



2020:
Youth in Survival Against
Pandemic and Capitalism
SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM

Press Release

20 European Communist Youth Organizations have gathered on the 103rd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution at the “Online Meeting of European Communist Youth Organizations to Share Experiences” and exchanged their experiences about the struggle of the youth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, working people all around the world are envisaging numerous attacks against their rights. Their right to healthcare is getting vandalized by capitalist governments who are promoting private health industry instead of public healthcare. Their right to education is underestimated because of policies that lack planning, work in favor of private education as an economic sector and dedicate insufficient funds for public schools. Their rights to housing, culture, and sports are also facing similar attacks. These problems are not new and are not initiated by the COVID-19. As they had already reached a serious extent, the role that the pandemic played has been to expose them even more clearly.

While capitalist countries failed to deliver the necessities for a humane and healthy life to their people, the great success of Cuba, a country under USA blockage for almost 62 years since

the Revolution, is bringing hope to our struggle.

Communist Youth Organizations around Europe are struggling against anti-people policies that governments adopted after the outburst of the pandemic and denouncing all of the attacks that are being made with the excuse of the pandemic to aggravate exploitation. They reject the impasse imposed to the working class and youth: Working under poor sanitary conditions or starving within the ranks of the unemployed. They demand that the state budget is used for the contemporary needs of the working people but not for saving or further enriching the capitalist monopolies. They call upon the youth to rise up against the bourgeois efforts to put the burden of the economic capitalist crisis on the shoulders of the working class.

On the anniversary of the October Revolution and in the middle of a fierce pandemic, while competition among imperialists is getting deeper and deeper, the undersigned European Communist Youth Organizations will strengthen their solidarity and stand still in their determination that the only path to carry humanity away from today's economic and health crisis is socialism.

Signatures:

1. Young Socialists of the Socialist Workers' Party of Croatia
2. United Democratic Youth Organisation, EDON
3. Communist Youth Union, KSM
4. Movement of Young Communists of France
5. Socialist German Workers Youth, SDAJ
6. Young Communist League of Britain
7. Communist Youth of Greece, KNE
8. Connolly Youth Movement, CYM
9. Front of Communist Youth, FGC
10. Communist Youth Movement, CJB
11. Portuguese Communist Youth, JCP
12. Union of Socialist Youth, UTS
13. Leninist Communist Youth Union of Russian Federation, LKSM RF
14. Revolutionary Communist Youth League [Bolsheviks], RKSMb
15. Young Communist League of Yugoslavia, SKOJ
16. SpainCollectives of Young Communists, CJC
17. Communist Youth Union of Spain, UJCE
18. Communist Youth of Catalonia, JCC
19. Communist Youth of Turkey, TKG
20. Communist Youth of Austria, KJÖ

Communist Youth of Turkey - TKG

Dear comrades,

We would like to thank you for your participation and contributions. We are already pleased with the results of the meeting and learnt so much from all of the experiences.

We would like to begin with the current situation in Turkey. As you know, last week a deadly earthquake happened in İzmir, near the Aegean shore of Turkey. Once again, we witnessed the inability of capitalism to utilize its forces during a humanitarian crisis. A system which organizes itself only to preserve the interests of the bourgeoisie fails to help people on every example. Just after the earthquake, district organization of TKP and TKG were the only forces who were able to organize a solidarity campaign urgently and start to help people systematically. Compared with the state's or municipality's financial power, humble forces of TKG proved to be much more efficient. During an interview of big media channel, a neighborhood resident put the word, "If the TKP wasn't here during this time, people would have starved to death."

Dear comrades, this is only a single example to illustrate the situation here. For us, it cannot be solely explained as the success of TKG. This should also be assessed as the positive reflection of communism in the eyes of the people. Despite the attacks of the ruling ideology, the ideas and values of socialism are still rightful and legitimate. Solidarity, cooperation, to help those in need, those values are associated with communists.

Especially after these eight months.

With the pandemic, world went through a period, which can be summarized as "unequal results of an unequal system". Since no one is able to predict such crises, there is a clear need of organization and preparation beforehand to overcome them. Unfortunately, unlike bourgeoisie, the working class was not sufficiently organized and equipped to face the crisis. With the outbreak of the pandemic, on every land of the planet, we witnessed a great attack against the working class. The ability to reach healthcare services, the right to work under safe conditions, those basic rights have already become "privileges" for the proletariat, but on the top of that, capitalism added new blows to the working people. In Turkey, like everywhere else, unemployment raised rapidly. The AKP government immediately started to strengthen the already-existing tendencies of increasing the rates of exploitation and utilizing the extraordinary situation as a means of legitimization for these attacks against the working class. On the one hand, workers were forced to work under deteriorating conditions, crowded workplaces with inadequate COVID prevention measures. On the other, they had to struggle against decreasing wages and new legal-financial favors for employers.

Comrades, we believe the conditions of the youth cannot be separated from the consequences of those attacks. The situation mentioned above affected also youth, possibly even more harshly. One out of three university graduates in Turkey cannot find a job,

and the rest feel lucky if they start to work for minimum wage. Youngsters who are working from their home also face with obstacles, because the companies ceased to assume the responsibility of paying for the transportation and meals of the employees, cutting down various cost items of the workplace and transferring these costs on the shoulders of the workers who have to heat their homes or spend electricity out of their own pockets.

But we should also focus on the political results of the situation. In our opinion, even though general picture seems heavy and bitter, positive aspects can be drawn from it. Firstly, the legitimacy of capitalism has been heavily damaged in the eyes of the youth and the people. In Turkey, curfews are held at the weekend while workers still had to go work on the workdays. Such absurdness cannot be explained as “measures for pandemic”. Secondly, the bourgeois state revealed its essence with various examples. According to the data announced by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the total amount of aid provided by the Turkish government under the name of “unpaid leave”, “short-time work allowance” and “social relief” is only above 11 billion Turkish liras, while the total amount of the stimulation package for employers that the government announced was 522 billion Turkish liras. The big portion of governmental support was addressing companies and bosses.

Dear comrades, we believe those two points also indicate important

elements for our future, for the revolution. While this day remarks the anniversary of the Great October Revolution, we should not forget that the way we pave consists a complex process, with ups and downs. Despite harsh conditions, we should seek the opportunities for a world freed of exploitation and inequality. Just like 103 years ago, world is going through a unique period. While conditions have changed to a large extend, we know that the basic contradiction preserves itself as it is.

We would like to finish with some examples of our works during this period, which we have done with the mentioned motives.

After the announcement of pandemic, TKG immediately utilized all of its force to use new methods that are suitable for new conditions. Correlated with TKP's Health Organization's advices, preventive measures to protect our comrades and friends were urgently put into action. Following the closure of schools and universities, many students had to go back to their hometowns. We enrolled in weekly online educational activities and discussions to keep the communication between members and friends. The broadcasts of online Socialism Classes helped TKG in meeting numerous youngsters and in organizing the enthusiasm towards TKG. Demands for proper education and exams were prominent, as the education system of Turkey failed to cover the needs of students on a remote basis. In addition, with the beginning of new education year, a petition campaign was also launched with the demands such

as free access to internet services and raises in scholarships.

Dear comrades, we have a long road ahead of us, which is full of struggles and challenges. But we believe together, hand in hand, we shall overcome all of them. The world and the youth have once again seen that this system offers neither future nor living for us. With the light of our glorious past, with the experiences from the Great October Revolution, we have no doubt that we will create the world that workers dream and deserve.

Once again, we thank all of you for your contributions and we are glad to have this meeting with high significance. Our hope is to see you next year in Serbia under healthy conditions.

Young Socialists of the Socialist Workers' Party of Croatia - SRP

Respected comrades,

I am honored to be present at this meeting and on behalf of the Young Socialists of the Socialist Workers Party of Croatia I send you a comradely greeting.

In half a year since the arrival of the new corona virus epidemic two global facts have crystallized.

First, the unpreparedness of health systems, organized on capitalist profit principles, and second, the superiority of the socialist health systems. Thanks entirely to the socialist heritage of the health systems of the former socialist countries, the scope of the pandemic in the areas of former Yugoslavia is of lower intensity compared to western Europe and north America.

Under the conditions of stigmatization, rejection, isolation, accusations of democratic deficit and even support of global terrorism, socialist countries were the only ones to send mass medical aid and assistance to the most endangered areas of the pandemic in the EU.

