

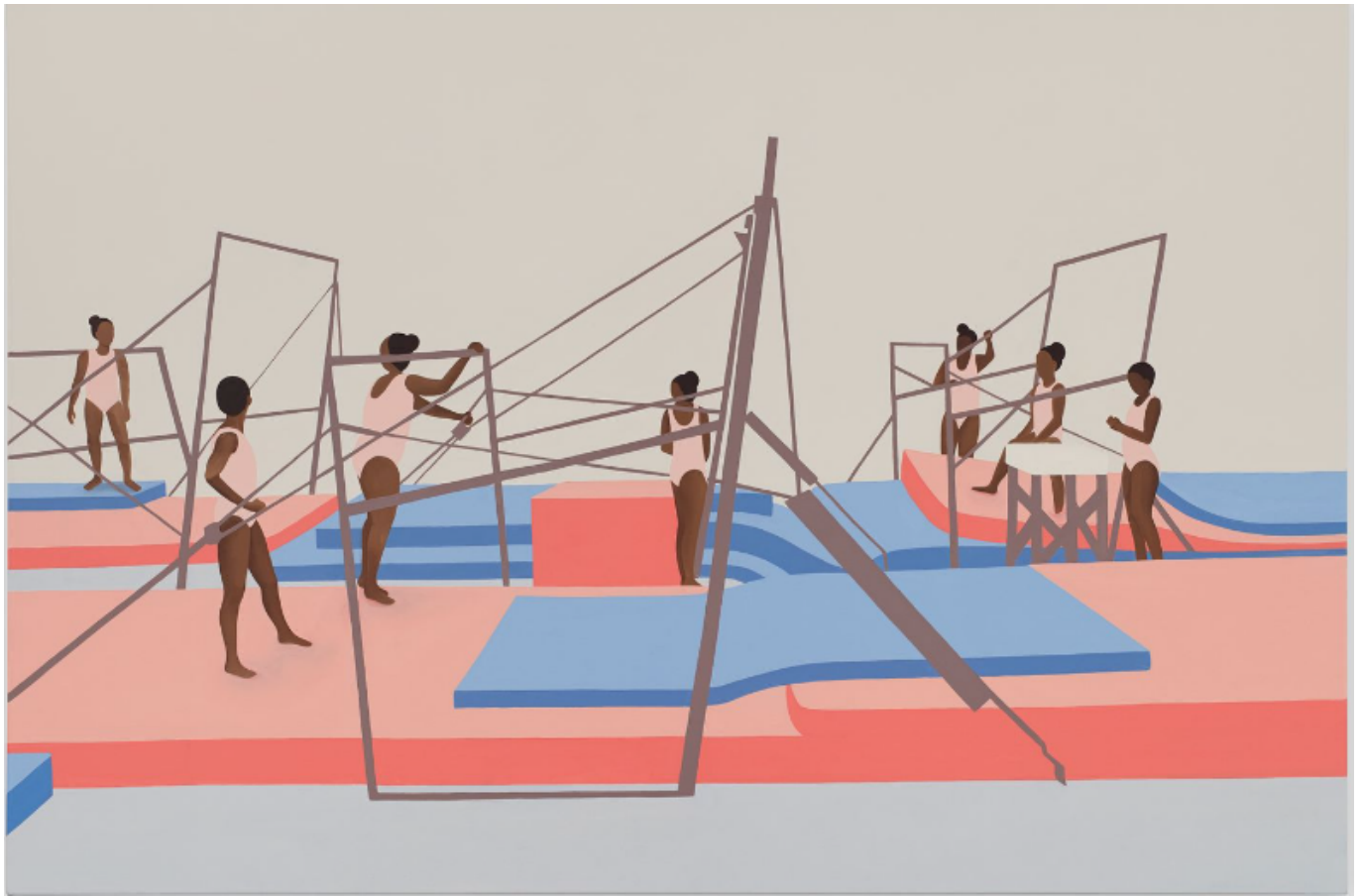
From Niamey to Gaza: Resisting the Imperialist World System. The Tenth Pan-Africa Newsletter (2024)

‘On the map, there are two kinds of classifications; a geographical one and a political one in which the world is divided into only two major continents. All the forces of revolution, liberation and justice stand against the forces of colonialism, racism and imperialism. Africa on this map is a cause more than it is a continent. We, therefore, came here as being a part of Africa the cause, although we are not from Africa the continent’.

