republic's support and complicity in favouring the continuity of that policy; the resulting contribution of these policies to open the field and political space to reactionary and backward forces, like Chega and IL, which being surrogates for PSD and CDS and fully sharing their policies, benefit from the deception to which many are led by their demagoguery and media promotion. They reflect the growing confrontation of big capital with the democratic regime.

Right-wing policies have found in PS a path and choices that are not different, in what is essential to the interests of capital, from those defended by PSD, CDS, Chega and IL, despite manufactured polemics and verbal confrontations. This can be seen by their systematic convergence in political objectives and in parliamentary debates and votes, and in the process to review the Constitution which was triggered with undisguisedly anti-democratic goals, sheltered by PS, although it was interrupted by the dissolution of [parliament].

This option by PS was visibly expressed in its discomfort with the period of the "new phase of national political life" that began in 2015, when it formed its minority government in the context of a balance of forces that made it possible to interrupt the ongoing policy of accelerated destruction and to defend, restore and win rights, albeit in a limited way. The assessment of what that period represented, of its scope and signif-

icance, of its limitations and inadequacies, requires rejecting simplifications and misrepresentations. That period showed that it was possible, with the struggle of the workers and the PCP's intervention, to prevent the implementation of ongoing negative projects, to respond to some more pressing problems, to achieve progress. It also showed, as the PCP has always stressed, that the solutions and the policy that the country needed and needs, in order to overcome its structural deficits and ensure a sovereign development, could not emerge within the straitjacket of the class options by PS and its government.

On this path, PS increasingly assumed a position of resisting and refusing to respond to problems. It adopted a strategy geared towards continuing to pursue its class options, namely with the dramatics surrounding the 2022 draft State Budget, the content of which was marked by the rejection of solutions for the country. This strategy was sustained in a naked ambition for power, after an operation of pressure and blackmail, which the President of the Republic promoted, and which eventually led to early elections in which PS achieved the absolute majority which it sought.

This policy, in the two years of [PS] Government with an absolute majority, confirmed options ranging from the degradation of public services to the attack against the NHS, from the maintenance of the grievous norms of labour legislation to favouring the bankers' profits, from the support for economic groups to inertia in responding to housing problems. The resignation of the Prime Minister in November 2023, with the pretext of a legal proceeding, and the consequent convening of elections is, more than anything, an expression of the consequences of this policy and of the growing discontent which was expressed in the struggle of the workers and the people..

The early stage of the PSD/CDS government revealed, despite the propaganda and some

specific measures, a clear determination to continue and intensify right-wing policies. The first months in office confirm that PSD and CDS, in convergence with Chega and IL, seek to take the right-wing policy at the service of big capital even further, attacking workers' rights, worsening exploitation, handing over public services to private interests, privatizing, granting privileges to economic groups, whilst deepening the difficulties for the general population.

In a context in which the forces of big capital have better institutional conditions to achieve their goals; in which the refusal of PS to confront the options of the current government and majority is confirmed; in which the pretext of the reactionary nature of Chega and IL is used to normalise PSD and CDS, seeking to oppose a "democratic" right to a "reactionary" one – it becomes an imperative to assert the PCP as the true force of opposition and alternative.

The position of the President of the Republic is worth noting. It is marked by an objective convergence with developments that, on the political and institutional level, contribute to ensure favourable conditions for the continuity of right-wing policies. His term of office as regards foreign policy also sets him in confrontation with what the Constitution stipulates and with what he is called upon to respect and enforce.

2.4.

The perversion of the democratic regime and defending the Constitution of the Republic

The confrontation between those who aspire to complete the counter-revolutionary process and the forces that resist, anchored in April and in the Constitution, is centred on the democratic regime, with its founding traits and the most advanced elements that define it.

The confrontation between those who as-

pire to complete the counter-revolutionary process and the forces that resist, anchored in April and in the Constitution, is centred on the democratic regime, with its founding traits and the most advanced elements that define it.

It pursues the goal of perverting the democratic regime, also by adopting unconstitutional laws, by disrespecting and reviewing the Constitution of the Republic in a subversive way. It seeks to criminalise political life. It proposes to review electoral laws, calling into question the principle of proportionality and their reliability. It seeks to divert the Constitutional mission of the armed and security forces. It seeks so-called regime pacts between forces that have, in turn, carried out right-wing policies.

This process is accompanied by the resurgence of backward and reactionary conceptions, with the promotion of far-right forces and the spread of anti-communism, in which the whitewashing of fascism and the rewriting of the April Revolution are key elements.

In this context, the struggle to defend the democratic regime and demanding respect for the Constitution of the Republic and its political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the promotion of the values of April that are directly related to the interests and rights of workers and the people, take on extreme importance and represent a platform for the convergence of all democrats and patriots.

Chapter 3

Capitalist European integration and national sovereignty

Portugal's inclusion in the capitalist process of European integration, with its nature and course, has confirmed it as an instrument to promote the domination of monopoly capital over national affairs.

The country in which we live and act is deeply marked by the effects of this economic, social, and political integration.

On the economic front, by jeopardising the full use of endogenous resources and potential for development; by the limitation of the State's role as a decisive and reference structure in the planning and conduct of economic policy; by a European division of labour that contributes to lock the national economy into a profile of specialization based on low wages and skills.

On the social front, with the erosion of labour and other social rights; with the degradation and dismantling of public services and the commodification of ever-growing spheres of social life – from healthcare to social security, housing, transportation, communications, education and culture.

On the political front, with the overall impoverishment of democratic life; the growing subordination of political power to economic power; and the demeaning of national sovereign institutions in relation to the institutions of the European Union, subjecting the former to the roster of dictates and arbitrary regulations that emanate from the latter.

The serious limitations to national sovereignty and independence associated with the capitalist European integration intensify the conflict between the course of national affairs and the development project enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic.

3.1.

Situação e evolução recente da União Europeia

The EU has confirmed itself as an instrument and arena for domination by monopolies and transnational corporations, geared towards concentrating power in the main European capitalist powers and simultaneously aligned with US imperialism and subject to its interests.

The EU's evolution, while structurally safeguarding the interests of big capital and the major powers, reflects the relationships between the social and political forces in its midst, as well as the need to adapt to different circumstances.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the economic downturn, as before during the crisis that broke out in 2007-2008 with the scale of its impact in the Eurozone, have led, based on those interests, to the annulment – albeit conditional, and with varying duration and scope – of established rules, and to adopting measures that had previously been rejected or were not envisaged. Examples include the ECB's zero and even negative official interest rates; the financing of States by the ECB with sovereign debt purchase programs on the secondary market; "capital controls" (in Cyprus) and restrictions on the "free movement of goods"; exceptional possibility of public assistance to national companies; the suspension of budgetary rules on deficits and debt; the issuing of debt by the EU and the promotion of investment with the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

These measures helped to prevent a deeper recession, although their implementation has been marked by shortcomings, unequal-

ities, and arbitrariness on the part of EU institutions, as was demonstrated by the exclusion of [the Portuguese air carrier] TAP from the exceptional framework for State aid, thus favouring multinational companies in the aviation sector.

In addition, this rapid reversal reveals the class nature of the integration processes, at the service of big business, which does not accept lower profits, nor social expenditures. Examples include the significant rise in interest rates and their maintenance at high levels; the reinstatement of limitations on debt purchases by the ECB; the reform of EU economic governance, with the imposition of public spending caps and more interference in the conduct of national budgetary policy; the possibility of further reductions in structural and cohesion funds. These developments will have extremely negative effects on the Portuguese reality in the near future.

The intensification of the neo-liberal, federalist and militarist nature and course of the EU, with its single policies and guidelines, which take precedence over the interests of the workers and peoples and which clash with national sovereignty, confirm that an alternative policy is not possible without confronting and breaking with the EU's impositions.

Experience confirms that the EU's dogmas and policies are untouchable only as long as they serve the dominance and interests of the major powers and their economic groups. The same rules that have been invoked to condition, blackmail, and sanction certain member States and their peoples, have been suspended or modified when required by the interests that determine the EU's course. This reality, and the contradictions that it exposes, calls for determination on the part of countries and peoples in making their interests prevail. At crucial moments, successive Portuguese governments have relinquished the defence of national interests.

3.2.

Monetary integration

Monetary integration within the Euro

continues to be a major constraint on the country. The Euro has worsened economic crises; it imposes a common exchange rate that is out of step with the country's wage and productivity levels; it seriously affects sovereignty and removes room for manoeuvre from national policies; it deprives the country of tools to boost resources and capacities; it harms national production, management, and the balance of trade; it hinders necessary structural transformations; it promotes the limitation of social spending and public investment; it subjects the country to blackmail from EU institutions and financial markets; it makes it difficult to raise the population's standard of living; and it benefits big business, both domestic and foreign, to the detriment of public and national intervention.

Despite the average national economic growth over the last decade (1.94 per cent per year between 2014 and 2023), and the reduction in public and external debts, the insufficiency of the former and the high level of the latter confirm that the Euro is an obstacle to the country's development. During this period, investment, the funding of public services and the response to national problems have continued to be sacrificed.

The Banking Union promotes the concentration and national divestment of banks. The country lost public and national control over money creation. With the loss of monetary sovereignty, the power to issue money was left to an external entity, the ECB; with foreign dominance of banking, promoted by the Banking Union, control of money creation by commercial banks (with the exception of Caixa Geral de Depósitos) was also left to external command centres.

Recovering monetary sovereignty is a structural necessity for the country – with the

issuing of its own currency, the creation of its own Central Bank, and monetary, financial, exchange rate, budgetary, and banking policies adjusted to the national reality. But while it is a necessary condition for national development, it is not in itself a guarantee of that development. Everything depends on the political choices that are made, assisted by the increased scope for action. Furthermore, this process must necessarily involve careful preparation to safeguard the interests of the people and the country.

3.3.

Other constraints imposed on the country by the capitalist European integration

The **single market**, extending to such industries as energy, telecommunications, or digital; the pressure for the commodification of social sectors; and the EU's common policies (in what regards, among others, agriculture, fisheries, and trade) expose its neo-liberal framework and the asymmetry of its impacts. The demand for profound changes to these policies and for safeguards that recognise national specificities is best expressed in the struggle for national sovereignty in, among other areas, industry, agriculture, fisheries, trade, public services, and data and digital services.