Most of the countries of the capitalist EU are entangled in their own cobwebs, introverted, selfish, with no signs of European solidarity. The USA is not sending the necessary medical help to its EU so called "allies". The United States instead sends tens of thousands of soldiers to Europe (including Croatia) to threaten countries that resist it's imperialist goals.

The capitalist anti-people system uses this situation to satisfy its own greed, promptly raising the prices of

medicines, protective equipment, disinfectants, basic foodstuffs, etc. At the same time began the dismissal of workers, whose work has enriched the capitalists. In Croatia alone thousands of small businesses went bankrupt in the two months of closure and in the same period the number of unemployed people has doubled, at the same time the capitalists and the bourgeois state are conducting an unprecedented attack at the rights of the workers by trying to lower their wages openly, disregarding the collective labor contracts. The tourist season on which rests the Croatian economy this year was lost, we expect a dramatic rise of poverty and emigration by the next year.

On the other hand we clearly see a rise in the intensity of the class struggle both in Croatia and abroad, especially among the youth, many of which are starting now to understand the level of exploitation and injustice that the capitalist system produces. The bourgeois ideologues are starting to fear the radicalization of the class struggle and the sympathy with which the younger generations look toward socialism.

The feelings of solidarity and unity are a natural response to the sensations of anxiety, fear and insecurity which rise in people in times of danger, those are necessary to solve major crises, but also to meet the needs of humanity. Solidarity and unity are at the same time the virtues of socialist thought and practice, which proves that socialism is not a thing of the past, but a solution to the survival of humanity.

Thank you.

United Democratic Youth Organisation, EDON

Dear comrades,

Initially allow me on behalf of the CC of EDON to thank the comrades of TKG for this initiative and greet all of you. We believe that, especially in these international conditions, this kind of opportunities to exchange experiences are becoming even more important than before. This pandemic has revealed, at which level, we are all exposed, because of the way this system is functioning.

This year we celebrate and we honour 103rd anniversary of the Great October Revolution. One century and still, issues that have been answered by the Socialist Revolution back then, remain unsolved in the capitalist world today.

The outbreak of this virus has made obvious to the whole planet, the lack of protective policies in all the bourgeois states for their peoples. Viruses and pandemics have always existed and will always exist. What is really important is to have states, governments and societies that are ready to confront this and any other challenge we face. In order to do so, we need to be focused on policies for the people and for the environment in which humans live – the planet. Within the current socio-economic system – capitalism – the machine that pushes the world forward is the thirst of the capitalists for profit. Given this, all the planning and organizing of production is directed to make the rich, richer and the poor, poorer.

It was clear, since the very beginning

of this pandemic that the governments of the bourgeoisie not only fail to protect their peoples but, in several cases, didn't even attempt to do it. Cyprus is not, of course, an exception to this situation. When the pandemic broke out in Cyprus, most of our public hospitals had to shut down because many of the hospital workers got infected. This was a result of bad planning and the absence of protective measures for those people. It is also the result of the huge cuts that the current anti-popular government of the right-wing party [DISY] imposed on the health sector. Since they first got elected in 2013, they have cut 500 million euros from the public health budget.

Since the election of president Anastasiadis in 2013, we have witnessed a huge attack on workers' and social rights. We have witnessed cuts in many sectors such as public health, education, sports, culture, and also an attempt to turn the educational system backward through the implementation of a conservative program. One of the main goals of this government is the total destruction of the public sector. They have been trying to privatize or shut down all the semi-public and public companies. This whole procedure, left the popular strata of the island exposed and without any guarantee during a crisis like the one we are experiencing.

More than the danger for their own health, the peoples have been suffering the catastrophic consequences on their income. Many companies have fired their employees, leaving entire families exposed. At the same time,

people who are not getting fired, experience the worsening of their working conditions. The reason for this varies. In some cases, companies have fired employees with the excuse of the pandemic but their work isn't less than before. This burdens the workers who are still working there, to do also the work of their people who got fired. In some other cases, enterprises introduced "flexible forms of work" such as working from home, leaving the cost of the work equipment, to be afforded by the workers. In addition, many companies have obligated their employees to keep working without any protection from the virus.

More than anyone else, has been affected the youth. Since the youth of the working class was in the worst situation even before, the pandemic came to pull them deeper in despair. It is a fact that the last few years it became much more difficult for a young person to afford for a home. With the decrease of income that came with the pandemic, and the prices of rents still high, this problem became bigger.

Young people, have also been affected as the major part of the educational system. Education in capitalism serve two main purposes. As an investment to increase profits and as the tool of the system to implement its ideology. There are of course countries and periods of history where education has a more progressive role but this is only because of the struggles of the people for free public and democratic education. Since education in general serve as a way to increase profit and it is not approach-

ed as a fundamental right for everyone, further evolution of the education is considered as unnecessary expenses, if it doesn't bring more profit of course. New technologies and new methods of teaching are not even considered in most of the countries. With this situation in schools and universities, when the need to use these technologies came, the states and the educational systems around the world failed, leaving the students wondering what will happen.

Another thing that the outbreak of the pandemic allowed to be viewed by many people is the general approach of this system about science. The vaccine that the entire planet is waiting for, is depended on the pharmacy industry and the willing of the capital of this sector to work for it. As in every other sector, the efforts put on this task, are directly depended on the possible profits. No company will ever invest more money on the research, than the profit they will be waiting. No company will rush to find a proper vaccine if their incomes are not guaranteed. Once again, capitalism is proving that it is unable to fulfil the contemporary needs of the peoples and the planet.

As EDON, since the beginning of this situation, we have set as priority to find ways to respond and work in the best possible way. For this reason, our militants were the first who volunteered in the groups created to assist those who were in need. When the first lockdown was implemented, we've understood that it was of great importance to give to the people staying home alternatives. We have

launched several campaigns, sharing on the internet cultural material such as concerts, theatres, movies, all of course, with our political mark. At the same time, we had our militants writing articles about the recent developments, giving the youth, an alternative way to receive information. More than that, we have been sharing our ideological publishes, on topics related with the current situation. In this way, we found a way to deconstruct the ideal image of capitalism, in fields experienced in the everyday life of the youth.

Dear comrades,

This new situation is creating for our organisations obstacles, but also chances. On the one hand we have the difficulty of maintaining our communication with the masses. With the restrictions implemented in many countries, it is a real challenge not to lose our connection with the society, not to establish a situation that will be difficult to overcome in a post-COVID period. We must be creative and find ways, even under these circumstances not only to maintain but also strengthen our social bonds. We must oppose the anti-social policies and approaches that want us to live apart, isolated and restrict our everyday communication with our communities, having always of course, the protection of peoples health as our priority.

On the other hand, the pandemic made some truths obvious for the people. The need of a public health system, the need for radical increases on the budgets of education, the need for investment on science, not for profits

but for the future of humanity. We need to work on these topics, that are now in the direct interest of our peoples and find the way link them with the need of a total change of system. To explain, based on what they are experiencing, that situations like this, are inevitable in capitalism. And if we manage to do this, then our peoples will be able to listen much easier that there is an alternative, there is another way to do things. Not in this system but in socialism.

Communist Youth Union, KSM

Dear comrades,

we would like to thank the comrades from TKG for this important and helpful initiative. This seminar is a great way to celebrate the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, given the circumstances of the pandemic.

The KSM understands and fully respects the seriousness of the situation. We have made measures to limit the spreading of the virus in our organization and among older comrades. Given the development, are looking for secure ways of organizing our 14. Congress, which should be held this December. We are also preparing to celebrate 100 years since the foundation of our organization in the next year.

This meeting is a great opportunity to exchange experiences of organizations with the work in such conditions. Great responsibility and serious danger were always laid on communist organizations, e.g. work in illegality.

The new coronavirus pandemic is an enormous, objective phenomenon, the effects of which are to be understood and worked with. At the same time every capitalist, imperialist, and bourgeois political force tries to make a profit from the epidemic. The epidemic will be a trigger that will mark the start of the capitalist crisis of overproduction and overaccumulation, which already developed in previous years. It is part of the generalized crisis of the capitalist system and it marks a new phase of it.

The Czech Republic may serve as a prime example of not only the incapability but mostly unwillingness of the capitalist class to effectively resolve crises such as this one. After managing the first wave during the spring with harsh, but short-lasting measures, strong opposition to any form of regulation grew within the capitalist class, most notably in the service sector.

