

Announcing the Relaunch of the World Socialist Web Site on October 2, 2020

A statement by David North, chairman of the International Editorial Board

David North
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On Friday, October 2, 2020, the *World Socialist Web Site* will be relaunched with an entirely new design and with vastly enhanced functionality. The launch will take place simultaneously in the over 20 languages in which the WSWs is published.

The changes that are being introduced are the outcome of an intensive review, spanning more than a year, of all aspects of the WSWs. Throughout this lengthy process, our central concern has been the development of the *World Socialist Web Site* as the focal point, in the international struggle for socialism, of theoretical education, political analysis, cultural enlightenment and the revolutionary organization of the working class.

Driving the WSWs relaunch have been two powerful and interacting objective factors: first, the explosive development of the global crisis of the world capitalist system; second, the escalation of the international class struggle. The interaction of these fundamental processes, accelerated by the global pandemic, confronts the *World Socialist Web Site*, as the political organ of the International Committee of the Fourth International, with immense challenges and responsibilities.

The most direct impact of the global crisis and the escalation of class struggle has been a substantial growth in the readership of the WSWs. The total number of page views so far this year exceeds 20 million. By the time of the relaunch on October 2, the number of page views during the first nine months of 2020 will have surpassed the total number reached in all of 2019.

This increase in readership has been achieved despite the unrelenting efforts of governments and the social media conglomerates to censor and restrict public access to the WSWs. In fact, every surge in WSWs readership—as, for example, when an article posted on the WSWs in August was viewed more than 100,000 times in a single day—is followed almost immediately by the intensification of corporate censorship.

As its readership has grown, the *World Socialist Web Site* has come to play an increasingly central role in the struggles of the working class. This development requires not only more extensive news coverage. The WSWs must assist the growing mass movement by providing the Marxist theoretical guidance and political perspective required to transform the spontaneous eruptions of social opposition into a class conscious and internationally coordinated revolutionary struggle for socialism.

In whatever part of the world they live, workers require detailed knowledge of the international economic and political conditions within which their struggles are unfolding. They must be able to follow and establish contact with the movement of the working class beyond the borders of their own country. And, above all, they must be able to draw upon the strategic lessons derived from the historical experience of the class struggle and the fight for socialism. The relaunching of the *World Socialist Web Site* will be a milestone in meeting these needs in a new period of revolutionary upsurge.

The most significant features of the new *World Socialist Web Site* are:

- A vastly improved design, utilizing industry-leading technology, that is far more functionally robust than the present site. Responding to the fact that more than half the WSWs readership accesses the site with either a mobile phone or tablet, the redesigned site will provide excellent usability on all viewing platforms.

Readers entering the site via a cell phone or tablet will have access to the full scope of the WSWs's content in the appropriate viewing format.

- Readers will be able to quickly identify the latest articles, which will be especially helpful as the WSWs transitions—beginning with the relaunch date—to multiple postings throughout the day. More sophisticated topic categories will greatly improve the daily placement of new articles and the navigation of the site.

- Since its initial launch in February 1998, the *World Socialist Web Site* has developed an archive of more than 125,000 articles. This extraordinary collection includes not only a record of the major political, economic, social and cultural events of the entire twenty-first century.

It also consists of a vast collection of documents relating to the entire history of the Trotskyist movement since the founding of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union in 1923. This critical historical material has been assembled in “curated page areas” that are easily accessed.

The relaunched WSWs has been designed to encourage and facilitate a dynamic interaction between past and present. Readers will be able to navigate the site, as motivated by their interests, from contemporary to historical events. The same thematic approach has been taken to the presentation of major and persistent contemporary topics (i.e., the malignant growth of social inequality, the defense of Julian Assange, the struggle against imperialist war, the threat of authoritarianism and fascism, the impact of climate change, and many other important issues).

The relaunched site integrates the two essential characteristics of the *World Socialist Web Site*: the *breadth* of its news coverage and the *depth* of its theoretical and historical foundations.

- The WSWs will provide access to the programs and major statements of the International Committee and its sections. All those who are looking for a socialist movement based on Marxism—which upholds the genuine revolutionary legacy of the 1917 October Revolution, defends historical truth, and conducts a relentless fight against all variants of neo-Stalinism, reactionary nationalism, reformism, opportunism and middle-class pseudo-leftism—will be able to follow the work of the Fourth International and study its history and program.

This announcement of the relaunch would not be complete without acknowledging the tireless efforts of the cadre of the International Committee of the Fourth International and the unstinting support of so many thousands of devoted readers of the *World Socialist Web Site*.

The relaunch of the *World Socialist Web Site* on October 2, 2020 will prove to be a historical advance in the struggle to put an end to capitalism and establish an international socialist society.

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