To: Guests

Vienna, 8th February 2023

Dear Guests

We are pleased to invite you to the:

IUSY WORLD CONGRESS 2023

“THE RISE OF POPULISM AND EXTREMISM: A DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGE”

Panama City, Panama

June 22-25, 2023

THE RISE OF POPULISM AND EXTREMISM: HOW CAN WE STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY AND SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY

Populism and extremism are not a new challenge for the democratic regimes. Yet, over the past decades their expression has rose and their influence has infiltrated not only the public debate, but also institutions and democratic parties.

As socialist, social-democratic and labor organisations, we often face the challenges of demagogic speeches and actions in our own parties, even though we strongly advocate for strong democratic procedures. Unfortunately, the problem is bigger than our own family: right-wing extremism and populism has proved, over and over again, to grow and disseminate its message in different latitudes.

Filled with hate and divisionism these movements begin their action by setting a clear division between the good and the bad actors of public life. If many times they fail to agree on the root of the problems that distinct societies currently face, it is indisputable that their appropriation of democratic tools to adulterate the democratic will and spirit of the people and institutions is a common strategy.

In a time where fake news, artificial intelligence, big data, target advertising, social media bots and high-tech surveillance threatens the individual access to legitim information, extremists and populists tend to use them for increased popularity – spreading rumours, conspiracy theories and lies that are proven to be 10 times more shared on social media than information based on science, journalism or other fidedign sources.

It is therefore essential to debate and discuss how should our movement face populist and extremism movements. The past has shown how alliances with those who do not share our principles and values turn out to work against democracy. But in a time where these parties and movements gain unseen popularity due to the diffusion of the information previously mentioned, how effective can we be? What are the alliances we should consider for democracy? Is there a common root for the problem? Is it permanent, cyclical or temporary? How can young voters be convinced of the importance of democracy even when they haven’t experienced dictatorships?
The fact is that democracy indexes show how democratic rule has been decreasing all over the world since 1980, with 2021 reaching the lowest level since there is record. The COVID-19 pandemic has also increased both the unpredictability and the misuse of power from bad intentioned governments, but the current economic scenario of spiral inflation does not indicate a brighter future.

That said, it is high-time for our movement to position itself where it has always been: on the side of democracy and peace. It’s up to us to define the path to take.

In Solidarity,

Jesus Tapia
IUSY President

Bruno Gonçalves
IUSY Secretary General

Hussein Pitty
FJPRD President
TECHNICAL INFORMATION

1. Registration

All guests/partners/fraternal organisations need to be registered through filling in the link (https://forms.gle/jbG5JU5FVtsqqPpP7) provided in this invitation email. We urge all delegations to register before the 25th of March 2023 (since this means a better estimate on the number of participants attending the Congress).

The last deadline for registration is the 25th of April 2023.

To make sure you get a visa, please register before the first deadline.

In case of any issues, please get in contact with the IUSY Secretariat (congress@iusy.org) immediately.

Deadlines

1st deadline to register - 25th March 2023
2nd deadline to register – 25th April 2023
2. Logistics

3. Travel and Transfers

The World Congress will take place in Panama City, Panama. We encourage you to arrive as early as Thursday, 22nd of June, as the Congress starts on Friday morning. Departures are foreseen on Sunday, 25th of June.

You need to arrive to Tocumen International Airport (PTY). Transfers will be provided ONLY from this airport and ONLY on the day of arrival and ONLY on the day of departure.

!!!In the case you are also attending the IUSY Festival (26 June-1 July) in Farallon, Coclé, Panama, please take it into consideration when booking your flights. Invitation will follow soon.!!!

3.2. Accommodation

Accommodation will be provided for the dates of the Congress at the hotel El Panama (https://www.elpanama.com/).

IMPORTANT: To avoid problems we would like to make it strictly clear that hotel rooms and other assistance will only be provided for those delegations that have informed the IUSY Secretariat on their travel details by the designated deadlines. Please note that the hosting organisations are not responsible for covering any travel expenses.

Should you require accommodation before or after the actual congress, please let us know. The hosting organisations can assist you in making additional reservations for your delegates. Kindly note that costs of additional accommodation in Panama will not be covered by the hosting organisations or by IUSY.

Please note that our hosting organisations are not responsible for any cost outside of those strictly indicated as part of the Congress. Therefore, the hosting organization or IUSY will not account for any personal costs incurred by the participants at the hotel such as phone calls, room service or the use of mini bar.

3.3. Venue

Congress will be hosted at hotel El Panama (address: Calle Eusebio A. Morales 111, Panamá, Panama).

3.4. Meal requirements

Food will be provided for the days of the Congress, starting from the dinner on the arrival day and finishing with the breakfast on the departure day.

If you have any dietary requirements please do not forget to mention it in your application. In case of changes you need to inform the Secretariat immediately sending an email to congress@iusy.org.
4. Visa

4.1. Application
We ask all delegates to ask at the nearest Consulate, Embassy or High Commission of Panama if they need visa to enter the country. All delegations needing visa MUST make the necessary arrangements with sufficient time in advance, and follow the application procedure, requesting regular information on its development, in order to resolve any problems that may arise. Please make sure that you apply for your visas well in advance and that you follow the procedure regularly.

4.2. Letter of Invitation
All those that require visa will need a letter of invitation from the hosting organizations. For this reason, we are asking you to fill in the registration form correctly with ALL information in it. The hosting organizations will send an invitation to your organization and a copy to the respective consular authorities, which will help you obtain the visa. It will NOT be possible to obtain visa on arrival from the airport, land border or seaport. Please take this information seriously in order to avoid any problems.

4.3. Deadline
Please note that the deadline for sending visa requests on the registration form is the 25\textsuperscript{th} of March. In order to be able to assist the delegates of your organization the IUSY Secretariat needs to receive the passport details immediately! \textbf{Please do not overlook this}. 

5. **Security and insurance**

Kindly note that neither IUSY nor the hosting organizations will be responsible for any health costs incurred during your stay in Panama. We would recommend that you make travel insurance before your departure from your own country. There are special policies that cover unforeseen expenses such as hospitalization, theft and costs deriving from loss of flight.

6. **Additional Information**

6.1. **Currency**

USD

6.2. **Time zone**

GMT-5

6.3. **Electricity**

In Panama, the power plugs and sockets are of type A and B. The standard voltage is 110 V and the standard frequency is 60 Hz. In Panama, the power plugs and sockets are of type A and B. Please do not forget your adaptor in case you need one to plug your devices.

6.4. **Climate in Panama**

The average temperatures you'll face in June would be between 26.0°C and 29.0°C, with exceptional possible peaks as low as 20°C and high as 36°C as observed in previous years. Please consider this weather indications when thinking about packing your luggage! In any case, online softwares will also have a better estimative closer to the date.

7. **Contact the IUSY Secretariat**

All inquiries related to the Congress should be sent to: congress@iusy.org

8. **All the deadlines**

**Deadlines for Congress**

- 25th of March - 1st Deadline for Congress registration for guests who need VISA
- 25th of April - Last deadline
Additional contact info:

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