

China: Palestine has right to armed struggle

By John Catalinotto

Senior Chinese official Ma Xinmin made a powerful statement Feb. 22 before the International Court of Justice that Palestinians have the right to engage in armed struggle, because they live under an illegal Israeli occupation.

Ma, who is director general of the department of treaty and law at China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told the 15-judge panel in The Hague, Netherlands, that armed struggle differed from terrorism. "In pursuit of the right to self-determination," said Ma, "Palestinian people's use of force to resist foreign oppression and complete the establishment of an independent state is an inalienable right well founded in international law." (Palestine Chronicle, Feb. 22)

Ma's statement marked a break with China's policy prior to Oct. 7, 2023, of normalizing economic and diplomatic ties with Israel. China's latest statement confronted the U.S.-European Union policy of supporting Israel with military, diplomatic and economic assistance.

While avoiding any military provocation,

the Chinese government and Communist Party have consistently defended Chinese sovereignty and Chinese national interests against any challenge from U.S. imperialism and its allies. Ma's statement extends that defense in the diplomatic arena to the right of the Palestinian people to fight for self-determination.

Reflects worldwide support for Palestine

That China's policy makers would make such a bold challenge illustrates the worldwide shift in popular support for Palestine and the growing mass anger against the Israeli occupation state and its imperialist enablers. It indicates that political leaders are well-aware that hundreds of millions of people around the world are pressuring political actors regarding what position they are taking to stop the genocide in Gaza.

The massive international solidarity with Palestine emboldens those in leadership or vital positions to take steps to stop the massacre of Palestinian civilians, stop the slaughter of children, stop killings that much of the world sees as genocide.

Now a representative of People's China has said that international law is on the side of the Palestinians. That Palestine has a legitimate fight for self-determination. That Palestinians have the right to wage armed struggle.

"The struggle waged by peoples for their liberation, right to self-determination, including armed struggle against colonialism, occupation, aggression, domination against

foreign forces should not be considered terror acts," Ma said. (Palestine Chronicle, Feb. 22)

The Chinese statement not only reflects the strength of a massive worldwide movement, it adds to that strength. After all, as much production takes place in China as the next nine countries combined — including the U.S., Germany, Japan, Britain and India. That's according to the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) in Europe.

Even if China's actions were limited to diplomatic support, the Palestinian position would be strengthened. But the Chinese government has also announced plans to send its third shipment of material aid to Gaza.

Through much of 2023, it seemed the U.S. corporate media, including establishment media like The New York Times, went out of their way to attack some aspects of life in People's China or policies of the Chinese Communist Party. Strangely enough, there has been no or little coverage of Ma's statement to the court, not even an attack, as of Feb. 26.

Media based in the Middle East and South Asia, on the contrary, gave Ma's statement full coverage.

China's positions hold authority with many anti-imperialist and pro-socialist activists and organizations worldwide. Should this statement be publicized it can help build solidarity of communist and workers' organizations in the imperialist countries with the organizations of different ideologies who are leading the struggle for self-determination in Palestine and in all of West Asia.

China's leaders have aided the peoples' struggles worldwide by taking this bold position in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance. □



Some of China's aid shipments to Gaza.

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