The intention to encourage even more concentration and centralisation of capital on a EU-wide level is at the root of the increasing financing of economic groups, particularly through the EU budget, as well as the modification of competition rules in line with their interests and ambition to control markets.

The possibility of a further cut in the post-2027 EU budget, especially in the funds earmarked for 'cohesion policy', along with increased restrictions on its use, or even the removal of Portugal from the list of recipients of this policy will, if unopposed, be particularly damaging for the country

Tying Portugal to the **militarisation of the EU**, which assumes itself as an imperialist political-military bloc and the European pillar of NATO, as well as to its 'foreign policy' guidelines and priorities, in addition to the dangers that it entails and the commitment of resources, represents an obvious confrontation with the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, an obstacle to the political resolution of conflicts, to the diversification of international relations, and to cooperation with various countries and regions of the world.

Pressure is mounting to further concentrate power in the hands of the main powers and in the supranational bodies that they control. An expression of this is the intention to put an end to the **requirement of unanimity** in those important decisions where it still exists. Portugal cannot afford to relinquish this.

An **anti-democratic offensive** is gathering pace, with an active role by EU institutions and cynically based, among other things, on so-called pro-democracy initiatives. It threatens rights, freedoms and guarantees, and seeks to impose uniformity of thought, giving way to reactionary concepts and practices, to censorship, racism, xenophobia, nationalism, chauvinism, fascism, and anti-communism.

3.4.

Defending national sovereignty

The transfer of decisions to a supranational level, which is favourable to the interests of the big powers and of big transnational capital and is more distant from popular interests and less exposed to the dynamics and effects of mass struggles, helps to promote a more intense exploitation of the workers and to reduce public intervention to guarantee rights and development. It essentially congregates the support of the big Portuguese economic groups, who are dependent on, or subordinate to, European monopolies

and who are often direct beneficiaries of EU rules, aid and policies.

In different countries there are different expressions of the contradictions between domestic and foreign capital and between domestic and foreign companies; of the promotion of the internal market and of the European (and world) market; of industrial capital and financial activities; of productive sectors and monetary and financial policy; of disputes over funding, investments and markets.

In Portugal – where a convergence of political forces exists, from the political right-wing to social democracy, which overtly or tacitly accepts and defends EU impositions – these contradictions are likely to create conditions to broaden the unity and convergence in action of the anti-monopoly classes and strata that are affected by these policies, in particular of workers, pensioners, of the populations who are affected in their salaries and pensions and by the degradation of the State's social functions and public services; of small and medium-sized companies, who are sacrificed to the interests of the economic groups; of small and medium-sized agriculture and family farmers, sacrificed to the interests of agribusiness and large-scale

distribution; and of young people, whose future prospects are damaged by an unfavourable European division of labour.

A democratic and progressive break with these policies and impositions is a process that is inseparable from defending the people's interests and from affirming the national interest and sovereignty. This process, in its development, justifies a coordination of positions and the quest for convergence with the workers and peoples of other countries, but rejecting the misleading concept of 'European sovereignty', understood in practice as the sovereignty of the main European powers at the expense of other countries, in opposition to a Europe of peace, cooperation, and social progress based on free and sovereign States with equal rights.

The policy of national surrender has other expressions that go beyond the capitalist European integration. Asserting national sovereignty and independence is an essential component of an alternative policy. It implies, both internally and externally, choosing paths that accord with the interests and aspirations of the Portuguese people and that break with the subordination to the interests of imperialism.

Chapter 4

The conditions of struggle, the ideological offensive, the Party's influence and its expansion

The conditions of struggle in which the PCP acts accompany, and are inseparable from, the evolving national and international situation. These conditions of struggle are all the more demanding as they occur in a complex and unstable international situation and in a country marked by the advance of the counter-revolutionary process and the growing domination by big business. Acting in this reality requires an understanding of the aspects that determine the Party's general influence in Portuguese society, the prevailing ideological framework and the material basis on which it rests, as well as the unequal resources in this confrontation. This understanding is fundamental in identifying not just the obstacles, but also the possibilities to resist and advance in the struggle for a political alternative, for democracy and socialism.

4.1.

The circumstances in which we struggle

The Party's influence in its various aspects and expressions – political, ideological, social, and electoral – cannot be separated from the conditions of struggle; from the dominant relations of social production; from the existing balance of class forces; from the situation in which the political and social process is moving forward or backwards (boosting or limiting factors of attraction, commitment, and identification); from changes in the social composition and structure (characteristics, size, and organisation of the proletariat, of other workers and other social strata); as well as from the framework of external and international factors that have a direct or indirect impact (together with their instrumentalisation), and from the (now more numerous, diverse,

and insidious) means of ideological domination which are inseparable from the nature of the ruling power that shapes consciences, willpower, and stances.

It is in this context that the Party must resist the intense political and ideological offensive to which it is subjected and lead a process of struggle and action that contributes, by raising the social and political consciousness of the masses, to accumulate the forces that project the role that it is called upon to play and to affirm its proposals and project.

These conditions of struggle are inseparable from elements that shape and condition positions, that promote or hinder aspects of political identification, regardless of one's class or condition, and which are determined by a framework of dominant material relations in which weigh various structural and short-term factors.

Structural factors, stemming from the material basis of society, mould and shape that which the short-term factors attempt to consolidate, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the circumstances and using the tools of ideological domination.

It is the responsibility of Communists to respond on an ideological level, to take the initiative in this struggle, to permanently mobilise the resources and to take concrete measures in confronting it.

4.2.

PCP's social and political influence

The social, political, ideological, and electoral influence, although distinct aspects, are nevertheless inseparable. The more gen-

eral and broader recognition of the Party's action, reflected in its social influence, results from a closer identification based on concrete action that is less subject to directly ideologically diversionary factors. This recognition does not translate into full political support, and even less into electoral support, because this process is negatively affected by the repercussions of a long and systematic dissemination of prejudice, misrepresentation, falsification, silencing and concealment of the Party's positions.

Other factors that cannot be underestimated have to be taken into account because they weigh on the specific nature of the electoral battles and their results. These include the activity of those who confront us. It is not disconnected from a broader political and class confrontation; from the fact that this activity is not limited to the moments in which voting options are expressed and is shaped by a set of factors that condition and determine it, and not just a specific assessment of merit; from an activity that cannot be separated from the ideological framework that is determined by dominant viewpoints arising from the socio-economic structure on which they are based; and from the fact that electoral choices are influenced by what is massively disseminated through the ever-growing means and instruments of disinformation.

It is not possible to analyse and understand the different expressions of the Party's influence, including electoral influence, divorced from the elements that decisively condition it, such as the anti-communist offensive, on the ideological and other levels. This has its origins in who we are, in the goals that we fight for, in the class interests to which we are committed, in the project of social emancipation that we defend.

4.3.

The ideological struggle

This ideological offensive is part of the process of confrontation between antagonistic interests that sweeps through Portuguese

society. It attempts to impose the prevalence of the rule and power of big business. It is an expression of the class struggle in our country. It is an offensive designed to guarantee the interests of the property-owning classes, favour the achievement of their goals, and perpetuate exploitation.

This offensive is neither new, nor separable from the conflict of interests that, at each moment, is expressed in a given way. But it is now particularly intense due to the ever more instruments at the service of monopoly capital and to the multiplication and concentration of its centres of ideological production that invade all areas of life in society. It is an offensive boosted, above all, by the favourable conditions that the changing socio-economic structures provide and determine in political and social conceptions and consciousness. It is an offensive that is nourished by the very difficulties and problems which are imposed by right-wing policies, namely among workers and the intermediate strata, who see their prospects for the future denied or postponed.

This offensive is developed in two essential directions: the promotion of various expressions of anti-communism, directly targeting the PCP; and the dissemination of notions and ideas that are inherent to capitalism and the promotion of bourgeois ideology. These two components are inseparable. The latter ploughs the ground where anti-communist prejudice is sown and spreads, and readies it for the attack on the Party.

Anti-communism, considered globally, is an integral part of the ideological expression of the struggle between the exploited and the exploiters, between Labour and Capital. As an ideological product, anti-communism is an expression of this confrontation between two antagonistic socio-economic systems and of its use by those with material power to attack communists and other democrats in an attempt to blur the appeal of their project, to delay the process of mass awareness, struggle, and transformation. The virulence

of the anti-communist campaign is inseparable from what the PCP represents, as the main obstacle to right-wing policies and to reactionary and backward projects.

The offensive against the PCP has many forms, expressions and goals. Direct and crude attacks, silencing, misrepresentation and falsification of positions, fascistic hatred, prejudiced insinuation, defamation and slander. This is a process that cannot be seen in isolation, but rather in terms of the obstacles that it adds, stratifies, and consolidates against the Party's message and action.

Particularly noteworthy is the torrent that, under the pretext of facts, events, and realities on the international stage, is unleashed with the dual aim of spreading caricatures or anathemas about the Party's positions, and of concealing what they represent as a challenge and denunciation of imperialism's global strategy. On a more elaborate level, but no less insidious, is the claim about the PCP's 'conservatism', in an exercise of conceptual manipulation between conservatism and progress, which resorts to gross lies and historical misrepresentation to attribute positions to the PCP that it does not have and that its activity belies; or the deliberate concealment of the true progress and human development that the PCP's project bears within it.

This offensive is sustained by historical revisionism, by the rewriting and falsification of facts, events, and processes in order to spread misconceptions about them, to invert and conceal responsibilities, to spread knowingly false elements in order to induce erroneous and prejudiced conclusions and positions. This rewriting includes gross misrepresentations of the struggle of the workers and the people – whether by whitewashing fascism or misrepresenting the Portuguese revolution – and aims to falsely portray capitalism as a system without alternatives by spreading lies about past and current processes of creating a new society.

The main target of this ideological offensive is the PCP. But it is also a broader offensive against democracy and the democratic system, an attack on [the] April [Revolution] and its values, the discrediting of political activity as such, the stigmatisation and even political criminalisation of all other democrats and patriots who dare to oppose the ongoing anti-democratic drift, or who oppose the single mindset that is being imposed.

