




Final Declaration

*European Forum of Left, Green
and Progressive forces*

Athens, 2022

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The peoples of Europe are suffering from a prolonged crisis, resulting in a deterioration in people's quality of life and setting back social, civil and labour rights. This crisis also fills the future with uncertainty and creates a situation of individual and collective insecurity.

Without positive and democratic solutions, based on solidarity, this anxiety about the future will provide a fertile breeding ground for fascism and political coalitions influenced of the extreme right. Left, green and progressive forces in Europe have a responsibility to lead the way with democratic political alternatives.

1

We must provide a response to the crisis which prevents the working class and the less advantaged in society from paying for neoliberalism's exploitation of the economy at the expense of working people. The present economic situation is the result of neoliberalism's failure to solve economic problems for the benefit of working people. We therefore condemn the fact that, since the start of the pandemic, new multi-millionaires have been created while more people are every day falling into poverty.

Millions of workers are experiencing an unprecedented crisis of job satisfaction; deregulation of the labour market and the lack of fair labour legislation are reaching unprecedented levels. Rather than being supported, trade unionists are too often repressed. Together with all European trade unions, we emphasise the need for a plan to stop the increase in the cost of living, to build a socially advanced economy which will meet the needs of working people.

2

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that "human security" relies on all basic needs being met: housing, food, decent work, drinking water and, of course, social protection and public health systems and public services. These are the only guarantees that the climate emergency, social inequalities and the protection of human rights will be tackled.

The urgency of climate change demands an immediate response and strategic planning for the transition by institutions, governments and society as a whole. It represents one of the greatest threats to humanity, and the response must include a genuine energy revolution and a new model for sustainable development and sustainable living.

In the current situation we must speed up European efforts to reduce external dependence on fossil fuels and also accelerate the transition to green energy.

3

The COVID-19 pandemic signalled a first shift in the EU's fiscal policy. The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) was suspended, and instruments of collective response were adopted that enabled the EU to obtain loans from capital markets. This step should not be treated as an exception or merely a temporary break from the dominant neoliberal policies. We are joining forces to fight for the abolition of the SGP and for it to be replaced with a new model of economic governance for the EU based on sustainable development and social and climate justice.

We condemn Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, which has provoked a war that is dragging Europe, and the rest of the world, into a situation of unforeseeable consequences. We therefore reiterate our condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

We consider the inability of the European Union to enforce the Minsk agreements to be a serious problem and we express our deepest solidarity with the Ukrainian people who are suffering the devastating consequences of a conflict that has lasted for more than 8 years, and which has been made worse with the Russian invasion.

Faced with this dramatic situation and other conflicts around the globe, we also affirm that the solution is not to continue down the path of greater confrontation between over-armed military blocks.

Given this situation, we call for a ceasefire that will respect international law. War cannot again become a means of resolving conflicts. We call on the European Union and the rest of the international community to take every possible opportunity to make systematic use of diplomatic means to guarantee respect for international law and the security of all states in the region, and in Europe as a whole, whilst meeting the aspirations of all peoples for a just and lasting peace.

To this end, we call for an international conference to be held as soon as possible, under the auspices of the UN, to address the problems of collective security and disarmament in Europe, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter. This conference should implement a model of shared security for the 21st century and move towards a model of shared continental security.

The participants in the 6th European Forum in Athens demand that culture should not be made an instrument of war and should serve to build bridges as a guarantee of peace and friendship between peoples. We also express our full solidarity with artists who are suffering repression for courageously opposing warmongering policies.

The EU must act against the militarisation which fuels the vicious circle of conflict and war. EU budgetary expenditure on the defence industry must instead go towards peaceful and sustainable industrial development that guarantees jobs and a decent standard of living. This industrial policy must ensure the decarbonisation of our economy in order to protect the future of the planet and biodiversity. Large-scale investments in public education, arts and culture are also essential.

5

The way in which EU countries welcomed millions of Ukrainian refugees should serve as an example for a radical change in migration policy. We call for the EU to urgently adopt a Pact on Migration and Asylum based on the principles of solidarity and shared responsibility. The pact must ensure that the management of refugee and migrant flows is carried out in full compliance with human rights and international law, that there is a fair and proportional distribution of migrants across the EU, with relocation mechanisms, and that member states on the borders of the EU do not become the gatekeepers of a Fortress Europe. In parallel, the EU must focus on tackling the root causes of migration, breaking up human trafficking networks, opposing the exploitation of migrants for political purposes and establishing robust resettlement programmes in the EU and in countries of origin and transit.