Any measures implemented during the spring were quickly canceled in the summer. Almost immediately one could notice the onset of exponential growth in daily numbers of infected. But, since the numbers after the first wave were low, many weeks passed before the true nature of the exponential law became obvious - that was in the first half of September, when very quickly the numbers of daily infected reached the thousands [the maximum in spring were lower hundreds]. With some delay, all measures were reactivated, but the high amount of daily infections meant, that even with efficient measures, many weeks will pass before the numbers go down.

This is a textbook example of the inherent contradiction in the capitalist economic system - in an attempt to avoid losses, capitalists postponed anti-epidemic measures to the point, where they are much less effective and caused for themselves a crisis of much greater magnitude than necessary, not to mention of course the significant loss of life and health, as well as economic impact on the working class. The greatest achievements of socialism in managing the health

of society and treating epidemics are actively being dismantled for decades

Workers active in the service sector, especially tourism, became the economically most affected group and would often lose their jobs, being forced to look for a new living in the midst of the epidemic and crisis. The industrial proletariat, while not directly economically threatened, is forced to risk its health and continue working, while management only implements symbolic measures to stop the spread of the epidemic. In certain sectors, people are sent to work from home. While in itself a good way to protect them, it often results in increased costs, borne only by the workers [electricity, internet, space, in some cases electronics, more expensive food, etc.]. The closing of schools and switch to online classes meant many families had to acquire the needed electronics for their children. The government's attempts to mild the incoming economic calamity are symbolic at best and generally ill-received. The government's incompetence in handling the issue, combined with some scandals of high ranking politicians lead to widespread distrust of the ruling government.

This sentiment is unfortunately not directed in a productive way, and instead sapped by various populists, causing chaos and confusion within the working class, exploiting both alarmist and downplaying moods.

The epidemic and related confusion is used by the ruling class. In April, on the eve of the 75th anniversary of the great anti-fascist victory and during the quarantine when protests were

not possible, the mayor of one Prague district removed the statue of the liberator of Prague – the Red Army Marshal Ivan Konev. When the communication of people moved towards the social networks, their censorship increased, as was the example of the ban of the Red flag over Reichstag picture on Facebook in May of this year.

We are continuing our work. In the February of this year, we organized a seminar about the importance of Josif Stalin, the great Bolshevik who lead the USSR in the construction of socialism and victory over Nazi fascism, in the view of modern knowledge. During the first wave, we contributed in a limited way to protests against the antifascist monument removal, and celebration of the liberation of Czechoslovakia. In summer, where the situation temporarily stabilized, we co-organized with success the Anticapitalist camp, an event of young communists with theoretical seminars on current issues.

Comrades,

the current situation also raises the importance of the struggle against opportunism in the Communist movement. In October there were elections to regional councils in the Czech Republic. In these elections, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) received great defeat and a decrease in popular support. It meant that the representatives of the Communist Party won't be present in the majority of the regional councils and various chauvinist and populist forces have arisen. It is a continuation of previous defeats and losses, as in the parliamentary elections of 2017

and the European Parliament election in 2019. It is also the defeat of the movement as a whole which will celebrate next year the centenary of its existence.

After the election, while not overestimating the importance of election results, KSM made a statement addressing the Czech communists analyzing causes of this defeat, which is a result of our discussions and positions from the last years which perceive the tendency of increasing opportunism.

The statement summarizes the previous positions. It reminds the following essential opportunist shifts:

1. Orientation only on the work in the bourgeois representative bodies – parliament and local councils, and withdrawal from the working class and popular struggles. The function of the party which was transformed from the political organization of the working class into the service for Members of Parliament and which relies predominantly on state funding.

2. Parliamentary toleration of government formed by a party of local oligarch together with the social democratic party, which we analyzed already from its creation and its foundation program.

3. Non-communist and generally positive political position towards the European Union imperialism expressed e. g. in the election program of candidates to the European Parliament, which spreads illusions about the possibility to solve the popular problems from the European Parliament. This shift was made in a time of great discontent with EU policy among the

masses.

As a result, the party is isolated from the working class and the whole society and their struggles. The party replaced the cultivation of the socialist future as the only alternative to capitalist barbarity with complicity with the capitalist government which makes pro-imperialist steps and in the situation of crisis will make pro-capitalist and anti-popular policy. In its pragmatism party spread illusions about the EU, supported the extension of NATO to the East, and justified the imperialist attacks – as in Libya.

The statement of the KSM concludes as follows:

“Our path, the path of the communists, is not the easy one and demands sacrifices from everyone who is joining the work and the struggle. This path does not create a comfortable income for members, it does not promise the salary of deputies, members of supervisory boards, or vice-presidents of the parliament. This path is not short, because a lot of time and a lot of efforts of our ancestors’ generations have been wasted. This path is dangerous because the dying capitalist system is attacking, destroying, waging wars, and killing. But this path is the honest one and is the only way to save humanity from capitalist decadence and leads to a qualitatively different, socialist society. It is a way of the class struggle of the workers, which has no smaller goal than to defeat capitalism and imperialism.

The Communist Youth Union wants to follow this path.

Socialism or barbarism!”

Movement of Young Communists of France - MJCF

First of all, we would like, on behalf of the MJCF, to thank TKG for organizing this meeting, despite the difficulties due to the corona crisis. more than ever, it is essential that we meet and discuss the situations in our countries and what we are doing to fight back against imperialism and capitalism as a whole.

The coronavirus pandemic acted as a catalyst of an already existing economical crisis. It permitted to bring to light the consequences of neoliberalism and globalised capitalism, by its management and its impact on the populations.

Even if all the peoples in the world face the same virus, all are not equally touched by it, not because of their age or physical condition, but because of the social and economical inequalities that were revealed and deepened in this period of time.

This grave situation would have needed, more than before, international cooperation, exchanges and help from states to states in order to face this crisis together and reduce it's impact on the peoples. But imperialist powers instead of that, just closed themselves off and managed on a national level this crisis, accusing their neighbors, rejecting the responsibility of the failures on others.

Even if it was a surprise for everyone, capitalists and liberal governments around the world quickly used this pandemic to their interest, protecting the Capital first, saving the rich, and

using fear to make anti social and anti-people measures pass, without hesitating to kill, repress and enprison demonstrators and those who oppose them.

If there is one central aspect that was put in light by the coronavirus crisis, it is the fact, that we know for long now, that capitalism can't and doesn't have as a purpose, the objective to answer people's needs, to protect them or even to put people before their interests.

We see in all the developed countries, the effect of decades of liberalism, on health system, education and the deepening of inequalities. The working class has definitely suffered from the pandemic more than everyone else.

In France, we saw this fact as clearly as it is. Even after the beginning of the pandemic, where unions and organizations demanded more beds in hospitals, recruitment of hospital staff, real sanitary measures, we have today less hospital beds than we had in 1970.

The actual governments and those that were here before it undermined little by little our health system, public services and the educational system.

The health crisis has revealed and worsened several social problems. First of all, a huge unemployment crisis. The effects of necessary containment paralysis several economic sectors, but the government never chooses to make the Capital pay despite the payments of dividends to shareholders increased in the period.

Worst of all, Macron chose to help with public funds the most important companies of the country.

This unemployment crisis results from an alarming situation with the augmentation of poverty. According to the carritativ association, a million of people have fallen below the poverty line. This million is to add to the 9.3 million of people already in poverty. The food aid needs have increased 30% in most of the importants cities in France. Despite this situation, the French government chose to cut off 11% of the budget of emergency food aid.

Education in France is also facing a huge problem. The French government has distinguished itself by its mismanagement of the start of the school year. Here again, the observation of a decade of destruction of public services applies. Since years and years, the education's unions always claimed for creation of new teachers jobs and more largely educational staff. And years after years, all the liberals governments never stop destroying these jobs and the results appear today. This is almost impossible for the education workers to face this emergency.

So, because of this alarming and emergency situation, we think we need to put our efforts on concrete demands, in the first response to the pandemic and social crisis. Raising the socials minimums for all people in needs is one of the important campaigns we start this year. This is an example of a subject we should address in europe, with a political aspect of denunciation of the Capital and of denunciation of concentration of wealth

in all europe, denouncing all the effort made to preserve Capitalism whereas nothing is done for the health and social security of europeans workers.

The situation in France, as we heard from the other comrades here, has a lot of similarities with other countries in Europe and beyond.

In this particular situation which is linked to an important crisis of capitalism, we need to strengthen our presence and our fights on the field, with the youth of our countries, bring our analysis of the crisis and grow in influence, and exchange about international struggles of the progressist youth in the world.

We need to show that even with the historical and cultural particularities of our different neoliberal governments, there are parallels and similarities in the management of the crisis, linked to the capitalist system.