Fateh (Palestinian National Liberation Movement) representative at the Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers, 1969

A year ago, within one month, two decisive events occurred: the **declaration** of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) vis-a-vis the Liptako-Gourma Agreement on 16 September 2023 and the **beginning** of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood on 7 October 2023. With the security compact between Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger following popular uprisings – calling for a **rejection** of French neocolonialism – the colonial borders drawn by the French are being challenged through the creation of a federation. Meanwhile in Palestine, Operation Al-Aqsa Flood was launched by the Palestinian resistance from a piece of land already liberated from settlers and settlements since 2005, towards the goal of liberating all of Palestine and the West Asian region from Zionism and imperialism.

We cannot predict the future, nor foresee the total impact that these events will have. What is significant is that a new phase of anti-imperialist consciousness and resistance is underway and requires continued critical analysis as it takes on new iterations. Two themes that I delve into in our recent *Interventions* on developments in the Sahel that reflect wider struggles, are worth noting: sovereignty and territorial integrity. Along with the concept of the popular cradle, we can see how processes in the Sahel and in Palestine contribute to a new stage of anti-imperialist struggle.



Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi (South Africa), *Trial*, 2020.

Territorial Integrity

The fight for the liberation of the Arab-Iranian region transcends the old colonial borders that remain intact today, and an urgent political demand is the spread of rights and dignity for minorities, no matter which country they reside in. There is no solution to the crises of our time, both in West Africa and Palestine, that is not a regional solution, where the reclamation of sovereignty can also act as a reclamation of unity. The same goes for the Sahel; the area now comprising the AES was a unified polity for years under the Malian, Songhai, and Soudan empires. In the mid-20th century, a short-lived union was made between various countries in the region, attempting to navigate the end of formal colonial rule. The AES seeks to build a stabilisation fund so each country can help the other economically, and to build transit connections between the three countries to reduce economic bottlenecks and increase unity. The combined territory would be over 1 million sq miles, or roughly one-third of the contiguous United States, containing a combined population of 72 million. The confederation agreement also stipulates that the countries will pool together their resources to build IT infrastructure and industrial facilities. Niger has also been supplying diesel to Mali at below-market rates to keep the power on.

In Palestine, there is an overt colonial occupation which directly controls resources and participates in land theft. Thus, the AES and Palestine are at qualitatively different points in their anti-colonial struggle. Yet, the fact remains that the Axis of Resistance brings together Sunni, Shi'a, and Christian peoples, from various different states (Palestine, Yemen, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq), and with different relations to state power and armed

struggle. Already in 1969, the PFLP wrote in their **manifesto** that Palestinian liberation ‘requires the mobilisation and concentration of all the forces of revolution in the Arab countries in general and the Arab regions surrounding Israel in particular’. Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah also understood this, and proclaimed in an interview, ‘we consider all borders throughout the Muslim world as fake and colonialist, and therefore doomed to disappear’. This is a critical lesson to remember when considering the future of anti-systemic struggle; reclamation of the means of production from colonial usurpers is the first step.



Reggie Khumalo (South Africa), *I'm Not Alone*, 2024.

Sovereignty

The martyr **Amílcar Cabral** argued that the first step of the national liberation struggle is the reclamation of the means of production from foreign monopoly capital. In West Africa, this is represented by French corporations like Orano who siphon **uranium** from under Nigerien soil, or the French and Canadian gold mining companies operating across the region.

In the Arab-Iranian region, merchants of death are making record **profits**: Elbit Systems, Rafael Technologies, and Raytheon are just a few examples. In order to advance on Cabral’s position and apply it to West Asia, it is necessary to understand what Ali Kadri has **termed** the ‘accumulation of waste’ where war is an example of an industry of perfect waste. The Zionist economy, by exporting counterinsurgency, weapons, and high-tech computer surveillance systems deals in death, quite literally. The only purpose of these technologies is to lay waste to life and de-develop the region by breaking any sovereign centres of indigenous

accumulation.