Individualism is promoted, to blur the understanding of collective action as the key to knowing and transforming reality. Social selfishness and the atomisation of collective life are instigated, as factors of division. Racism, xenophobia, and other expressions of discrimination and prejudice are promoted, using them to encourage divisions and open the way to backward and reactionary agendas, eluding their roots. So-called identity dimensions are exacerbated, so as to hide the sources of conflicts that are always rooted in social and class domination. The sense of belonging to a social class is obscured. Fear is inculcated as a standard of behaviour and an irrational attitude towards life, with the Covid-19 epidemic being used to take it even further. Appeals to conformism and to succumb to inevitabilities serve to encourage giving up on participation. Concepts such as individual success at the margins of social relations and competitiveness are disseminated to foster division and exploitation. Social organisations and their activity for collective rights are stigmatised in the name of praising individual action and commitment. These are only some examples of widespread conceptions.

Based on an ideological misrepresentation of reality according to the dominant interests and living off the promotion of what is immediate and fragmentary to the detriment of what is global and comprehensive, this ideological offensive seeks to establish a pattern of thought and action that, through emotional manipulation, devalues what is rational, does away with reflection, and ties everyone's actions to interests that are not

their own, although they are presented to them as such.

This is a complex web of conceptions that, even if absorbed unconsciously and subliminally, tends to condition everyone's way of thinking, obscures the individual exercise of critical observation of concrete reality, creates criteria for evaluation and value judgements that are opposed to those of an emancipatory ideology.

This web, which includes school curricula, academic contexts as centres for the production and inculcation of dominant neo-liberal conceptions, patterns of entertainment or social life, has a key player in the media, which are increasingly hijacked by economic power, which deny the objectivity and rigour of journalism and devalue their professionals, which promote lies and spread a uniform mindset. Particularly central to this is the role of digital platforms with a global impact as constraints on freedoms and democracy itself. Appearing as free and uncensored spaces, they are in fact part of the oligopolies' control, censorship, and economic and political domination of the ways people think. Social media have imposed virtual scenarios whose potential can surpass the scale and effects of other means of communication. These media – increasingly privileged arenas for disin-

formation campaigns with a direct impact on political and social organisation and mobilisation – have become one of the phenomena with a global impact on social relations, on communication, and on the very notion of democracy.

The ideological struggle is part of the broader class confrontation to which the Party is committed. The permanent confrontation between ideological conditioning to undermine the influence of the PCP on the one hand, and the intervention of communists to extend it on the other, is an everyday task. However unfavourable it may appear, this does not inhibit the possibilities and the real scope for an intervention that, also on an ideological level, opposes what the forces of big business are spreading; of a response that can ultimately shape the social and political consciousness of the workers and the people, based on their concrete lives and aspirations; on taking the initiative, maximising the Party's resources and intervening to raise awareness of the need to overcome an iniquitous and inhumane system, based on the concrete reality and objective conditions at hand, without losing sight of the fact that the ideological battle is only definitively won when it is framed within the more general struggle to transform society — a struggle that Communists promote and Capital seeks to delay and preclude.

Chapter 5

The political goals of the PCP's activity. The struggle for a patriotic and left-wing alternative

The XXII Congress defines as the current political goals of the PCP's action: to break with right-wing policies; to assert patriotic and left-wing policies and a political alternative; and to defend the democratic regime. These aspects are inseparable from the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic and from the rights and projects that it enshrines. These goals call for a confrontation with right-wing policies and reactionary projects. The political alternative is part of the struggle to achieve an Advanced Democracy with the values of April in the future of Portugal, which the PCP proposes in its Programme as the current stage in the struggle for Socialism and Communism. Developing the mass struggle, strengthening broad-based mass organisations and political work in unity, and strengthening and asserting the Party as a decisive element, must all converge to achieve them.

5.1.

Patriotic and left-wing policy: an imperative need

The seriousness and scale of the country's problems cannot be solved by variations of the right-wing policy, regardless of its actors.

Without a break with the right-wing policy, structural deficits will worsen, the country will become more dependent and weaker,

and democracy will become more fragile. Affirming the patriotic and left-wing policy is a determining factor in securing and achieving political, economic, social and cultural gains for the people in general and the workers in particular.

The alternative patriotic and left-wing policy that the PCP proposes to the people and the Country has its basis in the Constitution of the Republic, in the rights, the project and the values that it enshrines.

A patriotic policy inscribes national sovereignty and independence as its central goal, affirming the Portuguese people's inalienable right to decide on the options and guidelines that are essential to achieve them and the prevalence of their sovereign will over any and all external constraints and impositions.

A left-wing policy unwaveringly breaks with right-wing policies and with the interests of big capital, and inscribes the goal of valuing the rights of the workers and people, of raising the living standards of the anti-monopoly classes and strata, of promoting social justice and progress.

This policy holds the solutions to national problems, the restoration of rights and the assertion of a path of progress and advancement, based on essential axes and objectives:

Valuing labour and the workers – Raising wages and valuing careers and professions, regulating and reducing work-

ing hours, eradicating precariousness and promoting full employment, lowering the retirement age, are all essential factors in improving living standards, retaining workers and preventing emigration, and developing the country. The interests of Capital and Labour are antagonistic. This calls for a policy that sides with the workers; fights for a fairer distribution of wealth; for a legislative framework that protects their rights, in particular by repealing the grievous norms of labour legislation; for a fair tax policy and a public, solidarity-based and universal social security system. At the same time, the State must act, significantly increasing the national minimum wage and pensions, valuing salaries and careers in Public Administration, and promoting collective bargaining.

Ensuring welfare and a Public Administration and public services that serve the people – Strengthening human, organisational and financial resources, guaranteeing a public, universal and free coverage; valuing the NHS and Public Education, including Higher Education. Preventing and fighting poverty, with a view to eradicating it; ensuring the well-being and participation of children and youth. Guaranteeing ageing with quality of life. Promoting equality and women's rights. Ensuring the rights of people with disabilities. Ensuring a proper integration of immigrants. Safeguarding access to housing, water, sanitation, energy, telecommunications and mobility, by reversing the processes of liberalisation and privatisation. Dignifying the security forces and services and the military and equipping civil protection. Democratising cultural creation and fruition, defending our heritage, valuing the Portuguese language and culture, including the promotion of a Public Service of Culture. Promoting the right to physical education and sports.

Promoting overall economic development – Defending a mixed economy with a strong public sector that is modern, dynam-

ic, efficient. Ensuring planning. Promoting national production. Developing industry. Investing in research and technological development policies. Developing agriculture and fisheries. Ensuring food sovereignty, supporting family farming, small-scale and coastal fishing, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and the cooperative sector. Guaranteeing public control over the strategic sectors of the economy, freeing them from the action of monopolies and oligopolies. Diversifying economic activity, combatting intensive monoculture in agriculture and the excessive weight of tourism. Guaranteeing fair prices for producers and consumers. Fostering investment, which must be guaranteed by truly progressive and fair taxation of income and wealth, preventing the plundering of public resources by economic groups.

Ensuring a cohesive and balanced country and the preservation of nature – A cohesive Country requires greater territorial, economic and social balance among the regions; a decentralised and efficient administrative structure, namely with the implementation of regionalisation; combatting asymmetries and depopulation, developing the hinterland and the rural world; territorial planning; ensuring the rational use of resources, in particular viewing water as a public asset. With an environmental policy that safeguards nature, the environment and ecosystems, and protects biodiversity and the natural and built landscape heritage.

Strengthening democracy – This requires, first and foremost, defending the democratic regime and the values of April with respect for, and compliance with, the Constitution of the Republic. Extending fundamental rights, freedoms and guarantees. Strengthening the participatory dimension and citizens' intervention in political life with mechanisms of management control by the workers. Making the legal system accessible,

swift and effective. Respecting the autonomy of Local Government. Opposing all forms of discrimination and prejudice. Strengthening the associative movement and popular participation. Freeing the mass media from the hegemonic power of big capital. Promoting transparency in Public Administration, particularly in public procurement. Fighting corruption and the choices that lead to it – PPPs, privatisations, concessions. Ending the control of political power by economic power.

Recovering instruments of sovereignty and asserting national independence

– The Country’s full development is not possible without a break with the external constraints expressed in submission to EU impositions, especially those associated with the Euro. This requires a commitment to cooperation and the diversification of mutually advantageous economic relations, taking control of the Country’s potential and resources, placing them at the service of its development.

Promoting international cooperation and peace

– Portugal must take a stand, in all international forums, in defence of political solution to conflicts and putting an end to the growing use of force and sanctions in international relations, denouncing the escalation of confrontation, the arms race, the threat of nuclear weapons, the instigation of war, and standing for the rights of peoples. Portugal must stop being subordinate to the defence of US imperialism’s hegemonic power, strive for the dissolution of NATO and the creation of a collective security system, oppose the militarisation of the EU and fight for a Europe and a world of peace and cooperation among the peoples.

5.2.

The path to a political alternative

The construction of a patriotic and left-wing political alternative, whose main reference is April and its values and achievements, is

a course that requires, in an articulated and dialectical way, developing the struggle; the participation of the masses; strengthening the organisation of the workers and the popular masses; and the convergence of democrats and patriots around this mobilising goal. This path is inseparable from strengthening and asserting the PCP – an indispensable and irreplaceable force – and its distinctive project, proposals and values.

The construction of this process will not result from isolated, proclamatory or voluntaristic acts, but rather from determined, coherent and persistent action, that can bring together all the subjective and objective factors shaping it.

The mass struggle

The mass struggle, in which the struggle of the working class and all workers takes centre stage, driven by the concrete goals corresponding to the existing situation, is an essential factor in raising mass awareness of the need for a break. This mass struggle is the driving force for social transformation, which can bring about a change in the political balance and alignment of forces and which will impose a break with right-wing policies and a political alternative.

Strengthening the organisation of the workers and popular masses

movements whose orientation, size, influence and capacity to mobilise have a decisive impact on defending and advancing interests and rights, freedom, democracy and social progress. These broad-based organisations and movements are fundamental to express, develop and increase participatory democracy, intervention and struggle, without which the established power of big capital promotes regressions and holds back the future. Being a task for all times, in the current situation it is increasingly urgent and

necessary to strengthen these organisations and movements.

The necessary convergence of democrats and patriots

Expanding democratic convergence around a patriotic and left-wing policy, while respecting diversity of points of view and positions, must be achieved based on a political programme that, starting from the rights and project enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic, inscribes as its goal a break with right-wing policies and brings together forces and energies identified with materialising this goal.