There are also other international struggles which are part of our essence. The struggle against patriarchy is an important example of international combat.

During the confinement especially, there has been a mass growth of domestic violence, and divided work between men and women has never been so blatant.

The fight of women in the world for their rights, for equality and against patriarchy is growing,

It is our role to support and strengthen the fight of women, as it is in Poland with massive protests against the anti abortment law.

In this period of time, where violence is growing, and fear becomes stronger than social anger, which is favorable to facism and to the right wing, we have a responsibility to be united, to mobilize youth and to act in a concrete way for their needs.

We have to work with progressist and communist youth organisations against this wave of reactionary forces. The work inside WFDY is also to be strengthened.

Against the great Capital and bourgeoisies of the world, against facism, against patriarchy and against climate change, we must propose a large front, propose solutions, exchange and grow stronger to be effective in our fight.

Young Communist League of Britain

Dear comrades,

My name is Abbie Rhodes, I am a member of the International Commission of the Young Communist League of Britain, YCL Britain.

Firstly, our thanks go to the Communist Youth of Turkey for organising this important meeting of European Communist Youth Organisations.

It is a privilege to join comrades from all over Europe to share our experiences of the COVID pandemic, and what work we have been doing to fight against exploitation and oppression under the capitalist system in Britain, and for social and economic progress, and Socialism.

These past seven months since the beginning of UK lockdown have now more than ever laid bare the critical flaws in the capitalist system, specifically the criminal negligence of public services and reckless profiteering of the Tory party.

Throughout the pandemic, England and Scotland have consistently seen the highest rates of deaths in Europe – and among the highest in the world – met only by continuous attempts from the government to deflect blame onto the public for doing their best to follow unclear and contradictory rules, ones which government officials have brazenly ignored themselves.

Before the end of March, they resisted calls for an earlier lockdown in order to keep the economy functioning ‘normally’ for as long as possible:

le: gambling with the lives of working people to protect private profits and the value of shares in the City of London.

Despite trade unions, community organisations and scientists alike warning of the consequences for people’s lives, the economy was then reopened in July. August saw the launch of chancellor Rishi Sunak’s ‘Eat Out to Help Out’ scheme, which subsidised restaurants to offer food and drink at half their usual price.

Though praised by the corporate media as a salvation, the Eat Out to Help Out scheme has since been connected to a significant spike in the number of cases, and Sunak has confirmed that the government intend to pay for the scheme through further cuts to the welfare state that working people are relying on now more than ever during this time of recession and economic uncertainty.

Throughout the Tories’ mishandling of the crisis, scapegoats have been made of young people, despite them being the very people forced to risk their health and lives in the retail, care, and hospitality sectors to ensure their bosses carry on making a profit.

Student doctors and nurses have worked round the clock, without additional pay on the front line of the NHS’s pandemic response, only to be blamed for spreading the disease to deflect from the government’s lack of interest in protecting working class lives.

Students were instructed to go to

university in September and move into halls of residence, having been promised a 'blended' learning experience of online and in-person teaching, only to then be told that their courses would be entirely online – something known to the universities for months beforehand, but kept deliberately ambiguous to ensure that the income from halls rent and for private landlords wasn't diminished.

Profit has been put before people time and time again. Rather than accepting lost profits or appealing to the government for support if needed, vice-chancellors instead decided to bring students from across the country, and beyond, into cramped accommodation in the middle of a pandemic. This crisis has also highlighted the marketisation crisis at the heart of education, something which the YCL campaigns strenuously against alongside the University and Colleges Union, teachers union and the progressive student movement as a whole.

These have not been wasted months for Britain's young communists we have continued to grow, found new branches and rebuild Britain's communist movement. We will emerge from the pandemic stronger than when we entered it and eager to cement these gains.

Although in-person campaigning has been restricted since the beginning of lockdown, the YCL has continued working online to coordinate our efforts up and down the country. Over the summer and up to now, branches have hosted education classes, webinars and meetings for organisation and

recruitment that have kept morale high during the height of lockdown when comrades were isolated from one another, enrichment of our Communist education and theory, as well as leading to the concrete growth and improvement of our organisation, with new and better branches and internal structures.

Our international campaigns have also continued: on 19 April, the Global Day of Action in Solidarity with Venezuela, members raised their voices in solidarity with the people and youth of Venezuela as part of a wider online campaign against US imperialist aggression and the defence of the democratic will and self-determination of the Venezuelan people.

In August we organised an appeal for the Union of Lebanese Democratic Youth [ULDY] to raise funds for their relief efforts following the devastating explosion in Beirut. We reached a total of \$3,000 USD for the essential aid work of our Lebanese comrades in Beirut, and organised a follow up webinar that streamed live with their president and the president of the World Federation of Democratic Youth [WFDY].

Statements of solidarity have been sent to the American people following the murder of George Floyd and the heightening of racialised police brutality, as well as physical solidarity on the street with the Black Lives Matter movement in Britain, as well as campaigns calling for the British government to end exportation of riot gear and rubber bullets to the USA.

Where in-person activity has been possible, we have ensured it has been

carried out with the necessary safety provisions including face masks, social distancing measures, and restriction to outdoor-only meetings. Our priority at the height of lockdown was COVID aid work: comrades volunteered with their local community response groups and led different efforts to deliver emergency food, care packages, prescriptions and face masks.

We have also ensured a continuation of our foodbank collection drives for working class communities, from which we've managed to receive large amounts of donations for those who will be needing it most as unemployment surges and winter sets in.

The YCL have also worked closely with tenants' unions in preventing evictions and demanding governments ensure the rights of renters rather than lining the pockets of landlords. Comrades attended anti-eviction demonstrations, workshops, and increased our presence within the unions themselves.

A significant example was the No Evictions demonstration in Glasgow, where we were involved in protesting the detention of asylum seekers in local hotels without basic provisions such as food, water, and adequate protection against the virus.

We have also engaged in various direct-action campaigns across the country: particularly of note was our "make the rich pay for COVID-19" graffiti, which in multiple cities and went viral across social media – even gaining the attention of the national press. These slogans demanded ef-

fective anti-coronavirus measures to protect working class communities now while pre-empting the fight against further austerity to pay for these measures once the pandemic ends.

Flyposting campaigns have also been extensive, especially regarding student issues and the continuation of extortionate tuition fees for what are essentially online courses, with a day of action organised by the YCL coinciding in major British cities including London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Glasgow, Newcastle, Brighton, Sheffield, Cambridge and elsewhere.

Propaganda campaigns are not the only place we've made headlines in the bourgeois media. In September, following protests by the environmentalist group, Extinction Rebellion, that aimed to block distribution of bourgeois newspapers, The Sun, The Times, The Express, The Mail and The Evening Standard (all owned by News Corporation, a right-wing and anti-working-class media monopoly belonging to Rupert Murdoch), The Times and The Express reported that members of the YCL had been involved in the recent Extinction Rebellion protests.

Their article was fronted by a photograph of members of our London district holding a banner proclaiming a choice we know to be true: Socialism or Extinction! The papers reported that XR protests were, according to the organisation's chief "under threat from parasitic hard left groups". This prompted XR to denounce the banner under the guise that they had no political affiliation – despite many

of their rank-and-file groups explicitly acknowledging that capitalism is an environmentally unsustainable system.

Our response was greatly received across social media and by the progressive and working class movement, and though we have no intention of drawing divisions between the left and the ecological movement, while highlighting the political errors, the move highlighted XR's bourgeois nature and the necessity of climate activism to retain class analysis at its core.

From the Labour Party's suspension of Jeremy Corbyn, to the government's decision to ban anti-capitalist material from schools; from the BBC's pledge to purge so-called left-wing bias from its already right-leaning ranks, to the passing of a bill that will allow police and intelligence services to infiltrate trade unions and political campaign groups – it is undeniable that the British ruling class are stepping up in their war against the left and the people's democratic rights and that we must be ready to resist it.

The YCL has seen a surge in applications over the recent period, due to the pandemic that demonstrated more clearly than ever that the capitalist system regards profits over the people's wellbeing, and the attacks on the left in Britain.

As we approach our 100th anniversary celebrations next year, it is clear that more and more young people are being mobilised into class politics by the response of Government and big business to the COVID crisis. With a fresh capitalist crisis underway and the pandemic showing no signs of subsiding,

we know that we – as an organisation and members of the wider labour movement – have challenging times ahead of us.