6

We condemn the effects of these crises and wars on women, who are always the first to suffer their consequences. We need a feminist response to bring down the patriarchal system, to eradicate sexist and sexual violence, and to achieve genuine equality for all humanity.

7

As in previous periods of capitalist crisis, fascist tendencies and parties are becoming stronger. This tendency is aggravated by the regressive policies of neoliberalism.

The advance of fascism in Europe should lead us to reflect self-critically on our inability to make young people aware of the horror of this ideology. Instead, we must propose a strong, direct and viable response capable of challenging the rise of fascism in working class communities. Once again, this shows that unity and cooperation between progressive forces are more crucial than ever. To push back these forces of hate, we need left, green and progressive forces to work together on new political responses for our democracies and our societies.

8

We call for peace in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as respect for international law and for the sovereignty and sovereign rights of all states in the region. We condemn the escalation and the threats by the Turkish leadership against Greece and Cyprus. We condemn the current occupation of the northern part of Cyprus and call for the resumption of bicomunal talks under the auspices of the United Nations in order to find a comprehensive solution, on the basis of UN resolutions. We underline the need for respect for the rule of law and human rights in Turkey.

We strongly condemn Turkey's pressures on the democratic opposition, first and foremost the HDP; invite Turkey to implement decisions of CoE and ECHR; and vehemently reject the politically motivated attempts to ban the HDP. We express our full support and solidarity with the women-led Kurdish struggles in Syria and Iran - with the motto of Jin, Jiyan, Azadi!

Post Brexit, the peace process in the north of Ireland has come under increased threat. We condemn all moves to undermine the Good Friday Agreement and call for respect for the peace process and its institutions. We recognise the growing demands for Irish reunification as set out in the Good Friday Agreement and the need for a Citizens' Assembly to plan and prepare for constitutional change in Ireland.

9

This Forum calls for progressive, green and left forces in Europe to support progressive governments in Latin America that are struggling for regional integration in order to improve the quality of life for their peoples and put a definitive end to the neo-colonialist exploitation of the continent's resources and wealth. We condemn all kinds of unilateral coercive measures, in particular the economic, commercial and financial embargo that, with extra-territorial repercussions, successive US administrations have imposed on Cuba for over 60 years, illegally and contrary to all international law.

Africa, already facing neo-liberal chaos, is suffering the full impact of the covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and climate change. The Forum advocates for the cancellation of the debt that traps African countries; the adoption of measures to combat the consequences of climate change; the resolution of socio-economic problems (energy crises, health, malnutrition, youth unemployment, etc.). The Forum supports democratic and progressive forces facing the rise of authoritarianism, obscurantism and the repression of dictatorships.

We support the struggle of the Palestinian people to end the occupation as well as the one of the Sahrawi people demanding the right of self-determination, as recognised by the UN.

At the same time, we reiterate our solidarity with, and participation in, the struggles for greater social justice carried out by people around the world.

Based on a critical analysis of the current situation in Europe and the world, this 6th European Forum of Left, Green and Progressive Forces proposes an action plan for 2022-2023 which consists of the following:

1 Mobilise for 8 March, and year-round, to challenge patriarchy as an ideology which exploits, punishes and represses women. We seek to make 2023 a year of struggle for the rights of women, particularly those directly affected by war and economic crisis.

2 Support all demonstrations/protests, in particular those arranged by the various European trade unions, to defend the purchasing power of Europeans and to find a way out of the crisis in the general interest. We also support organising petitions to the European Parliament, national parliaments and governments insisting on all necessary and immediate measures to guarantee the security of energy, food and housing for all European citizens during the coming winter. We must engage with all civil organisations and initiatives that fight poverty, malnutrition, homelessness and drug addiction in order to alleviate suffering and eradicate the causes of these crises. We support the fight for the unification of minimum wages, minimum income and labour legislation.

3 Support and promote all solutions for a fair climate transition, based on solidarity, to protect the planet and the well-being of workers and citizens. This includes participating in the alternative activities around COP 27.

4 Support demonstrations/protests that are organised for the defence of a future of peace and progress for all humanity, in harmony with the planet, supporting campaigns for nuclear disarmament, in particular for the signature by the maximum number of states of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

5 Propose to foundations, think tanks and commemoration groups that a seminar for the recovery of European democratic heritage be arranged. This is a necessary part of the fight against fascism. We seek to make 8 May (Victory Day over Nazism) a protest day in the Nazi concentration camps dedicated to the fight against fascism and the extreme right.

A specific working group will be created to take responsibility for implementing the action plan.