

Rallies and Protests Mark International Workers' Day Around the World



Havana, May 1 (RHC)-- Workers and trade unionists around the world staged rallies and marches across Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia on Friday to mark International Workers' Day. While many events were peaceful protests for workers' rights and world peace, May 1st traditionally sees clashes between police and militant groups in many countries around the world.

In Turkey, police and May Day demonstrators clashed in Istanbul as crowds determined to defy a government ban tried to march to the city's iconic Taksim Square. Security forces pushed back demonstrators using water cannons and tear gas.

In South Korea, thousands of people marched in the capital Seoul on Friday for a third week to protest government labor policies and the handling of a ferry disaster that killed more than 300 people a year ago.

In the Philippines, more than 10,000 workers and activists marched in Manila to protest low wages and a law allowing employers to hire laborers for less than six months to avoid giving benefits received by regular workers.

In financially struggling Greece, an estimated 13,000 people took part in three separate May Day marches in Athens, carrying banners and shouting anti-austerity slogans. Minor clashes broke out at the end of the peaceful marches, when a handful of hooded youths threw a petrol bomb at riot police.

In Moscow, tens of thousands of Russian workers braved chilly rain to march across Red Square. Participants said the May 1st march was a tradition going back to their childhood. This Soviet nostalgia was imbued with feelings of patriotism in the run-up to the 70th anniversary of victory in World War II on May 9th.

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