We hope to face this challenge with the same commitment, spirit, and discipline as we have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate despite the circumstances of the pandemic, and to build our League and the wider working-class movement so that we can win new victories for the working people and youth, transform and build Socialism in Britain, and we have every faith that our comrades across Europe are carrying the same glorious struggle wherever they are.

Communist Youth of Greece - KNE

Dear comrades,

on behalf of the Central Council of the Communist Youth of Greece [KNE] we send warm, comradely, internationalist greetings to the delegations of all the Communist Youth Organizations, who are taking part in today's online meeting. We sincerely wish all the comrades, the members of your organizations, to be healthy and strong.

Especially we would like to greet our comrades from the Communist Youth of Turkey [TKG], to wish them every success to their struggles, shortly after the recent Congress of the Communist Party of Turkey and the 100th anniversary of its founding. We really thank TKG for the steady solidarity with the struggle of KNE and also for its initiative to organize this online meeting for the exchange of experience between the European Communist Youth Organizations. It is very important to be able to discuss and exchange experience, under difficult circumstances, such as today. While having the aim to strengthen our struggle in every country, but also enhance the cooperation, the joint struggle and the coordination of the struggle of the CYOs.

The development of class struggle and life itself brings to the forefront more intensely the need for the joint struggle of the CYOs. It's our duty to provide the forms through which this will be accomplished under all circumstances.

A typical example –and not the only

one– of the last days, is the earthquake that hit Greece and Turkey last week. Many were the deaths in both countries, highlighting once again the lack of earthquake protection measures and the long-term responsibilities of the Greek and Turkish governments, which for the sake of the profits of their business groups, leave the peoples unprotected. KNE and TKG with their immediate joint announcement –which was widely accepted and promoted in both countries– just 4 hours after the earthquake, they made common immediate demands in both countries highlighting that “Our lives are not destined to be crushed! With our struggles, our power, our dreams ‘life will be victorious!’” Immediately, both Organizations, together with the Communist Parties of Greece and Turkey, which also share strong internationalist relations and a joint struggle, we took the initiatives of organizing the solidarity in the affected areas on both sides of the Aegean.

Comrades,

unfortunately this year, due to the pandemic, it was not possible to hold the established annual Meeting of the European Communist Youth Organizations [MECYO]. We hope that we will make it in 2021 in Belgrade, as the Working Group of MECYO has already decided unanimously.

After all, the coronavirus can be cured and will be cured! The pandemic will pass, as others have passed in the past!

However, capitalism is incurable, it is a permanent virus and that is why it cannot be cured by any kind of

mutation medicine. It can only be overthrown and replaced from a superior social system, socialism – communism.

And right here, the CYOs have the great responsibility: To win over the vast majority of the youth in our countries, every young man and woman from the working class and people's families, for the struggle for this exact perspective. Not only those who agree with our policy, but also those whose social and class position, makes it possible to benefit from it, regardless of whether they understand this today or not. From the generation of crushed rights, we have to become the generation that will overthrow the rotten and outdated capitalist system, which as long as it survives, it continues to spread death, exploitation and barbarity. We have to counter-attack, to organize mass and militant struggles to satisfy all the contemporary needs of the youth.

That is why we need strong CYOs in every country, revolutionary youth organizations, which will be the "schools" for the edification of young communists, with vanguard mass activity where the youth works, studies and lives; with combative and militant organs and Base Organizations, which ensure the promotion of Marxism-Leninism within the ranks of every CYO and more broadly within the youth. We have to bear in mind that the current members and cadres of the CYOs are the "future" of the Communist Parties and that today we need to take all necessary measures so that the International Communist Movement, our common cause, can

be revived as a whole, through active, combative younger forces that have received communist education. After all, many things are already determined from today, when everything seems to be immovable or even going backwards. The multifaceted ideological-political-organizational strengthening of our Organizations today is the element that will significantly mark the developments of tomorrow, in more sudden turns of class struggle. This is shown by the course of class struggle so far, by the uprisings and revolutions that every time shocked the world. This is shown by the experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution, whose 103rd anniversary we are celebrating today.

Dear comrades,

The conclusions drawn from the most important revolutionary leap to the future, until now, are timely under today's conditions. These conclusions are even timelier in comparison to that day 103 years ago when it was proven in a practical way that capitalism is not invincible and that the working class can construct a society without exploitation of man by man.

We honour the Great October Socialist Revolution, the socialist construction, first of all by keeping the flame of the communist perspective alive today.

Especially today, when the degree of socialization of labour has reached unprecedented heights, huge potential has emerged with the transformation of science into a direct productive force and the impressive increase in the degree of automation of industrial production, the gap between current

living and working conditions and the modern needs and possibilities is even larger.

We can prove directly, even more convincingly that the socialism that we, the workers, will construct in every country in the 21st century will lead to a level of social prosperity and to a degree of participation in workers' control, which both will be higher than the standard of living achieved in the countries of socialism in the 20th century.

This year, 150 years after Lenin's birth, we can say that his work, like that of Marx-Engels, remains an irreplaceable weapon, it remains timely "as if it was written yesterday" because the revolutionary change of the world is timely and necessary today as never before!

Armed with Marxism-Leninism, our worldview, we can give convincing answers to the reasonable questions that millions of young people in Europe and around the world have, such as: "How do the capitalists make their profits? What is the source of exploitation in today's society? What is the character and role of the state? Can this world change and how? Is revolution necessary? How will production be organized in the society of socialism-communism to meet the needs of the people? How will the participation in decision-making and the implementation take place? What is the character of the working class power, of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"? What are the duties of the communists in their intervention within the mass movement?"

This effort is of great importance, and we aim to connect it to the daily struggle for all the problems the working and student youth face.

Our slogan "Socialism or Barbarism" remains timely! And this can be seen from all aspects of life of young people in Greece, in Europe, in all over the capitalist world.

Comrades,

The conditions under which the KKE and the KNE developed their activity in Greece in the past months are determined by the following factors:

1. From the further intensification of the inter-imperialist competition in the Eastern Mediterranean region, which include the competition of the bourgeoisie of Greece and the bourgeoisie of Turkey, the escalation of Turkish aggression.
2. From the course and the outburst of the pandemic in our country and internationally, the tragic situation in public health systems, the consequences of the pandemic on the life and the rights of working class and the popular strata, as a result of anti-people policy and measures.
3. From the outbreak, the evolution and the depth of the economic crisis, which does not have as its main cause the pandemic, as claimed by bourgeois governments and international organizations. In the world capitalist economy there were serious problems of over-accumulation of capital, which mathematically led to a new crisis, which was accelerated by the pandemic.

4. From the intensification of authoritarianism, repression, anti-communism, as it was shown recently when the government of the conservative party New Democracy [ND] approved by vote of the new law that restricts and bans the demonstrations.

Under these difficult conditions, and while having as our decisive weapon the positions and the activity of our Party, we make a significant effort -and we have succeeded in this- from the beginning of the pandemic not to suspend the activity of KNE. On the contrary, we managed to intensify the efforts, necessarily adapting both the internal function of the organization and our intervention in the movement. Our effort is not to let the quarantine and the lock-down affect the communists, not to put in quarantine our mind, our study, our political criticism and polemic against the system and not to put obstacles political action.

An important moment of this effort was the success of the 46th Festival of KNE-Odigitis, which, even though it took place in a different form this year, finally it left a strong aftermath, it sent a message of optimism and hope to thousands of young people. By traveling in dozens of cities of Greece with the slogan "Socialism, for us to breathe freely, for life to be victorious" we highlighted the only development path for the benefit of the people. The success of the events, as well as the Two-Day Anti-imperialist Camp of KNE in summer [a camp with thousands of participants] is an example of the way that the organized disobedience to the system can overcome practical difficulties and ensure

the health of the members and friends of KNE. Mainly it showed the way to block the climate of silence that the government wanted to impose aiming to unleash its attack on labour - people's rights.

On the basis of the previously mentioned conditions, we come across an increasing concern of the working class and the youth, a concern that is based on the deterioration of the life conditions, the insecurity about the near future, as well as the contradictions of the governmental policies regarding the management of the pandemic that cause confusion. At the same time, during this period, the consistent stance of the KKE and KNE is appreciated by a significant section of the people, especially of the youth, regarding a number of issues, since the beginning of the year, demonstrating organized disobedience against the calls for "national harmony" and consent on the part of the government and the rationale of "we'll deal with it later", on the part of the social-democratic SYRIZA. We highlighted that there cannot be a "national goal" that is common for the bourgeois class and the people. We had to confront the enhanced propaganda of the opponent. Against the rationale of the "individual responsibility", we opposed the state responsibility of taking the necessary measures for the protection of people's life, health and income, but also, as a condition for the comprehension of the individual one. The management of the pandemic, according to the criteria of rescuing the profitability of the capital and the fiscal stability, even at the expense of

the people's health, the dangers deriving from the deeper entanglement of the Greek bourgeois class in the inter-imperialist antagonisms, brought into surface the unbridgeable gap between the capital and the working class, the poor popular strata, under the intervention of the members of the KKE and KNE.

