



# ALL OVER THE WORLD TO CHANGE IT!

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF SOCIALIST YOUTH

## DECLARATION

### BLACK SEA AREA COOPERATION MEETING 2016 FIGHTING INJUSTICE AND CORRUPTION

#### Context

It is vital that young people are active in parties and gain leadership positions – the more the better. We must enact critical self-reflection in our organisations and as individual socialists and social democrats, as this is key to our progress and development.

We must strive for better communication between our organisations and we should be proactive in asking each other for support when international solidarity is needed. This applies to IUSY globally as well as between BSAC member organisations. However, we recognise the monumental support that has been given by IUSY member organisations. TSD Romania, the hosting organisation, praises the support they are receiving for the upcoming parliamentary election in October, which will probably have the youngest list of all parties in Romania. TSD also proposed an equal minimum wage for both EU and the Black Sea Area states.

We should educate our members to care more about real policy and social democratic values rather than the current trends, especially in the context of the rising of populism and right-wing extremism.

Quality education is an untouchable right of every young person. In order to fully benefit from this right, education must be accessible, meaning that no child should be left behind. Young people suffer a lot from social and economic problems in certain Black Sea Area countries. We have to defend their rights for decent scholarships and to obtain their first job.

We fight the symptoms of injustice rather than focusing on the causes!

#### International solidarity and trade unions

The region has many common challenges, which can be better tackled with cooperation and international solidarity. Corruption, injustice and poverty are some of the main topics that concern our member organisations in the region.

There also needs to be more cooperation between trade unions and party political youth and the left, but unions need to be more effective and reformed. At the same time, it is important for the youth to demonstrate, protest and engage in direct action in addition to pushing for policy change.

Unpaid internships should be challenged on a European level and if young people were more engaged with the unions they could fight for paid internships – unions need to prove their value to young people.

#### Corruption

Corruption exists in all of our countries and needs to be tackled on a small-scale level as well as high-level. We recognise corruption as an Institutional Trap of transitional periods and understand the best way to resist corruption in the long-term – rebuild the system of public administration. There is always a high level of risk



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of corruption when there is a societal shift from one political structure to another – when we create a new society we get a corrupted version of the society that we are fighting for.

Corruption takes place on a multiple levels, including on a judicial level, in the executive powers, with members of parliament, and some parliamentarians are known to cooperate with criminals. All efforts to stop corruption are met with fierce resistance and lead to no results.

Corruption has to be minimised, through the improvement of the quality of life, strengthening institutional capacity, creating a transparent mechanism for entrepreneurship and facilitating the distribution of wealth.

## **On war and peace**

Out of 10 countries in the Black Sea region, seven are suffering from conflicts. Therefore IUSY is a strong platform to promote peace in our BSAC region and the world.

We recognise there is a lack of solidarity with countries in the region who harbour refugees as a result of war, particularly from Syria.

There are many on-going conflicts in the region, such as the Nagorno-Karabakh and Ukraine-Russia conflicts, which we call for an end to immediately in order to improve regional security. The Ukraine-Russia conflict still hasn't been resolved and has had a significant death and injury toll – we should remember that the political rules aren't being respected by Russia. At the same time, we recognise the European Union is not doing enough to adequately manage the crisis in Ukraine. The annexation of Crimea is revolved around the military base rather than the people and their wants. We also believe that Russian propaganda increases the risk of internal conflict in other countries, for example in Belarus and Georgia.

BSAC calls on all sides for peace – solutions to conflicts should be resolved in a peaceful way!

## **Social media and activism**

We should be aware that the mass media can be manipulated by influential actors. We need to be aware that clickbait is used as a tool by right-wing populists and that as socialist and social democratic youth we need to prioritise what we share and focus on with regards to social media. We need to be aware of the dangers of sharing misinformation quickly so that false information doesn't spread out of control.

Social media is a tool that can be easily used to reach people outside of our existing membership and circles, and which is a relatively untapped resource in terms of reaching new voters.

## **Actions/outcomes**

In order to enact change we must undertake actions on local, national, regional and global levels. The actions we would like BSAC members, our region and IUSY to take are:

- Create a strategy to increase participation in the Black Sea Region to include the participation of all organisations
- Raise awareness of the Black Sea region on an international level
- Encourage tolerance throughout all of our work
- Strengthen the implementation and adoption of non-formal and informal education
- Fight radical propaganda and offer tools to fight this online



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- Facilitate increased communication between young people in conflict areas and organising platforms for the cooperation and negotiation, such as seminars and round tables
- Make links with other organisations and NGOs outside of IUSY
- Offer humanitarian help to our organisations in need and promote financial cooperation between countries
- Coordination of visiting other countries' elections and being observers in this process
- Demand for free access to school, including educational materials, and promote state incentives in order for poorer families to stay in school
- Organise joint regional exchange programmes in the education sector, including students and teachers
- Deliver summer camps and leadership trainings/training of trainers in the BSAC region for our grassroots members and leadership and organisational development
- Give practical support and help to organisations and individuals who need visas to participate in our activities
- Improve the Bologna system to get better recognition of diplomas and credits