CLIMATE VANGUARD

No Eco-Socialism without National Liberation



Image: Tricontinental Magazine 14.

CLIMATE VANGUARD

What is National Liberation?

“The essence of national liberation for a colonised country in the neo-colonial system is the reclamation of control over its national productive forces.”

– Amílcar Cabral

was a leader of the national liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.



National liberation is an anti-imperialist people’s struggle for sovereignty.

As Cabral states, this not only includes political sovereignty (i.e. formal territorial control), but also economic sovereignty over a country’s productive forces (i.e. the things necessary for production, like land, machines, and labour).

CLIMATE VANGUARD

So what does national liberation have to do with eco-socialism?



They may seem unrelated, but, in fact, national liberation is indispensable to building eco-socialism on a global scale and securing a just future for all →

Image: *Map of historic Palestine from 1868.*

CLIMATE VANGUARD

Neo-Colonialism

Even though most nations in the Global South have formal political sovereignty, they do not have economic sovereignty.

A covert form of colonialism (i.e. neo-colonialism) is maintained through unequal exchange, which is the hidden transfer of value from the Global South to the Global North in the form of artificially cheapened prices for Southern resources and labour.

Between 1950 and 2015, it is estimated that the Global North appropriated $242 trillion from the Global South through unequal exchange.*

Note: This is 30x higher than the amount of developmental aid the Global South received from the North during the same period.

Source: *Hickel et al., Global Environmental Change (2022).*

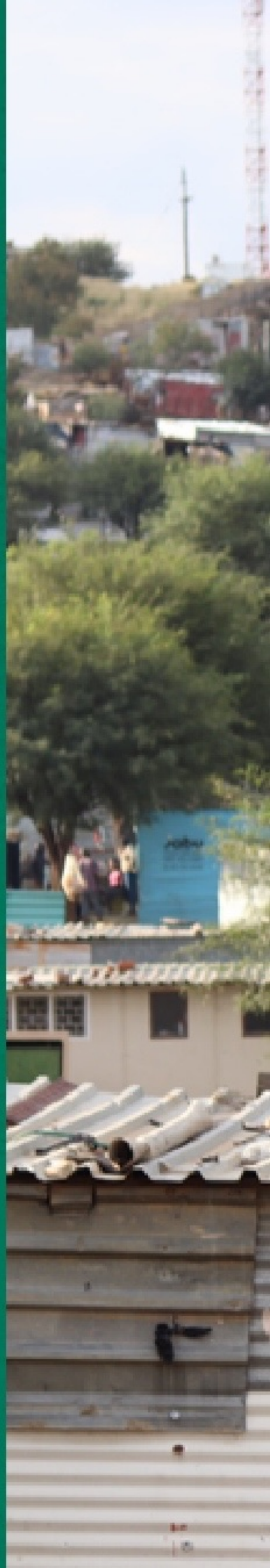
CLIMATE VANGUARD

National Liberation and Eco-Socialist Planning

Without control over their productive forces, it is impossible for countries in the Global South to plan and invest in their own eco-socialist development. Instead, critical sectors like energy, agriculture, and manufacturing serve the needs of Northern capital rather than the eco-social needs of their people.*

***Note:** Even if economic sovereignty is attained, national liberation is betrayed if the productive forces are developed for the purposes of constructing domestic capitalism. Rather, as Cabral theorises, a socialist movement must take control of the productive forces and develop them for the purpose of meeting human needs, as opposed to the accumulation drive of a new capitalist class.

Sources: *Cabral, The Weapon of Theory (1966); Ajl, A People's Green New Deal (2021).*



CLIMATE VANGUARD



Image: *Parts of Windhoek's township, in Namibia, are not connected to the electricity grid.*



Green Colonialism

For example, Germany recently brokered a $9.4 billion agreement with Namibia for the import of “green” hydrogen, a process that relies on renewable energy as opposed to fossil gas or coal.

44% of Namibians still lack access to power, but instead of providing it to them, electricity will be used for the production of a fuel that is vital to the EU’s domestic decarbonisation plans.

As a former coloniser of Namibia and architect of the Herero and Nama genocide, Germany has maintained its colonial project through the control of Namibia’s productive forces, only this time under a green veneer.

Image: *Illustration by @emim.k*

CLIMATE VANGUARD

National Liberation Today

Today's national liberation struggles are not only concerned with resisting neo-colonialism. There remain ongoing indigenous fights for formal political independence within established settler colonies, including the Palestinian liberation struggle.

Source: *Ajl, A People's Green New Deal (2021).* **Image:** *Photo by Laurence Geai.*

CLIMATE VANGUARD

Towards Global Liberation

National liberation is a crucial step in establishing an internationalist world order premised on full human development, one that dismantles the *"colonial mode of being"* that threatens our communities and planet with irreparable catastrophe.

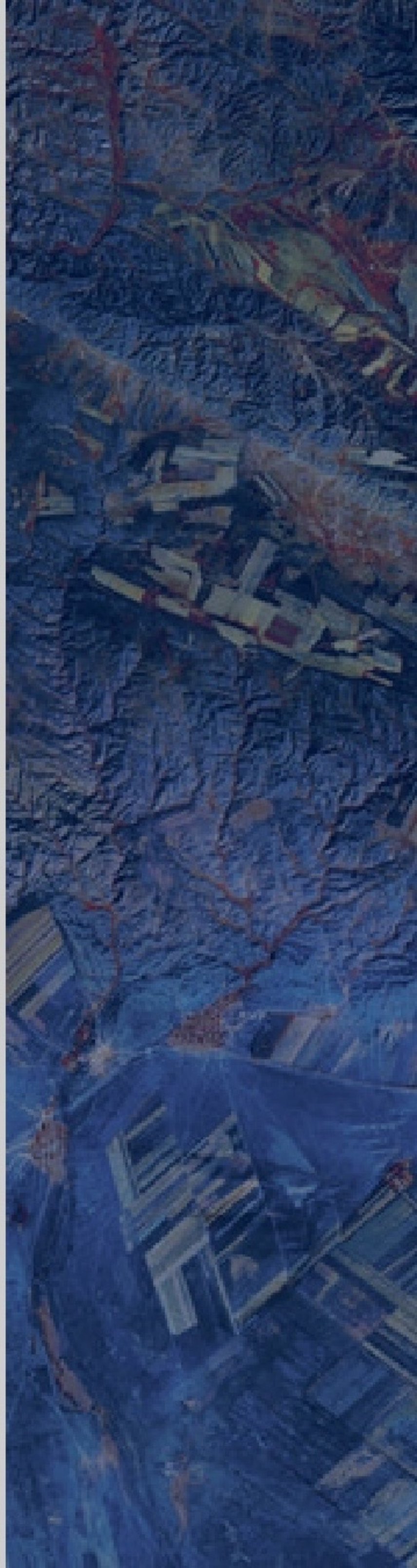
It provides the necessary material foundation for building a better world.

Source: *Ferdinand, Decolonial Ecology: Thinking from the Caribbean World (2021).*

CLIMATE VANGUARD

Therefore, we must stand in unconditional solidarity with all peoples waging national liberation struggle, whether it is the Palestinian people resisting the settler-colonial regime of Israel or Global South countries struggling for economic reparations from the Global North.

No one is free until we are all free.



CLIMATE VANGUARD

“The objective of national liberation is to regain the inalienable right of every people to have its own history”

— Amílcar Cabral