Also, during the previous period we took steps regarding the goal we had set in our 12th Congress (February 2019), in other words, the utilization and our contribution in the elaborations of the party for the formation of demands and a framework of struggle, regarding the sharpening problems that concern the areas of health, welfare, culture and sports. These demands facilitate the connection of the workplace struggle with the neighbourhood struggle, they come into conflict with the rationale of class collaboration or dealing with the issues in a classless way, forming the conditions for the formation of an anticapitalist - antimonopoly direction in the struggle. Especially, on the occasion of the pandemic outbreak, we highlighted our positions for the strengthening of the primary health care units, for the requisition of the already existing infrastructure belonging to the major private clinics, apart from the necessity for the immediate cover of the deficiencies.

At the same time, the members and friends of KNE, who were at the forefront of the school student mobilizations of this period, gave the best response to the government's argument that allegedly there are not enough money for covering the basic

necessities, when they highlighted the choice of all governments, throughout the years, to spend billions for the NATO military equipment, which has nothing to do with the defensive buttressing of the country.

In each place where the forces of KNE intervene, we seek not to exhaust the aim of the demands on what was guaranteed until yesterday, on the contrary, we promote our proposal, in an aggressive way, having the contemporary needs as a criterion, in other words, the needs based on today's possibilities. KNE is at the forefront, to develop combative activity, in every place where the youth lives, works and gets educated, against the silence that the rest of the forces maintain. With the following slogan "To make the invisible heroes, protagonists! We will not pay for their crisis again!" KNE started a campaign, from June until September, addressed to the young workers, highlighting - one of the most significant conclusions that has been confirmed during the pandemic- that they are the ones that are useful, they are the pillars of society and not the capitalists, the parasites of society. During these three months, we met with thousands of young workers, contributing in a decisive way, in the entry of more young workers into the trade unions. The forces of KNE were at the forefront of demanding means of protection, defending the rights that were under attack. Based on the elaborations of our Party, we published materials and we organized meetings on the topic of the new labour relations that were established on the occasion

of the pandemic, placing emphasis on telework and how this is utilized in today's system for the extraction of more surplus value to place more obstacles in the trade union action.

Regarding students, despite the under-functioning of the vast majority of the Faculties, for more than 8 months, the Students' Struggle Front [MAS], with the decisive contribution of KNE organized dozens of interventions about issues that concern immediately the popular families, as a spearhead, such as: to find a way not to cancel the exam periods, to keep the student dormitories and canteens open, since during the period of quarantine, it was attempted to throw students out on the street, to fill the vacancies in teaching personnel. Furthermore, the period before summer, the forces of MAS, especially the ones in the faculties of Health Sciences, were at the forefront of a number of initiatives for practical solidarity, such as voluntary blood donations and the preparation of antiseptics, in the faculties' laboratories.

However, the section of the youth that marked strongly the previous period was that of the school-students. For the past 2 months, since the beginning of the school year, school-students all over the country have been in turmoil, demanding the obvious, open schools with all the necessary protection measures, recruitment of the necessary teachers and cleaning staff. These are the largest mobilizations of students of the last 15 years, in terms of participation, with over 800 sit-ins in secondary education schools [out of the approximately

3,000 that exist nationwide] and large student demonstrations organized on a weekly basis. An important element is that these mobilizations are supported by Associations of Parents and Teachers, with the decisive contribution of the KKE forces that participate in them. This school-students' struggle, but also specifically the intervention of the school-student and area-based organizations of KNE already contribute to the acquisition of rich experience for the following steps. It is an important element that the framework of demands formed by the School-Student Coordinating Committee in Athens, which has been established in recent years at the initiative and active participation of school-students - members of KNE, touched the vast majority of the militant school-students, managed to orientate the struggle according to the demands and the necessity for mass collective, democratic procedures. The bourgeois state mobilized all its apparatuses to hinder the school-student movement, with the help of the bourgeois Media. But the just cause of the school-students was stronger. Thus, the government's attempt to identify the students with the mask-deniers, to intimidate them with the intervention of head-teachers and the police, but also to hold them accountable in advance for the transmission of the virus during the sit-ins -even if 25 and 27 school-students are piled up in a small classroom during the classes- went unheeded. The culmination of the repression effort was the beating of the students by the Riot Police [MAT], the arrests and detentions of students even for 4 whole days.

A few weeks ago, the trial of the Nazi criminal organization Golden Dawn [GD] was concluded. 7 years after the assassination of the anti-fascist musician Pavlos Fyssas by the GD and after an unacceptable delay of 5,5 years of the hearing procedures with great responsibilities of the governments of ND and SYRIZA, it was recognized by court decision what the people had already proclaimed, that the GD is a criminal organization. Dozens of thousands of workers and young people participated in a magnificent demonstration outside the courts on 7 October, the day when the court ruling was announced, to reaffirm that belief. The contribution of KNE in the previous years was important in revealing the role of the GD, the fact that its criminal character stems from its Nazi ideology. All these years, when cadres of ND were talking about the need for "a serious GD" according to the standards of the Le Pen party and cadres of SYRIZA used the so-called institutional role of the fascists to participate in joint events, the members of KNE came forward to isolate fascists in every university, school and neighbourhood.

We are not complacent; we continue the struggle against fascism. We are well aware that fascism neither is dealt with by court decisions nor by anti-fascist fronts with parties that serve the same system that gives rise to it, but by the struggle that targets capitalism itself, the womb that gives birth to fascism.

Lastly, concerning the dangerous developments in the Eastern Mediterranean, we are developing a multifac-

ceted intervention [thematic events, publications, documentaries, initiatives within the movement etc.] aiming to increase young people's awareness of the clear position of the KKE; The defence of sovereign rights, territorial integrity and borders from the standpoint of the people's interests, acquire true meaning only when combined with the struggle in Greece:

- For the disengagement of our country from the dangerous plans of NATO, US, EU.
- For the closure of the foreign military bases in Greece.
- For the disengagement of Greece from the imperialist organisations, with the people in power, owner of the wealth they produce.

Comrades,

Increase in deaths, cases and intubated patients all over Europe, constitutes the chronicle of a predetermined crime. It is under the responsibility of the longstanding directives of the EU and the governments that the public healthcare systems are stripped of personnel, infrastructure, ICUs, diagnostic reagents and the means to run diagnostic tests. The miserable situation that forces doctors to decide who lives and who dies and leads nurses to wear garbage bags for their protection against the virus, as well as the general condition that negatively affects the health and life of the peoples, expose that the real virus, the visible enemy, is capitalism itself.

The developments themselves -in every aspect of social life- place a strong focus on the issue of the only

real way-out in favour of the workers'-people's interests. They also show the need to break the vicious circle of contradictions of a system, which is unable to meet the vital rights and needs of the vast majority of the people, while the increase in productivity and the development of technology and science create the preconditions for leaps to improve and address social problems radically. These further highlight that, organising the economy based on capitalist profit, makes it an obstacle to social progress and prosperity.

Ample evidence shows the necessity of socialism-communism, i.e. the working class power, for establishing social ownership and central scientific planning of the economy, on the criterion of the expanding satisfaction of all social needs. The KKE and KNE devote all their forces for our people, the workers, to believe in the power and the potential they have to determine the developments, to make their mark, to make this way-out a reality.

