**LATIN AMERICA 2025, 8 February, Hamilton House, London
Speech by Kate Hudson, General Secretary CND in the first plenary:
Latin America after Trump’s re-election**

Trump’s back in office. What do we know so far?

First and foremost, he’s destroying everything that stands in the way of the far right agenda in the United States.

The whole state system is being restructured to support the far-right agenda. Consider the new Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Not usually a high profile post, but now it’s essentially the command centre of the Trump administration, filled by Russell Vought, founder of the Center for Renewing America, and a significant player in Project 2025. His agenda includes getting rid of all collective bargaining, getting rid of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy and practice, a full frontal attack on the working class, stripping employment protections from state employees, dismantling health and education provision, and much more.

Trump, and the rise of the far right more widely, are products of the great instability we face after decades of failed neo-liberal capitalism and the catastrophes it has wreaked; the rise of the far right is a symptom of the underlying structural crisis of imperialism: the crisis of overproduction, of financialisation, of the huge indebtedness of the US, of the crisis of climate and of environmental degradation. Trump has reached the end of the road with liberal imperialism and its mesh of formalities and institutions, and is entering a new phase, and we need to recognise what that is in order to fight it.

There will be bitter consequences across the world from Trump’s wild and barbaric policies. Some may celebrate the end of the propagandist, soft power elements of USAID, but millions could die as a result of pulling the AIDS programmes in Africa. And Latin America will take its toll in political and economic intervention, as it did in Trump’s first term. There is nothing to celebrate about Trump.

Of course the spotlight is rightly currently on the Middle East. For well over a year, the global majority have fought for the freedom of the Palestinian people, for a permanent ceasefire and an end to the genocide. Building on Biden’s full support for the genocide, Trump this week turned Gaza into a real estate opportunity. Gaza, he said could become the Riviera of the Middle East. The US he said, would take over Gaza while resettling Palestinians elsewhere, somewhere ‘lovely’ where they wouldn’t want to return from. In other words complete ethnic cleansing.

This comes at a time when the genocide is far from over and Israel is intensifying its violence against the Palestinians in the West Bank. And Trump, while sanctioning the International Criminal Court, says he has yet to decide whether Israel can annex the West Bank. Of course there has been widespread outrage, but there has been little leverage for change.

Trump is also taking a business transactional approach to Ukraine, while hundreds of thousands are slaughtered. So much for the promised peace on day one. Amid reports of a leaked peace plan, that are yet to be confirmed, Ukraine is currently offering minerals and valuable rare earth deposits to the US to get its support.

Meanwhile Trump is pushing for NATO member states to pay 5% of their GDP into NATO’s coffers, paying to bolster the US’s attempts to maintain global military domination, at a time when it’s slipping behind economically, losing its credibility and relying on bullying in its bid to Make America Great Again. Which of the NATO states will stand up to this latest round of absurd demands that would result in even greater cuts in public services? Not Britain, that’s for sure.

Of course financial pressure works both ways. When it comes to Iran, it’s sanctions not lucrative deals that are on the table. Trump has reimposed the so-called “maximum pressure” strategy he pursued during his first term: this means aggressive sanctions to drive Iran’s oil exports to zero. It’s once again couched in terms of stopping Iran getting nuclear weapons, but as Trump tore up the agreement that prevented that, in his first term, his position is completely disingenuous. Trump’s goal in Iran remains regime change. The danger is that Netanyahu may get US support for striking Iran.

The big picture has widened and become increasingly extraordinary. The threats of expansionism: Greenland is in Trump’s sights; Mexico and Canada are facing sanctions; Rubio has visited Panama attempting to force Panama out of its relationship with China. It has now cancelled its belt and road agreement with China. And of course China remains the defining foreign policy framework of the US, as Trump seeks to stifle its economic growth and curtail the growth of its international engagement. With China hawks in the administration, notably Waltz and Rubio, the military agenda towards China seems increasingly dangerous. Indeed, smash China is doubtless the overarching foreign policy goal.

Trump’s far-right domestic anti-immigration agenda has rapidly come into play in its relations with Latin American states. The deportations are ongoing – the news of the treatment from Brazilian and Colombian flights has been horrendous. Trump has used the threat of punitive tariffs to get his own way on deportation. Camps to house 30,000 detainees are being built at Guantanamo. As he sees it, he is putting Latin America in its place. And he is not without his allies there, in Argentina and elsewhere; indeed Steve Bannon has tipped Flavio Bolsonaro to be next president of Brazil. The struggle is ongoing, and our solidarity must be stepped up.

There are other motives for deportation too. All overseas students who may have protested against the genocide are being deported. Pro-Israel groups are reportedly compiling lists for the Immigration Authorities of overseas students, undocumented migrants and others who have supported Gaza.

But terrible though these developments are, they are not the result of the strength, but of the decline, of the US, and of imperialism. When I look at the world, on the one hand there’s Trump and the global far right, and on the other, there’s Gaza, and all those – the global majority – who support it. That is the simple dividing line. That’s why the mobilisations for Gaza are so remarkable. Because really they stand for humanity and all our freedoms.

The far-right is a global movement with global reach. We see it here in Britain with Reform, and Starmer’s lurch to authoritarian methods. Elon Musk doesn’t just support the AFD in Germany, he supports Tommy Robinson. We have to rebuild our global strength too,

We are in a new political period, and there can be no substitute for united political coordination and organisation if we are to seriously pose a political alternative. And hand in hand with that must go international solidarity and international coordination of our movements and parties. It’s the only way to even contemplate winning this existential struggle. Today at this important conference, let us have that front and centre of our discussions, and let us build ever greater ties with our comrades in Latin America, and across the world.