As Zionists assassinate leaders of the resistance, such as Ismail Haniyeh and Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, with deadly military technology, the will of the people is only strengthened. While there is no doubt that someone like Nasrallah cannot be replaced in stature and charisma, two things become clear. Firstly, Hezbollah has not been deterred from its mission. Secondly, Nasrallah haunts the occupation force even more after his martyrdom. This imperialist system and its accumulation of waste is brought into relief precisely through the subjects it seeks to eliminate.

These two struggles also highlight the multifaceted nature of the anti-systemic struggle. After one year of accelerated genocide against the Palestinians, resistance efforts show no signs of slowing. Every day, new videos are shared by Hamas (Palestine), Ansar Allah (Yemen), and Hezbollah (Lebanon) which show successful ambushes against Zionist soldiers, destruction of military material, and an indomitable will to victory. Captain Ibrahim Traoré has recently **signed** an order to expel foreign gold mining companies, while promoting a takeover by indigenous mining companies in the sector. In Mali and Burkina Faso, the means of production are being reclaimed from imperialist monopoly capital and put in service of the people. Large scale electrification projects are underway, nuclear power plants are being **built** to promote clean energy, and agricultural self-sufficiency is on the agenda.



Ghada Amer (Egypt), *Portrait of Elizabeth*, 2021.

Popular Cradle

The ‘popular cradle’ is a term coined in Palestine and refers to the inviolable relationship between the masses and the forces of resistance. In Palestine, the Axis of Resistance is composed of popular militias as well as standing armies, each with their own relationship to state power. In the AES we see a ‘free officer’ movement within the military who took power in coups d’état over the last three years. Despite surface differences, the concept of the popular cradle can be brought over to West Africa and the AES as the mandate of the people remains with the now unified government. One example of this is the Walkers for African Unity group who **walked** from Bamako, Mali to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso to show their support for a federation and the erasure of colonial borders, or the massive **rallies** in support for the current governments.

Captain Ibrahim Traoré has **visited workers** on multiple occasions, such as the women’s street sweeping brigade. He has also been seen at various construction sites, laying the first brick for a gold mining facility or

encouraging the workers onward in their patriotic duties. Days before the signing of the Liptako-Gourma Agreement, and after the overthrow of Bazoum, it was Nigerien citizens who **surrounded** the French military base and ensured their exit from the country. In Palestine, the link to the popular cradle is expressed by youth harassing Zionist troops with stones, leading them to an ambush. Or a grandmother covering a security camera outside her house with a blanket while resistance cells sneak by. These actions keep the torch of national liberation and decolonisation alight.



Aziz Osman (Somalia), *Exodus*, 2004.

While the Axis of Resistance and the AES do not have formal ties, the 1969 quote that opens this newsletter reminds us that despite the 7500 kilometres which divide Bamako and Al-Quds, the African cause and the Palestinian cause are one. These struggles represent the real movement to abolish the current state of affairs. As revolutionaries, we must support these efforts and do our part to break the imperialist propaganda machine which seeks to undermine the world's anticolonial vanguards. The demonisation and repression of these movements is proportional to the level of threat they represent to this system.

These two particular movements represent the desire of the oppressed to be free, to fight for dignity and to stand as upright men and women. In his speech at the inaugural meeting of the AES Confederation in July 2024, Traoré spoke decisively on the course their movement intends to take:

In our veins runs the blood of those valiant warriors who fought and won for us this land that we call Mali, Burkina and Niger. In our veins runs the blood of those valiant warriors who helped the whole world rid itself of Nazism and many other scourges. In our veins runs the blood of those valiant warriors that were deported from Africa to Europe, America, Asia ... and who helped to build those countries as slaves. In our veins runs the blood of worthy men, robust men, men who stood tall...

The people of Gaza, too, have assumed their own revolt. The land of Gaza is liberated territory and that is precisely why the Zionists intend to turn it to rubble and massacre its people. Because Gaza is more qualitatively sovereign than the rest of Palestine, from Gaza the great patriotic war of national liberation is launched. The narrative of victimhood must be replaced with one of revolutionary optimism. From Niamey to Jenin, the oppressed have spoken.

Warmly,

Hanna Eid



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