Connolly Youth Movement - CYM

Capitalism in Ireland was already in crisis at the outbreak of COVID-19. The two traditional parties of domestic and international capital, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, have just received their worst election results in the history of the 26-county state and have been forced to drop the pretense of competition between each other and enter into coalition. As such, the present epidemic has simultaneously deepened the political crisis in Ireland while also providing a pretext for the government to engage in unprecedented measures to cling on to power at a time when their base, and the broader ascendancy of the capitalist class, is under a novel threat. The legislature in Ireland has taken advantage of the unusual situation to drastically reduce the speaking rights of smaller political parties, to remove economic rights of tenants by allowing landlords to digitally request expedited judgements, and other measures designed to tighten control, ranging even into sealing politically sensitive documents related to the Catholic Church's action at the Tuam Mother and Baby Home, where infants were taken from pregnant mothers and buried illegal. These actions of those of the recently disgraced EU Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan (who failed to observe COVID-19 and traffic laws in order to attend a golf party) show the intense unaccountability and exceptionalism of the Irish bourgeoisie. The scope of in-person cadre work available to us as activists in Ireland is reduced in many areas due to our political and social responsi-

bility to uphold the guidelines to reduce transmission rates of COVID-19. The resulting reliance on social media has placed us in a uniquely precarious and vulnerable situation, and our social media accounts are being categorically targeted and attacked as result of a policy of active political censorship by the bourgeois companies which own them. The awareness of these limitations and self-reflection on them poses fundamental questions to us on how to continue to effectively propagandise in a media environment which is being given greater and greater privileges and power for the ideological policing of society on behalf of neoliberalism. Only by increasing the technical skill of our members, and utilising media critically and efficiently, can we navigate this situation without becoming vulnerable to censorship and disruption on social media.

The epidemic has cast light on many processes that were occurring quietly in the background and has exposed, accelerated and inflamed them. Scandals are accumulating weekly and the legitimacy of the political establishment is fraying. The massive increase in unemployment is being actively lauded by the far-right as providing them an opportunity to insert themselves into the narrative as national saviours, and they are working in overdrive and with unprecedented boldness in pursuit of this. Their opposition to the lockdown measures and the refusal of the state apparatus and the neoliberal journalistic commentariat to adequately confront them allows them to majorly expand

the scope of their operations during the epidemic, due to the restriction of the traditional anti-fascist suppression as a result of unwillingness to violate public gathering guidelines. It is no accident that this trend is being ignored or excused by the bourgeois private media and government, as it is exactly in these types of crises that the fascists can prove useful as a mechanism to waste popular energy and resistance while diverting people's attention from capital. Some in attendance at "anti-lockdown" protests by the far-right are business owners who stand to benefit economically, the petite bourgeoisie being one of the mainstay demographic resources of fascism. Violence in the methods of the far-right is escalating, and during the COVID-19 epidemic far-right violence in Ireland has become a public issue of significant concern for the first time in many decades. We must confront fascists and continue to work through the masses against them, reconnecting and remolding our political work to serve the needs of communities under attack or being won over by the far-right, and wresting the key ideological identification of the right to the nation as a community for all of the working class from their ideological inroads to debase and villainise our national premise as Irish under the corruption of racism and xenophobia. As Georgi Dimitrov wrote, they are the most reactionary wing of finance capital and must be exposed as such.

The present crisis has revealed the dysfunctionality of many sectors of the economy which suffered privatisation, asset stripping and marketi-

sation during the years of austerity, and the overall situation is being used to prepare justification for renewed disenfranchisement of the working class under the guise of debt repayment and endless "restructuring". The partition of our national by British imperialism, which already plays a role in the suppression of class forces through its inherently sectarian premise, also hampers the efficacy of our response to the present crisis. We are one people and class that has too long been divided along the lines of jurisdiction and health policy without any serious co-ordination, caught between two comprador governments that serve the interests of investors rather than people. The occupied six counties are suffering disproportionately as a marginalised province of a colonial centre, while the free state government relies entirely on the EU for its initiative and marching orders, sacrificing its sovereignty in the hope of avoiding complex political questions and receiving support for its own faltering domestic position.

The Connolly Youth Movement is attempting to anticipate the attacks on the working class by the bourgeoisie, to support trade unions in contesting illegal firings and avoidance of severance packages, help tenants against illegal evictions, and prepare agitators for a more difficult environment through both practical experience in campaigns for higher wages and unionisation drives, and theoretical sharpening through shared education. The cry of all of the forces of capital is for a "return to normal", but we know that normality for the working

class was brutality prior to the epidemic, and that brutality is only going to intensify. There is a real possibility in Ireland of a social democratic government in the short-term, that may alleviate some of the intense pressure faced by young people being crushed between high rent and low wages. However, we know from the experience of the European working class more broadly, in particular of Syriza's act of betrayal in Greece, that there can be no solution to the problems of capitalism within the European Union, and a project of the scale and depth we need to address our problems will require immediate withdrawal from the EU. Hence while confronting fascists physically and the domestic overseer caste politically is vital, we must also give special attention to confronting social democrats theoretically in exposing the illusion that there can be any weakening of the control of the capitalist class on the economy while membership of the EU continues. The European Union's ideological core is constantly toughening, as it commits more and more to illegal interventions outside of Europe, while attacking the left more intensely internally through its conflation of socialism and nazism. The instinct of the Irish bourgeoisie, which has never been strong enough to survive on its own capital alone due to its emergence from a colonial system, has always turned to more disgraced servility and increased integration into the imperialist machine in times of crisis. Our goal is to destabilise and challenge this tendency, both on the Thatcherite right and reformist left that dominate the gamut of our poli-

tical landscape, to frustrate and delay it as much as possible while continuing our numerical growth and unity with the working class.

Our current slogan is 'onwards to the red decade'. This is because the key goal of recovery and consolidation from the last decade has been achieved, and we are now ready to go on the offensive and escalate confrontations with the bourgeoisie. This will involve mobilisation of youth cadres into every social and political institution, as only public, highly amplified confrontation can force the bourgeoisie to reveal the nature of its political control in the form of undeniable repression. We look forward, tentatively but optimistically to the future where we will overcome the contradictions facing our political work by earning greater legitimacy with our class's generation by stark contrast with the bankruptcy of the passive tactics advocated by reformists. The real economic situation in our countries is becoming more and more resonant, and only through constant dialogue, support and study of each other's work and conditions, and daring to take risks to help each other, can the potential of international proletarian solidarity be unlocked. We are in a time of international crisis, and only through collective and shared solutions to our problems can we establish the superiority of our methods to the individualism, chauvinism and directionlessness of the capitalist response.

Front of Communist Youth - FGC

Dear comrades, On behalf of the CC of the Front of Communist Youth (FGC) I warmly greet all your organizations, we thank the Communist Youth of Turkey [TKG] for its efforts in this initiative to organize this online meeting. It is a pleasure to be connected with you after months of complicated and intense work for our organizations among the context of the pandemic crisis.

Many comrades have contracted the virus, many have been in home isolation, yet our activity has never stopped placing every effort in the direction of an intensification. The origins of the pandemic in Italy most likely date back to last November, it is useful to underline that the government prepared control protocols that made it impossible to identify cases. It is no coincidence that the famous patient zero was found only in February, thanks to a group of doctors who deliberately decided not to apply the ministerial protocol. The lack of a pandemic plan and the related stocks of medical devices and material immediately determined the state of emergency.

A new pandemic plan, hastily written by the government in February, was instead completely useless since it did not consider both the real progress of the pandemic and the real structural capabilities of public health system, weakened by decades of cuts. For this reason, the Italian government was the first to decree a general lockdown, despite the propaganda it was only nominally "general". In fact, with the total absence of individual safety me-

asures, more than half of all the workers continued their work in presence, almost all in factories and logistics warehouse. Already during the first week of the general lockdown, many factories, instead of following it to contain the pandemic, imposed overtime work, even over the weekend. For this reason, the main places of contagion were hospitals, factories and logistics warehouses.

Since the beginning the government policies have been shaped on the interests of the capitalist and their associations [Confindustria]. The owners were allowed to delay the closure for weeks, with consequences on the growth of infections. Even after the general lockdown, thousands of companies ignored it going in complete derogation to the anti-contagion safety rules in the workplaces and to the list of the essential activities. There was a clear disparity between the zeal with which runners, walkers and individual were persecuted, and the enormous discretion that - in fact - the companies enjoyed.

In the middle of the second wave of infections, emerged again and more forcefully all the limits of this system to provide the basic need to the peoples and all the bourgeois government responsibilities, that had as its only objective to protect the profits of the capitalist. In eight months, very little has been done to prepare health care, schools and transport for this situation, while billions were given to the capitalists. Using this crisis to give a greater strength to the processes of capital concentration, the pandemic

has in fact greatly accelerated the crisis of capitalism, already present and mature among the society. The plan of the capitalist and their governments is clear from the beginning: to move the cost of the crisis to the workers and the popular strata. This second wave began at the beginning of September in factories and warehouses with infection rates far higher than the national average at that time. The government decided not to do anything, not to close those outbreaks and not to apply safety regulations in the workplace. While individual behavior was demonized, the government left the field open to Confindustria to freely apply ineffective and superficial containment measures. Since March, every Confindustria action has been directed to negotiate with the government minimum containment measures in the workplace and to delay closures, then once the crisis began they have proceeded to threaten two millions of layoffs and attack national contracts claiming lower and precarious wages, after the summer they deliberately continued to produce even in outbreak companies, preventing the possibility of any containment intervention.