The set of problems that subsist in Portuguese society affects not only the working class and workers but all anti-monopoly classes, strata and sectors, including sectors of the small and medium bourgeoisie. This means that the broad convergence of democrats and patriots, and their involvement and mobilisation, are of fundamental importance in order to achieve political, economic, social and cultural gains. It also makes strengthening unity a condition for defeating right-wing policies.

Strengthening and asserting the Party

The first condition for the alternative lies in strengthening the activity, the organisation and the social, political and electoral influence of the PCP, with its identity, its project, its Programme, the alternative policy that it defends, its commitment to the workers, the people and the Country, whatever the circumstances. The PCP's political courage, consistency and determination cannot be dispensed with and cannot be diluted. They are a decisive factor on the path that Portugal needs.

Multiple scenarios can be envisioned, but without strengthening the PCP, the aspirations for change towards a better life that

permeate the Portuguese society will not be materialised.

A government to materialise an alternative policy

The patriotic and left-wing alternative requires a patriotic and left-wing government that can materialise it. Such a government will have to be built in unity, based on a clear programme, which must include breaking with right-wing politics and complying with the Constitution of the Republic as a crucial and unifying element. It will be composed of democratic forces, sectors and personalities who are committed to these goals and will be supported by the mass organisations and movements of the anti-monopoly social sectors. Ensuring the viability and political and institutional support for such a government is in the hands of the Portuguese people. Since the PCP is indispensable to building the alternative, it will also be indispensable in a government that gives it expression.

5.3.

The patriotic and left-wing alternative in the struggle for Democracy and Socialism

The construction of a patriotic and left-wing political alternative is an absolute necessity and emergency, so as to deal with the problems that are made worse by the right-wing policy. But it is also a possibility that is being built every day.

The construction of the political alternative, perceived as the need and the result of breaking with right-wing policy, is indispensable to materialise a patriotic and left-wing policy, based on the values of April. It is an integral part of the struggle for the Advanced Democracy that the PCP proposes in the current stage of the struggle for Socialism and Communism.

Some of the goals and possibilities opened up by the construction of the new society

are, among others: the creation of a classless society, inspired by humanist values; the liberation of workers from all forms of oppression and exploitation; democracy understood in the complementarity of its political, economic, social and cultural aspects; the permanent and creative participation of the popular masses in all aspects of national life; the inclusion of youth in the life of the country, as a dynamic and creative social

force; unleashing the full potential of scientific and technical development towards social progress, raising the living standards of the workers and the well-being of the people; satisfying human needs within the framework of a harmonious and sustainable relationship between human beings and Nature; eliminating discrimination, inequality, injustice and social scourges; building a world of peace and cooperation.

Chapter 6

The struggle and the mass organisations and movements

We are living in times of resistance and of collecting forces, facing the prolonged action of right-wing policies, the promotion of neoliberalism and a strong political and ideological offensive to consolidate the power of big capital. The times demand the struggle to halt this course, to affirm the need and the possibility of building a patriotic, left-wing political alternative.

6.1.

The social and political struggle

The process of capitalist restoration and the anti-democratic action of right-wing policy is countered by the mass struggle, which has historically demonstrated its strength in resisting and moving forward.

Intensifying and broadening the struggle is, therefore, a central issue of our time. It is indispensable to defeat the most immediate goals of big capital and a necessary condition to resist the curtailment of freedoms, rights and guarantees and in paving the way for a different course for the Country.

In the period since the XXI Congress, **the struggle of the working class and the workers** has played a fundamental and irreplaceable role in the organised struggle to resist and achieve, to defend their rights and interests. It has encouraged other sectors and strata of the population to fight and take part in large and militant mass actions which were noteworthy due to their size, diversity and dynamics, and in thousands of actions.

Confirming the roots, influence, capacity for initiative, action and mobilisation of CGTP-IN and the trade unions of the United Trade Un-

ion Movement (MSU), the struggle developed in unity, from the companies and workplaces, with strong involvement and participation by the workers, with strikes, stoppages, plenary sessions, concentrations, petitions, marches, demonstrations, and with important moments of sectoral and general convergence, prominent among them the May Day events.

Mobilised by CGTP-IN and the trade unions that make up the MSU, workers in the public and private sectors have confronted with determination the right-wing policies and the bosses' offensive, demanding wage increases; defending and valuing collective bargaining; for better working conditions and shorter and better regulated working hours; opposing precariousness; and defending rights, including the right to organise and freely exercise trade union action. In many instances, this struggle achieved important results.

It is also important to stress the value and importance of **the struggle of other social classes, strata and groups.**

In the struggle of the small and medium farmers and common land sharers, there have been dozens of rallies, tractor marches and demonstrations, carried out in a particularly difficult context of loss of income and rights, as a result of right-wing policies and the implementation of the [EU] Common Agricultural Policy.

The struggle of the youth has evolved, for students' rights, for better conditions, against national examinations and excessive school hours, against tuition fees, for school social action, for student housing, for democratic participation. But also by young workers, in particular against precariousness, with hundreds of actions in schools and workplaces.

Prominent were the actions on March 24 and 28, Student and Youth Days, as well as with a significant participation in the general struggle.

It is also worth highlighting the important role of struggles on specific issues that affect different strata and sectors such as micro, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, fishermen and small shipowners, intellectuals and technical cadres, professionals in the security forces and services, justice system workers, workers with labour accidents, the military, arts and culture workers, women, pensioners and the elderly, immigrants, emigrants and people with disabilities.

Also noteworthy are the community struggles to defend the National Health Service, for the right to housing, transport and other public services, against the rising cost of living, as well as the many actions for peace, against the whitewashing of fascism and war, particularly in solidarity with Palestine, or the fight against all forms of discrimination and prejudice, namely on grounds of sexual orientation, against racism and xenophobia, or in defence of the environment.

The **electoral battle** is an expression of the broader struggle that is taking place, in an unfavourable balance of forces and in deeply unequal conditions, between the forces at the service of capital and those that oppose it.

The PCP's role in national affairs cannot be assessed exclusively by its institutional representation or its election results. The weight and role of the PCP in Portuguese society extends far beyond that. But the impact that the electoral expression has on the Party's activity as a whole, on the struggle and the conditions in which it is fought, on the intervention and the means to influence the course of national life, cannot be underestimated.

The PCP's electoral influence over time has evolved in different directions, with advanc-

es and setbacks, which must be taken into account in a line of affirmation, resistance and progression.

The PCP has long had to face an environment marked by hostility and belittling; by the continued falsification of positions to feed prejudice and to narrow its space for growth; by the promotion of reactionary forces and conceptions; by media favours for others; and by a forged bi-polarising dynamics, with the aim of whitewashing responsibilities, concealing alternative solutions and narrowing down the choices to similar options.

In this context, and not discarding its own shortcomings, which must be overcome, the PCP faced all eight election battles held since the XXI Congress as important spaces for participation, clarification, enlargement in unity and mobilisation for the vote. Mass campaigns were built, inserted in the goals of each electoral process and in the general sense of exposing right-wing policies and affirming the patriotic and left-wing alternative. In these processes, there was a drop in the Party's electoral influence, but at the same time there was resistance to the goals of the operation that was unleashed against it by our enemies.

In the next four years, there will be elections for Local Government, at the end of 2025, where we will intervene to affirm and consolidate the project of Work, Honesty and Competence, embodied by CDU in Local Administration. This requires undertaking, as immediate priorities for Party work, a broad initiative of contacts, militant mobilisation, broad-based enlargement and proposals for better living conditions. Elections for President of the Republic will be held at the beginning of 2026, in which the PCP will have its own participation regarding how it views and defends the exercise of the functions of President of the Republic, contributing to ensure, from this body of sovereignty respect for, and compliance with, the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic. There

will also be elections for the Regional Legislative Assemblies of the Azores and Madeira [Archipelagoes] and for the Assembly of the Republic.

Strengthening the PCP's electoral influence must continue to be a goal inseparable from political organisation, intervention and action.

In the institutional and political framework, the following aspects should be noted: a balance of forces in the institutions that is more favourable to the interests and goals of big capital and a more profoundly right-wing policy, with regressions in the rights and achievements of April; the growth of forces that spearhead reactionary and fascist projects; the action or willingness of PS to converge on matters of interest to capital, promoting or facilitating the advance of right-wing policies and of projects that enter into confrontation with April and the Constitution of the Republic; the promotion of factors of dispersion and division.

The [political] party scene is dominated by parties which, despite their differences, are a direct expression of the interests of monopoly capital and which have taken turns in power. In recent years, parties that openly adopt reactionary, backward and even fascist conceptions have gained prominence. Despite the playing up of differences, they converge with the goals of big capital. New formations have emerged, some of them ephemeral, corresponding to an effort by the dominant interests to create and promote forces that feed factors of dispersion. Other forces do not disguise their social-democratic nature, based on so-called modern or divisive agendas, with erratic and often incoherent positions, benefiting from the media promotion that Capital provides them, so as to make it difficult to assert more consistent options.

The positive assessment of the institutional activity of the PCP's elected representatives in local government, in the Madeira Regional

Legislative Assembly, in the Assembly of the Republic and in the European Parliament, acting on the basis of distinctive values and criteria, does not dispense with a permanent commitment to enrich its content, articulating it with the general work of the Party at all levels and projecting it to the masses.

CDU has confirmed itself as an important arena for democratic participation and for political action which, based on the PCP and the PEV, includes the Democratic Intervention Association and thousands of democrats without party affiliation. First and foremost, because of its distinctive work and project – highlighted by participation and proximity; by the democratic nature of its management; by the priority given to public services; by the defence of collective interests; by valuing Local Government workers; by its example of democratic convergence; by its proven record in defending the rights of the people. CDU is the great left-wing force in Local Government.

6.2.

Mass organisations and movements

In a particularly difficult and demanding context, with different expressions and, in some cases, not without difficulties and shortcomings, the mass organisations and movements have carried out a strong and intense action, initiative, proposal and struggle, which must be continued, strengthened and expanded, based on convergence and broadening so that their just demands are supported by more and more people who are affected by right-wing policies.

The broad-based organisation of the working class and workers. The trade union movement

CGTP-IN – the class-oriented, broad-based, democratic, independent, solidarity-based and mass trade union central – together with the trade unions (both affiliated and non-affiliated which, identifying with

its principles and practice, cooperate with it), the Trade Unions and Federations that make up the United Trade Union Movement (MSU), organise hundreds of thousands of workers, tens of thousands of shop stewards and other workers' representatives. They are based on a notion and practice that privileges grassroots union organisation, putting the workplace at the centre of its activity, its awareness-raising, its demands, its unity and struggle. This conception and practice are based on acquaintance with reality, on regular and in-depth contact with the workers and on encouraging their active participation in trade union affairs and action.

The XV Congress of CGTP-IN was a powerful demonstration of confidence, stimulus and affirmation of an organised, influential and mobilising force. It was a decisive element in the struggle that continues. With it, CGTP-IN reaffirmed its identification with the values of April, its class nature, its principles and goals, at a time when the right-wing policy, now implemented by the PSD/CDS Government, at the service of big capital, further worsens injustice and extends and intensifies exploitation and attacks against workers and their rights.

The Congress indicated the immediate goals of the struggle to increase wages; to value careers and professions; to fight deregulation and reduce working hours; to defend collective bargaining; to repeal the grievous norms of the labour legislation, in particular repealing the expiry of collective bargaining and reinstating the principle of the most favourable treatment for workers; to fight precariousness and defend work with rights, the social functions of the State and public services, more fiscal justice, as well as the revitalisation of the national productive apparatus.

Given all that it stands for and upholds, CGTP-IN has always been one of the main targets of big capital and its supporters, who resort to various attempts to divide and disintegrate it, with the purpose of weaken-

ing it, attacking its transformative project and, in this way, undermining the unity and organised struggle of the workers, in order to intensify exploitation and promote social regression. It is in this context that various attempts to interfere with and condition the autonomy, independence and democratic functioning of the MSU have taken place, namely the creation and promotion of divisive structures, in addition to the UGT.

A central feature of this divisive and disruptive action at the service of big capital are the sectarian, anti-democratic and anti-unity conceptions, including the attacks against the communists who work in the MSU. Lies and falsifications are used to try and hide the fact that the Communists' strength and influence within the MSU results from the choices made by the workers in democratically held elections, as a result of the selfless way in which many Communists commit themselves to trade union work and to the workers' struggle, in unity with many other workers with or without party affiliation, and with determination in action and steadfastness of principles.

Communists, in accordance with their principles and practice of unity, must help to strengthen the MSU, based on its trade unions. Unionisation is a central and decisive issue on which the present and future of the MSU depend. So too are the election of workers with proven track records as shop stewards and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) representatives; the rejuvenation and strengthening of the trade union structure; broadening the unity and convergent action of workers and their representative organizations; a bold initiative to exercise trade union activity with the aim of expanding activity, the struggle for demands, the organisation and unionisation in companies, workplaces and services where today they do not exist; exercising the free right to trade union action even where there are no unionised workers. This is a necessary contribution to foster the organised strength of the masses and their collective

action, which is a prerequisite for raising social and political awareness.

Workers' Councils (CTs) are an important reality in many companies, with concrete expression in the action of committees and subcommittees, regional and sectoral coordinators. Although there have been attempts to condition and instrumentalise the role of the Workers' Councils, it is by their action within the scope of their competences, through convergence and cooperation with the MSU and with their close links to the workers that awareness, unity, organisation and struggle are strengthened.

Other organisations and movements

In the **farmers' movement**, there are difficulties in organising small and medium-sized farmers and family farms, despite the confirmed recognition of the National Confederation of Agriculture (CNA) and the National Federation of Common Lands (BALADI), which successfully held their 9th Congress and 7th Conference, respectively, and the continued influence and links to political power of other confederations, regardless of the difficulties faced by their associated grassroots structures.

Moves to create new structures, particularly to promote reactionary projects, are continuing without visible success.

The reality of the **fishermen's movement**, whose activity focuses on defending fishermen's labour rights and defending fishery, faces the economic and social debasement of this activity.

The movement of **micro, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs**, where the Portuguese Confederation of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (CPPME) stands out, includes associations of a very diverse type, with a territorial or sectoral basis. They are present throughout the Country, reflecting the contradictions inherent to this anti-monopoly stratum, in a context of diffi-

culties in associative participation.

The **youth movement**, with the diverse forms of youth organisation and participation expressing their interests and goals, is confirmed as a heterogeneous reality. It includes Student Unions, Interjovem/CGTP-IN, the Youth Associations and the National Federation of Youth Associations, as well as many informal student or local groups. The National Meeting of Student Union Leaderships (ENDA), despite contradictions, remains an arena for articulation and convergence of the Student Movement in higher education. The youth movement confirms characteristics that reveal dynamism, initiative and liveliness.

JCP [Portuguese Communist Youth], within the framework of its autonomy, carries out its action among the youth. Through the overall action of its militants it is inserted within the youth movement. It takes part in the National Youth Council, of whose board it was a member, defending its nature as a broad platform, and articulating initiatives with other expressions, namely within the framework of the Platform for Peace and Disarmament.

JCP, whose 12th Congress was held on May 15 and 16, 2021, under the motto "A Thousand Struggles on the Path of April", has played an important role in fomenting the struggle for youth rights and for Peace, asserting the values of April and demanding a break with right-wing politics.

JCP – the revolutionary youth organisation – contributes to the Party's prestige among the youth masses with the communist ideal that it embodies and promotes; with its diversified activity in secondary schools, vocational schools and higher education institutions, where young Communists stand out in defending the interests of students; with the significant influence of its militants in the Student Movement; with the intervention that must be intensified among young workers, promoting their organisation, unity and struggle; with the growing action

of internationalist solidarity; for Peace; in defence of the environment; or opposing discrimination against young women, racism and xenophobia; in relation to issues of sexuality; or due to the extension of its intervention to new areas of sports and culture, namely in neighbourhoods.

The convening of the 13th JCP Congress for May 17 and 18, 2025, under the motto “In our hands lies the new world. Organise. Unite. Fight.” is an important moment to strengthen its activity, prestige and influence among the youth.

Of particular importance in the struggle of the **women’s movement** for their rights is the Women’s Democratic Movement (MDM), which is active in defence of women’s rights, for equality, against violence, for emancipation and social justice in a world of peace; for the organisation and struggle of working women for the right to work with rights and against discrimination, particularly wage discrimination, in the workplace. It gives an important contribution in the Commission for Equality between Women and Men (CIMH), a specific CGTP-IN body, and in the equality committees of trade unions, federations and trade councils. But also with its action in other expressions of women’s struggle on specific health issues, the rights of pregnant women in the NHS, women in culture, science, sports and agriculture, among others. This intervention is taking place in a context where political and ideological pressure is mounting to dilute women’s problems and demands and to weaken their organised struggle in defence of their rights and for social emancipation.

In the **pensioners’ movement** there is a prominence of MURPI – the National Confederation of Pensioners and the Elderly – which has played an important role in promoting associations of old-age and other pensioners and the elderly, particularly as places to fraternize; in the struggle for annual increases in pensions to restore purchasing power;

in the fight against poverty among the elderly; for quality public services of proximity to ensure the right to ageing with quality of life and well-being. And also Inter-Reformados/CGTP-IN, which, from within the structure of the Trade Union Movement, is carrying out an important action based on intergenerational solidarity in the fight for higher wages and decent pensions; against raising the retirement age and for its reinstatement at 65 years of age; for the right to retirement without penalties after 40 years of social security payments.

In recent years, **the immigrant associations’ movement** has become increasingly visible, intervening in the processes to regularise and defend their rights, interests and cultural values, as well as their integration, and denouncing the problems that they face on a daily basis. Also the **movement in defence of the right to housing**, which includes very diverse organisations and structures, has grown in size and strengthened its activity in response to the growing difficulties in access to housing, including with nationwide actions. The **movement against racism and xenophobia**, whose action is undeniably relevant given the need to fight racist and xenophobic ideas and attitudes, and the reactionary forces that promote them on various fronts. The **peace movement**, with strong actions, particularly regarding solidarity with Palestine or Cuba, for peace and disarmament, against war and NATO. In the **anti-fascist struggle**, the important action of the Union of Portuguese Anti-Fascist Resistants (URAP) stands out due to its persistent information and denunciation, particularly in schools, of what fascism represented and to promote the ideals of freedom and democracy, defending the achievements of April.

Within the diversity of **disabled people’s organisations**, of special importance are those that, despite growing underfunding, act for solutions to prevent and combat the growing difficulties that are faced by the majority of disabled people, rejecting a

mere assistance and charity policy and defending the fulfilment of their rights.

The **popular associative movement**, deeply rooted in the territory, with an immense activity, namely with various forms of recreational, sporting and cultural activity is an example of democratic life and collective participation, as exemplified by the thousands of officials who take part in it, promoting progressive values and conceptions. Although ignored by the central authorities and still re-establishing itself from the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, it continues to play an important role in the affairs of the country.

There is also the **movement in defence of culture**, focused on the rights of cultural workers, creators and agents and on the right to culture, demanding a policy of support, and the goal of achieving at least 1% for culture. The **movement of users** of public services, which has an important legacy of knowledge and demands in its defence, brings together the various Users' Committees at a national level. It has developed an important activity in the struggle and in promoting debates and public forums, among other initiatives. The **science workers' movement** strives for their recognition as workers, holding the largest demonstration in the sector in decades in 2023. The **emigrant's associative movement**, as a federating, socialising and mobilising arena for Portuguese people who live and work abroad, often replacing the insufficiency of the consular network. The **Humanitarian Firefighters' Associations**, with a diversified social activity, besides actions of civic protection, even though they are facing difficulties in terms of funding, sustainability and operation. **Parents' Associations**,

increasingly linked to answers to educational needs. Actions and structures that work **against discrimination and prejudice**, particularly in relation to issues of sexuality. **The cooperative movement**, which has reduced its weight in the Country's life, reflecting a policy at the service of monopoly capital that seeks to eliminate non-capitalist forms of economic organisation. **Neighbourhood associations and committees**. The **movement in defence of the environment**. The **movement to fight poverty**. The **movement against [road] tolls**. The **movement against the rise in the cost of living**. And **local development associations**.

6.3.

Strengthening mass organisations – a task for the Party

It is essential to take the initiative, based on a debate in the Party organisations, involving the Communist militants who are active in these movements, cultural and sports associations, so that priorities can be defined, based on the concrete reality, contributing to develop the struggle waged by the mass organisations and movements, strengthening their action and organisation and promoting participation, unity and convergence, countering divisive actions, contributing to breaking with the right-wing policy and its consequences for the different strata and sectors, as well as increasing the strength and the path towards building an alternative, patriotic and left-wing policy.

These objectives require that Communists be attentive, available and committed to reinforcing the broad-based political work and strengthening these organisations' activity, given their connection to reality and to the masses and valuing the role that they play.

Chapter 7

The Party. Identity, courage, initiative, reinforcement

The world situation clearly shows that capitalism is not only unable to resolve its intractable contradictions, but dooms millions of human beings to exploitation, hunger, disease and obscurantism, as it intensifies its exploitative, oppressive, aggressive and predatory nature. At the same time, the use of scientific and technical advances and achievements – which, if placed at the service of Humanity, would enable levels of development and emancipation never experienced before – is limited and even subverted by capitalist production relations, which seek to increase exploitation and profits.

In this context, the correctness and timeliness of the communist project is reinforced. This is the project of the Portuguese Communist Party, reaffirmed on its Centenary, in 2021, which was a high point in the life of the great Party collective, when the characteristics of its identity were highlighted: the Party of the working class and of all workers; that defends the interests of the anti-monopoly classes and sectors; that is independent of the influence, interests, ideology and politics of the forces of capital; that is closely connected to the working class, the workers and the people in general; whose supreme goals are the construction of Socialism and Communism, of a society freed from capitalist exploitation and oppression; whose theoretical basis is Marxism-Leninism, a materialist and dialectical conception of the world, an instrument of analysis, a guide to action, and critical and transformative ideology; whose operating principles arise from the creative development of democratic centralism, based on a profound internal democracy, a single general line and a single central leadership; a patriotic and internationalist Party.

7.1.

Party action, resistance and initiative

Only a great Party – grounded in its identity and deeply connected to the workers, the people and life, acting on the reality that it wants to transform, with courage in political, ideological and action terms, with strong militancy – could resist the scale of the anti-communist offensive that was waged against it since the previous Congress. Anti-communism – which provides ideological support to the offensive against the Party, together with the daily concealment, manipulation and misrepresentation of the Party's opinions, proposals and project – had particularly intense moments. Namely, regarding the firm defence of freedom and democracy and the exercise of democratic rights during the Covid-19 epidemic, during the associated health protection measures; the rejection of the measures that the Socialist Party (PS) wanted to impose in the 2022 Budget, which refused to solve problems and to counter the worsening living standards; the denunciation of the escalation of war and the demand for peace in Ukraine; the rejection and denunciation of US imperialism's destabilization and interference; in reaffirming solidarity with the peoples and for sovereignty and independence, in particular with Bolivarian Venezuela, Socialist Cuba and Palestine; and with the results obtained by CDU in the most recent elections.

No matter what big capital and the political forces at its service wanted, PCP, anchored in its nature, in its experience of struggle accumulated over more than a century and in its deep connection to the current social and

political reality, will continue to drive the struggle for the revolutionary transformations that the workers, the people and the country need. In the present national and international context, PCP is proud of its history in the struggle against fascism, for freedom and democracy, during the April Revolution and in defence of its achievements, and reaffirms its determination to fulfil its revolutionary, liberating, progressive and humanist project.

The **Party's action** has diversified and intensified since the XXI Congress. The Party's activity and the struggle of the workers and people confronted big Capital's offensive, resisting and managing to win rights, and representing the strongest opposition against the policies at the service of big capital and of submission to the EU, carried out by the PS governments (which were worsened during its absolute majority government) and which have been continued and intensified by the Social Democratic/Popular Party (PSD/CDS) government, in office since April 2024.

In this period, the PCP's Centenary celebrations were held under the motto «Freedom, Democracy and Socialism – the future has a Party» with a remarkable program asserting the Party, its identity and project, with a strong expression in the streets throughout the country, including 100 actions in 100 locations, on the Centenary day – March 6, 2021 – and the big March 2022 rally in Campo Pequeno.

In the period between the two Congresses, the Party was called to take part in the 2021 municipal elections, in two parliamentary elections (January 2022 and March 2024), in the 2021 Presidential elections, in legislative elections in the autonomous regions of the Azores (in 2024) and Madeira (in 2023 and 2024) and in the elections for the European Parliament (in June 2024). During this period two national meetings were held.

Among the diversified set of initiatives that were carried out, it is necessary to highlight the actions to strengthen the Party, namely the action «100 cells, 100 responsible cadres» to strengthen the [Party] organization in companies and workplaces, the recruitment campaign, the national fund-raising campaign and the campaign to promote *Avante!*.

The 50th anniversary of the April Revolution was commemorated with a program of Party actions that were part and parcel of the powerful affirmation of the values of April that was expressed by the popular commemorations.

The Party carried out a broad activity on the problems of the workers, the people and the country, such as national actions for workers' rights, including those with the slogans «More strength to the workers» and «Raise wages and pensions – for a better life!»; the general action «Living better in our land»; the roadmap on national production; the national meetings on Culture, Housing and Civil Protection; national actions on housing, healthcare, children and parents with rights. We highlight the actions for peace and internationalist solidarity, particularly with the Palestinian people. There were initiatives within the scope of the anniversaries of the Party and the April 25th Revolution, as well as the annual *Avante!* Festival.

In November 2022, the Party held a National Conference with the slogan «Taking the initiative, strengthening the Party, responding to new demands». This important initiative was convened with the aim of «contributing to analyse the situation and its developments, focused on responding to the Country's problems, the priorities of Party intervention and strengthening and asserting its project, fostering a broad involvement of the Party collective and promoting a confident prospect for the future». In addition to other relevant decisions, the conference outlined guidelines to strengthen the Party and its links to life and to the masses.

In the context of a great and prolonged anti-communist offensive, the Party assumed its responsibilities at the national and international level.

Our **operating principles** – the basis of the Party's strength, cohesion and internal democracy, of its connection to the masses, ensuring its confident, coherent and effective action – are a key element in the militants' commitment to the Party.

In the years since the XXI Congress, the **Party leadership's** work affirmed the Party's identity, project and goals in particularly demanding conditions. It had to face the Covid-19 epidemic and its profound consequences on the social, political and Party level; a national situation with worsening economic and social problems and unforeseen electoral processes with significant institutional changes; an international situation of great instability, uncertainty and with serious developments; the continued and intensified brutal action against the Party.

The situation demanded daily action, with courage and determination, considering the necessary tactical elements, but always bearing in mind the Party's responsibilities, principles and essential goals. We value the action that was carried out, without ignoring the shortcomings that must be overcome.

The Central Committee fulfilled its role as the Party's supreme leadership. It held 23 meetings, debated the national and international situation, the Party's action and strengthening. It adopted guidelines and took decisions on different matters, namely on issues of leadership and the Party's General Secretary.

The election of Jerónimo de Sousa as the Party's General Secretary, following the election of the Central Committee at the XXI Congress, reflected the Central Committee's consideration of the importance of having a General Secretary, a possibility that the Party's Constitution envisages. In the mean-

time, the comrade raised the issue of his replacement in that role given his health and the demands of the responsibilities that he had taken on. This led to the Central Committee's decision, within its remit, to elect in November 2022 comrade Paulo Raimundo as the Party's General Secretary.

The Central Committee's executive bodies – the Political Committee and the Secretariat – performed their functions in a very demanding situation, ensuring regular functioning, taking the initiative and responding to complex and unexpected problems.

The Central Control Commission exercised its powers and responsibilities in monitoring the statutory legality of the Party's activities, intervening as an appellate body for any body or militant, and overseeing the Party's accounts.

The central leadership's support structures confirmed their importance by assisting in the work, study, systematization, elaboration and dynamisation, despite imbalances between various areas and sectors and an insufficient response.

Regarding the leadership of regional organizations – which play a very important role in leading the Party's work on a regional level and in coordinating between the central leadership, intermediate structures and the grassroots organizations – we highlight their action in fulfilling their functions, despite very different situations across regional organizations in terms of their size, cadres and leadership structure.

As for the municipal committees and other intermediate leadership bodies, namely of professional and business sectors, which play an important leading role, we stress the work that was carried out, including their initiative and connection to the masses. But we also note some situations of fragility, isolation and lack of initiative, with an overall insufficient territorial and sectoral coverage.

In the coordination of national and multi-regional companies and sectors of undeniable importance, there have been shortcomings and significant differences in terms of content, depth of knowledge and mobilisation of work and activities. In some sectors and companies there was regularity, in others irregularity and in some it was almost non-existent. This reflects the accumulation of duties and the number of cadres who were given the responsibility of accompanying sectors and companies in each regional organization's leadership.

The role of **cadres** was decisive between the XXI and XXII Congresses, when particular demands were placed on the Party's activity. The PCP's action and intervention would not have been possible without the selfless, persistent, revolutionary work of each Party member, and in particular its cadres, who shoulder with dedication the duties assigned to them. This embodiment of duties has as its essential pillar an identification with the communist ideal and project. We stress the current action of giving responsibilities to one thousand new cadres by the end of 2024.

Among the cadres, we must value and highlight the Party's full-time cadres, due to their indispensable role in promoting activities and action. They are politically and ideologically steadfast cadres, professional revolutionaries, militants entirely dedicated to the struggle. At present, the number of Party workers is about three hundred (including retired comrades who are in active service).

The complexity of the class struggle, namely its ideological expression, requires comrades who are increasingly well prepared and resistant to the constant attempts by capital to disaggregate, to cast doubt and to define the central political issues of each moment. Participation in meetings, their preparation and individual study are fundamental elements of militant life. Attending courses and other training – whether at the central level or at the level of organizations – remains an irre-

placeable means of studying and deepening the knowledge of the Party's theoretical basis and political line.

In the period since the XXI Congress, despite difficulties, important work was carried out. There were 34 courses at the Party School, with the participation of 639 comrades, including the course for Party workers. There were also 7 training sessions on specific topics – the Party's Centenary, the international situation and antifascist struggle – in which 623 comrades participated. In the regional organizations, 116 training events were carried out with the participation of about 1850 comrades.

The **organization** is decisive for the Party, inherent to its nature and decisive in achieving its goals. The Party's membership stands at 47 612, with a reduction because the number of recruitments did not compensate the loss of Party members, particularly due to deaths.

The social composition remains, in the main, with a large majority of workers and employees (68.9%) and a strong working-class component (35%). As for age composition, 10.4% are under 40 years old, 36.9% are between 41 and 64 years old and 52.7% are over 64 years old, which translates into an increase in the percentage of Party members over 64 years old. The percentage of women (32.9%) increased slightly.

In recent years, 3452 new militants were recruited. This represents an increase compared to the period between the XX and the XXI Congresses. This number, while insufficient, is positive, even more so in the political context in which it took place, with a violent anti-communist offensive. Among the new Party members, 72.9% were under the age of 50 when they joined the party.

The proportion of Party members integrated in Party bodies remains essentially unchanged and 31.7% are paying dues, a figure that is insufficient for the Party's needs.

There are 2183 Party bodies, including organisations that meet in plenary sessions. Of these, 324 are company and workplace bodies and 532 are bodies based on place of residence.

In the action to strengthen the Party, as part of the guidelines of the XXI Congress and the National Conference, we highlight the implementation of the action «100 cells, 100 responsible cadres» that achieved its goals, although not all the responsibilities that were attributed and cells that were created have been consolidated. The recruitment campaign «The future has a Party» with 2570 new militants, intensified recruitment and the integration of new militants, developing and expanding this work style of taking the initiative and connecting to the workers and the popular masses.

The Party increasingly depends on its organization and means of **information and propaganda** for its activity, to oppose the ideological offensive, to expand the political and class consciousness of the workers, to inform and enlighten the popular masses, to energize the struggle, to affirm its ideal and project. This is a struggle that involves the information and propaganda tasks of all organizations, all Party members, in all walks of life.

The Party's information and propaganda is a fundamental means for transformation, but also an instrument to link the organization to the masses. It must be characterized by truth, clarity, synthesis, fairness, rigour, class nature and assertion of the alternative proposals and policy.

Propaganda tasks were intense given the various election battles, as well as in specific campaigns such as «More strength to the workers» and «Living better in our land». They stimulated new styles of work, concrete activity by various means and visibility and boldness in our presence on the streets, through sound and other means that com-

plemented the distribution of documents, thus elevating them to actions of mass agitation, implementing lines of work discussed within the framework of the cadre meeting on communication that was held in November 2023.

Central work on digital platforms advanced in the targetting of communication and the production of specific content. Its presence was expanded onto more platforms, with production shortcomings in each platform and delays in the dissemination of targeted content. Organizations gave more attention to this task, namely by opening accounts on more platforms, although with insufficient production of specific content.

The **Party's work with the mass media**, as part of publicising its action and proposals, has faced obstacles arising from the current media environment. This requires organized and persistent work.

The **Party press** – Avante! and O Militante – in its printed and digital editions, has a decisive importance in information, in the ideological battle, in the links with the masses and for organization. The campaign to promote Avante! confirmed the potential to expand its regular sales, either through street stalls or through the Party organisations.

Publishing activity reveals the importance of the Party's own activity. There was progress in digital work, allowing greater autonomy in relation to distribution, as well as in digital editions and translations, expanding the possibilities for intervention and expansion.

The **Avante! Festival**, the country's largest political and cultural initiative, deeply rooted in the people, is an arena for the enjoyment of art, culture and sports, for joy and conviviality, fraternity, internationalism and struggle. The Festival is the result of the PCP's ability to carry out, organize and work

collectively, to permanently search for new forms of art and culture and new solutions in various dimensions. The Festival is also an important moment to overcome anti-communist prejudice and to affirm the Party's ideal and project. The most recent editions, confirming these characteristics, were important successes, inseparable from the 2020 edition and the steadfastness, political courage, responsibility and organizational capacity that it revealed.

Party funds are essential for the Party to fulfil its role. The Party's financial independence, which is indispensable for its political and ideological independence, implies ensuring self-financing, based on its initiatives and the contribution of militants and supporters, and requires rigorous management.

In the past four years (2020-2023), it was possible to ensure conditions for a positive result, which is valued and in which the commitment and determination of the Party organizations and militants and the support of the workers and the people were decisive. But this should not mislead us into thinking that the difficulties noted in previous Congresses have been overcome.

Decisive for this result was the implementation of measures based on increasing our own revenues – such as dues, contributions from Party members, elected officials and members of polling stations, donations from friends and supporters, fundraising initiatives – which represented 90.7% of the total income. And also in reducing expenses without curtailing our activity, as well as ensuring a rigorous management of all Party assets. We highlight the success of the National Fund-Raising Campaign in the context of the Party's Centenary and the campaign for up-to-date dues and to raise their value, which confirmed the importance of dues in financing the Party. During this period, the dependence of most regional organisations on central support continued, thus failing to achieve the goal of ensuring sufficient

means for the financial balancing of their accounts. In the Party as a whole, institutional revenues (9.3% in total) and other extraordinary revenues continued to be indispensable for the results that were achieved.

The characteristics of Party financing were confirmed, reflecting the Party's effort. These are inseparable from its class nature, ensuring its activity based on its own resources, not depending on State subsidies and third parties, and on the need to oppose mechanisms of interference in our internal life that aim to constrain and condition the Party's action and financial independence.

The measures implemented confirm their potential but are insufficient. This makes it necessary and urgent to continue, in a demanding and rigorous way, our work towards financial balancing, which is essential to guarantee the resources for the Party's activity.

The Party carried out an intense **international activity**. It held bilateral meetings with Communist parties and other progressive forces and took part in various bilateral or multilateral events, including those of solidarity and of an anti-imperialist nature. It contributed to the process of the International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties. It acted towards safeguarding basic principles of relationship between Communist parties and unity in action in the international Communist and revolutionary movement. It contributed to the Common Appeal for the 2024 European Parliament elections and to defending the confederal principles of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left – the Left in the European Parliament. It hosted political forces from several countries in Portugal, particularly with the regular presence of dozens of delegations at the Avante! Festival. It took a public stand on international issues and contributed to develop the struggle for peace and internationalist solidarity in Portugal.

7.2.

The Party and its role, its necessary reinforcement, initiative and action

Following up on the XXI Congress, we highlight the importance of the National Conference «Taking the initiative, strengthening the Party, responding to new demands» and the guidelines, work style and activity that it entails.

Given the current situation and its evolution, it is necessary to energize the Party's activity in an integrated way. This involves: asserting the Party, its communist identity and its project; its initiative and the links with the workers and the popular masses; a broad political activity, also on an institutional level, that responds to the most urgent problems and affirms the patriotic and left-wing alternative policy; the intensification of the struggle of the workers and populations; the strengthening of mass organizations and movements; work with democrats and patriots; the strengthening of the Party.

The Party, its organizations and militants face the need for a permanent and **close connection to the masses** and a bold activity, linked to the problems and aspirations of workers and populations and to the struggle to solve them.

The Party's social, political, ideological and electoral influence relies on its connection with the masses, its knowledge of reality and ability to act. The connection with the masses is a goal of the Party's action, but also the source of its strength.

The Party organization is the fundamental means of connecting with the masses, of knowing their problems and aspirations, of energizing and organizing the struggle, ensuring its consequential and transformative character, based on concrete and most heart-felt problems. Experience shows that it is in the connection with the masses and in mobilizing the struggle that one gets to

know and recruits for the Party those who most stand out.

It is necessary to broaden, deepen and intensify mass work in all its dimensions. It is essential to continue taking steps so that organizations and militants, in the most diverse areas and work fronts, are acquainted with the reality in which they are inserted and the problems that exist, acting to mobilize and fight for their resolution and to promote the information, organization, agitation and mobilization of others in the struggle for their aspirations.

The Party, its organizations and militants need to take the initiative in the general dynamics of asserting a break with right-wing policies and for a patriotic and left-wing alternative, for an Advanced Democracy with the values of April in the future of Portugal, for socialism. And also specific action for: a general increase in wages; the promotion of the rights of children and parents; the rights, dreams and aspirations of the youth; the improvement of pensions, benefits and the right to grow old with quality of life; for equality, and the rights of women; to protect and improve the State's social functions and public services; to defend culture; to promote sports; to increase national production; to protect the environment and access to water; for the right to housing, mobility and public transportation; to defend the democratic regime and the values for April; and for peace and solidarity with all peoples.

The Party, its organizations and militants must **intervene to promote the struggle, organized strength and united action**, aimed at: developing and intensifying the struggle of the workers and popular masses; developing action to strengthen broad-based mass organizations and movements; developing links and work with other democrats and patriots.

The Party, its organizations and militants need to **strengthen the Party**. This is a

decisive element for the workers, the people and the country. This reinforcement requires focused attention on priority guidelines.

In **leadership** it is necessary to take steps that respond to a situation that requires solutions, in various aspects, enabling the Party to fulfil its role as a Communist Party, with its own identity, nature and goals, whatever the conditions of struggle in the forthcoming years. This requires courage, resistance and initiative.

The solutions for the Central Committee, the executive bodies – the Political Committee and Secretariat – and the Central Control Commission must meet these general goals.

The PCP's Central Committee must preserve its characteristics, particularly in terms of its remit and size, possibly with some reduction. The Central Committee should retain a large majority of workers and employees, with a strong working-class component. The Central Committee must integrate Party cadres – both Party workers and non-workers – with responsibilities in leadership work, drawn from companies and workplaces, who are active in mass organizations and movements, who are prominent in various areas of national life. Renewal must take into account a composition that associates the participation of more experienced cadres with entrusting responsibilities to young people, as well as strengthening the participation of women.

The structures that assist the central leadership must be assessed and strengthened, in their goals of studying, elaborating and coordinating the national, sectoral, mass fronts and institutional activity. In so doing, consideration must be given to the priorities, the available frameworks and resources, collective and agile forms of functioning that ensure prompt intervention and maximum information, and the contribution of Party organizations and members, as well as of many other people who are available for such participation.

In the work to coordinate companies and sectors at the national and multi-regional level, steps must be taken to define priorities, to focus and take measures for priority companies and sectors, to define and clarify responsibilities and contacts in the leadership of regional organisations, to improve contents, to ensure an activity based on collective work, to plan actions and an agile response and initiative.

A general movement to strengthen leadership work and structuring, articulated with attributing responsibilities to cadres must be promoted, developed and implemented, assessing the concrete reality of the Party's priorities, and the cadres and organizations' situation. In the present circumstances, cadres, their determination, endurance, capacity, initiative, militant participation, and political and ideological preparation, take on the highest priority.

This general movement must:

act on the leadership structure at various levels – regional organizations, municipal committees, leadership of professional sectors, companies, parish committees and other intermediate bodies, among others – always aiming to stimulate, strengthen and create grassroots organizations with mass influence;

assess the leadership of regional organisations, their composition, functioning, coordination with the central leadership, intermediate structures and grassroots organisations, and take appropriate measures, given their diversity and current reality;

ensure the appropriate size of leadership bodies and the main criterion for the participation of cadres taking into account their characteristics and duties; they must be based on collective leadership and work, but correcting situations of overly large bodies, or of cadres without assigned duties, as well

as situations of cadres who are in multiple intermediate leadership bodies;

prioritise steps to improve party structuring, leadership, organisation and engagement with workers in companies, workplaces and sectors;

expand the number of leadership bodies, namely municipal committees, provided that conditions are guaranteed for their creation and effective functioning, countering the formal creation of bodies without practical consequences;

promote the appropriate structuring of party organizations, by merging or separating them so as to ensure the effective functioning of as many grassroots organizations as possible and the regular involvement of a greater number of militants;

promote the initiative of leadership bodies within their remit, acting within the framework of the Party's general orientation and principles;

stimulate collective work, individual initiative and monitoring of implementation, with the necessary assessment of the work carried out;

ensure assemblies of all organizations that did not hold them in the past year, by the end of 2026, without discarding urgent decisions that may be required.

Within the framework of **cadre** policy, which is a decisive element in strengthening the Party and fulfilling its programme, we need:

a permanent quest for cadres, becoming acquainted with them and assigning responsibilities, with integration into collective work, monitoring of implementation, assisting in preparing, training and helping them grow;

to view the assignment of responsibilities to cadres – in particular workers, young people

and women – as a major work priority, with the aim of assigning responsibilities to 1000 new cadres;

a regular discussion in the organizations, particularly in the secretariats, assessing cadres and identifying new comrades to assume responsibilities;

assessing, among the most prominent cadres, those who have conditions to become Party workers, in particular from among workers, women and young people;

the encouragement of cadres' activity in their reality, in connection with the workers and communities, seeking to expand the Party's social, political, ideological and electoral influence;

the development of a coordinated action of political and ideological training, integrating a stronger general programme of courses and other training actions in the Party School and in regional organizations with assistance and encouragement for each cadre's training, so that they can fulfil their role in the demanding conditions in which the Party must operate.

Within the framework of **organization**, which is a decisive element for the Party to play its role, we must ensure:

the regular functioning of [Party] bodies, ensuring that they can provide, as essential elements, an understanding of the real issues; political and ideological training; the definition of guidelines and of tasks, based on a political assessment and on priorities; taking the initiative and acting on the problems of the workers and communities;

an increase in the structuring of organizations, with the creation of more bodies and the integration of as many Party members as possible, promoting participation that extends beyond attending plenary meetings of members;

the development of contact with Party members, assigning responsibilities, stimulating greater militancy, more effective contacts, communication and integration;

the recruitment and integration of new militants, with the regular discussion in each organization of who should be approached for Party membership, with particular attention given to workers who stand out for their class consciousness and mass activity, as well as to young people and women, and with higher-ranking bodies focusing on companies, workplaces, sectors and localities where a [Party] organization does not yet exist;

a stronger Party action and organization among the working class and workers in companies and workplaces, making a general assessment of the main companies and sectors, of the existing [Party] cells and other bodies, ensuring measures for regular functioning, expanding the number of companies with contacts with Party members and with an organized activity, promoting agendas focused on the issues and demands of the workers, their organization, unity and struggle and the Party's direct intervention, with a view to creating 100 new cells and increasing the number of Party members organized in company, workplace and sectoral bodies;

the regular functioning of Party bodies with the Party members who are active in trade union structures and Workers' Councils;

the strengthening of local organizations, with activity linked to the community, an assessment of the structuring of existing organizations and measures to ensure their functioning and dynamism, taking into account the need for activity, the number of Party members and their militancy;

assisting in strengthening JCP and encouraging work among the youth, with activity in various areas and social strata and sectors;

meetings of Party organizations on a regular basis, at various levels;

the dynamism of Work Centres, as dynamic spaces to assist the Party's action, to connect and communicate with the communities where they are inserted and to carry out activities; this requires a continuous overall assessment and taking steps to respond to Party needs.

Within the framework of the **ideological struggle**, which plays a central role in the class struggle, the priorities are:

exposing capitalism and capitalist exploitation;

valuing labour and the workers, their unity, organization and struggle, raising class and political consciousness;

defending rights, the State's social functions and public services and fighting against anti-democratic expressions of liberal content;

defending democratic freedoms, the struggle against reactionary and fascist conceptions, racism, xenophobia and anti-communism;

fighting against isolation and individualistic atomization, discrimination and prejudice, promoting equality, solidarity and collective action;

denouncing imperialism, war and the arms race and defending peace;

denouncing the viewpoints of social democracy, its historical and current role at the service of big capital and against the struggle of workers and peoples;

promoting a break with right-wing policy and asserting the political alternative, the values of April, the Party's project.

In the framework of the **Party's information, propaganda and press** whose

importance is growing, it is necessary to promote, based on the Party's own resources:

a growing circulation and reach of all Party media, at the central and branch levels, which requires greater activity, assigning responsibilities to cadres, including those with specific technical know-how;

the development of direct contacts, notwithstanding other means of communication; this is of special importance and centrality, as an expression of the irreplaceable links to the masses and of the personal enlightenment that results from the activity of organizations and of each militant, given the direct relationship in conveying the message, the versatility of subjects and issues that can be addressed, and the proximity and non-mediated nature of this type of contact;

a Party presence that must be persistent and continuous, and not just a function of national campaigns, addressing concrete problems in the workplaces and localities, and projecting among the masses our institutional work, together with the creation of structures and strengthening the organizations' resources and cadres so as to ensure the prompt production of their own materials;

the unification of the fundamental axes of our message and the visual unity of the elements that are produced by the organizations, with priority given to locally prepared contents, that target specific sectors, with their diversified expression;

the quality of propaganda, in particular written communication and the Party's presence in the streets, including its persistent replacement, not only to ensure its effectiveness and our vitality, but also to exercise the right to political propaganda;

care in written and visual communication, ensuring that its content is accessible, clear and mobilizing, and ensuring agility and readiness in its production;

a better structuring of the dissemination of content on digital platforms, aimed at specific groups and the Communists' organized intervention, with a permanent assessment about the role of the PCP's website, seeking to ensure its importance, ease of access and research and its integral usage;

the existence of cadres in the organizations who are responsible for the necessary circulation and dissemination of **Avante!** and **O Militante**, for the definition of sales targets, for the expansion of the organizational circulation network and the promotion of regular street stalls, paying particular attention to companies and workplaces, increasing the number of regular buyers by contacting Party members and supporters, and continuing the assessment of its contents and thematic approach, as well as of its digital editions, overcoming shortcomings and fulfilling their potential;

the continuation of **editorial activity** in digital media, including in audio formats, expanding both the diffusion of Marxism-Leninism and the addressing of current issues, articulating editorial activity with the daily activity of the organizations, so as to enhance the Party's action and strength;

the development of the **Party's work with the mass media**, by preparing cadres and with the persistent dissemination of its activity, in a media landscape that is marked by silencing, by misrepresentation and by expressions of anti-communism; whenever necessary, this must include exposures and protests;

a continued attention to the **Avante! Festival**, asserting its specific characteristics, that give it distinctive features and recognized prestige; improving its program and attractiveness, especially among the youth; improving its efficiency, quality of services and visitor comfort; reflecting about ways to simplify its construction; prioritizing the dissemination, promotion and sales of the

Permanent Entry (EP); enhancing and stimulating militant actions and the preparation of its 50th edition, in 2026, which will highlight its affirmation and future projection.

Within the framework of **funds**, to obtain the necessary means for activity and ensure the Party's financial independence, it is necessary to:

harness existing potential to expand financial capacity and to implement measures based on rigorous management, which will increase our own revenues, control expenditure, reduce the dependence of regional organizations on central assistance and expand the number of organizations that contribute to the Party's general activity, reducing the relative weight of institutional and extraordinary revenues without underestimating their importance in overall revenues;

give priority to Party dues, which is the most regular and stable source of income in financing the Party; expanding our own revenues; taking measures to significantly increase the number of comrades that pay dues; talking to each Party member about the importance of having their dues up to date and increasing their monthly value – regardless of the reference target of 1% of income for the monthly due; promoting the debate within each body; increasing the number of comrades who collect dues; extending payments by direct debit and monitoring its implementation;

also important towards increasing our own revenues are fund-raising initiatives and campaigns; contributions from militants and sympathizers for specific purposes or general needs; the contributions of elected

officials and other comrades in public office, in compliance with the statutory principle of neither being benefited nor hindered in the exercise of these posts;

ensure a rigorous and effective management and maintenance of the Party's assets;

broaden the discussion, improve leadership work, collective work, planning, programming and monitoring of implementation, assigning responsibilities to more comrades, creating and streamlining structures that guarantee rigour in management, financial and budgetary control, ensure regular accountability at all levels, as fundamental elements to overcome difficulties and shortcomings and to take advantage of opportunities;

promote the understanding that financial independence is a priority to which no organization and no Party member can be oblivious.

As part of **international activity** and internationalist action, which is an inseparable element of the Party's identity, give priority to:

strengthen the international Communist and revolutionary movement and to strengthen the anti-imperialist front;

the struggle for peace and internationalist solidarity;

the struggle for the rights of the workers and peoples, against exploitation and oppression, for freedom, sovereignty, democracy, social progress and socialism.

The XXII Congress affirms its confidence in the strength and capacity of the workers and the people to confront a reality that is marked by growing instability and a worsening international situation, and with a domestic situation where there are projects to intensify policies at the service of monopoly capital and to promote backward and reactionary conceptions that threaten rights, living standards and democracy.

These are times of resistance and struggle in which the Party, the workers and the people

are called upon to assert the values of April, paving the way for a Portugal with a future, inseparable from the activity to break with right-wing policies and to build a patriotic and left-wing political alternative.

These are times to face reality, with courage, determination and initiative. With the confidence of those who, with over one century of activity, know that the condition for resisting, advancing and winning lies in the struggle of the workers and people, and in the PCP's decisive role.

These are times to take the initiative, for April, for democracy, for Socialism and Communism.