Our activity in recent months has been based on the involvement of combative trade unions, activists and all the workers and unionist that share an open conflicting position and who reject both the policy of national unity and that of class collaboration. This united front tactic that we consider necessary to face the strategy of a social appeasement pursued by the government. In fact, in this phase

the government's policy is to use the state as a collective capitalist, to mitigate the differences in the particular interests of the various monopolies and to try to guarantee social peace. The goal is to dilute the immediate effects of this crisis over time, extending the payroll subsidies until the end of January just as the industrial association threatened two million layoffs in August and the cancellation of the national collective contracts. This proposal was forward by our organization to the combative workers and unions to bring together all the struggle activities in a single groove to give strength and credibility to the perspective of the struggle against the capitalist management of the crisis. The proposal was positively welcomed by the unions that in recent years have proved more combative and by groups of workers in different other unions that have matured during the lockdown the awareness that there is no possibility within the class collaboration. It is useful to remember that during the lockdown of March / April the activity of the large concertative unions was to avoid the state of agitation and to cancel the spontaneous strikes promoted by the workers crushed in the blackmail between health and job in the outbreak companies.

As soon as the first lockdown phase was over, we organized a first student mobilization date [May 28] in dozens of cities against the failure of distance learning, as the result of years of cuts in public education. On 6 June the communist youth promoted and animated a first mobilization date in

the perspective of the class united front with unionists and workers from different sectors. This was a first significant attempt to unify the mobilization of students to that of workers, in the perspective of constant support over time. Already during the month of June, our organization strongly supported the strikes and production's blocks in the logistics sector, which after having amassed workers in warehouses during the lockdown declared thousands of layoffs. Our organization has moved nationwide to ensure the success of the production shutdowns, despite attacks by police and private taser guards, which both injured many strikers. At the same time, within these processes of struggles, we have set up a systematic political work for the transmission of more advanced political-organizational elements within those groups of combative workers, rapidly building a recognized position that has helped us to win the resistance to the particular problems of the various combative unions and call a first national meeting of combative workers. An assembly held in Bologna on 27 September in which unionist and workers from various sectors participated in presence and online, which approved the organization of a national initiative day for 24 October, the structuring of local assemblies of combative workers on regional base and identifying as an immediate goal to work to widen the state of agitation, to bring the company strike into a sector strike, and the sector strike into a general strike to counter the capitalist offensive.

A necessary work because, as already mentioned, the government policies to dilute the immediate effects of the crisis, the activities of the concertative unions to stifle any spontaneous mobilization and the pandemic situation itself are producing a low level of mass agitation among the workers, except for few sectors. It is significant that in the sectors, such as alimentary and logistics, where workers have been more combative in recent years, Confindustria's line is relatively less aggressive, publicly proposing to renounce at the demanding of revocation of national labor contracts in exchange for a single condition. Immediately stop the state of agitation. These are those sectors that have benefited most from the lockdown, increasing profits, and that are approaching the peak of work and revenue by the end of the year. The workers' decision was to continue, with the strike of last October 23, and with the next ones in November and December throughout all Italy. On this occasion too, students and communist youth militants are going to support the organization of these strikes and the warehouse's blockades effectiveness.

Comrades, In this new phase, we asked ourselves what the current tasks of the communist youth are in the perspective to their higher structuring and to the overcoming of the historical limits of the communist movement in Italy after World War II. In fact, in Italy the reaction of the opportunist forces to the pandemic was that of a substantial class collaboration, declined in various direction, in a reformist sense or in an openly chauvinist key

in welding with the most reactionary forces of the bourgeoisie crushed by the monopolistic concentration. You know all the damage that opportunism has caused in the movement of workers in Italy, ending up destroying much of the work done in the past. Many years ago, Antonio Gramsci wrote in prison “I am convinced that even when all is or seems to be lost, we just have to steadily get back to work, starting from the beginning”. The answer we gave ourselves was to continue working for the communist reconstruction process in Italy, the immediate tasks are first of all to reshape the activities in the new context of a pandemic that has eliminated the school and neighborhoods as meeting places of the proletarian youth within which to develop our political work, obviously also to “gain them back in safety”, and work to build a coherent response to the bourgeois offensive that has already strongly manifested itself, intended to an intensification in the coming months which will clash with an unprepared and politically backward labor movement even in its most combative components.

For this reason, we must intensify the political work and the mobilization to strongly respond to those who want to severely limit the possibilities of strike and public demonstration. As we have been saying for months “if we can work, we can strike”. There is a real risk of greater passivity among the proletarian youth, increasingly exposed to the important level of mobilization implemented by the petit-bourgeoisie in recent months. This

MECYO is a first important signal that not only the communist organizations are reshaping their activities with the pandemic, but that we can discuss and read together the consequences of this common international crisis despite the differences with which it manifests itself in each different country.

Communist Youth Movement, CJB

Dear comrades,

It is good to see so many of you in these embattled times. We would like to especially thank the TKG for taking the important initiative for this meeting of Communist Youth Organisations. In all of our home countries we are hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the in some ways even more deadly capitalist responses to the virus.

In the Netherlands, as in many other countries, we find ourselves with a health system which has been battered by years of austerity measures. The capitalist mode of health care proves time and time again it is neither able nor willing to ensure the care the people need. Whether it is the shortage of testing kits which were monopolized by the Roche company, or the shortage of IC units thanks to years of neglect and downsizing, every time we are faced with the shortcomings of capitalism.

The number of infected people has risen because of the unwillingness of the government to take measures in an early stage. Thousands have died from Covid and regular health care has now been drastically downsized for the second time since the outbreak of the pandemic because of the shortages in doctors, nurses and beds, which may have dire consequences for people that need healthcare.

The pandemic acted as a catalyst for the outbreak of the new capitalist economic crisis. Our workers are facing mass lay-offs. Tens of thousands have lost their job. Workers

with flexible working relations and self-employed are struggling to sustain themselves and their families. In many workplaces the protective health measures are lacking. Lots of other workers have to work from home, often without being provided the necessary equipment [such as an ergonomic office chair]. The capitalists use teleworking to further blur the limits of the working day and increase work intensity.

In the meantime, students in vocational and higher education are isolated as well. They keep paying tuition fees for education they hardly receive and many are delayed in their studies without compensation. Hardly any protective measures have been taken for students and teachers in high schools and primary education, were up to 30 pupils are stacked in a room as there is a shortage of teachers.

During all this the governments' policy is mostly preoccupied with ensuring the profits for companies. Once again large bail-outs make sure the working class pays for the continuation of profits for the capitalist class. Sadly, the enormous financial gifts to the companies are not the only way in which the government serves the capitalists. Even the management of the pandemic itself is focussed only on keeping business going as usual. Measures are always too little and too late and try to mostly limit private life and relaxation instead of non-essential sectors of industry. The government does not even try to eradicate the virus but wants to 'control' the spread of the virus so that not 'too many' people need hospitalization. Anybody

can therefore observe how human lives are sacrificed for capitalist profits. Because of this, the Netherlands has a relatively high death rate per capita from Covid-19 compared to other countries. This strategy will cause even greater economic destruction for the working class and will drive unprecedented amounts of Dutch workers into poverty and despair. CJB demands a strategy for eradication of the virus, putting peoples' lives above profits.

In the meantime, the bourgeois political parties are preparing the ground for the upcoming general elections in March 2021, making all kinds of promises that conceal the attack on the rights of the workers that will follow, regardless of which parties win the elections. The pandemic is also used as an excuse for restraining political rights and enhancing the suppression apparatus of the bourgeois state.

This health crisis is the opening epoch for an economic crisis that was already in the making. Economic growth has been hampering for several years and decreases in the industrial production were already setting in before Covid came around. The real cause of the economic crisis lies not in the pandemic, even though it certainly acted as a catalyst, but in the laws of the capitalist way of development itself. The capitalist economic crisis in its turn amplifies the contradictions between the imperialist powers that compete for the control over resources, transportation routes and markets, increasing the danger for escalations, imperialist interventions and even war in various parts of the

world.

The youths of today have already lived through three 'once in a lifetime' capitalist economic crises, but this one kickstarted by Covid is likely to be the biggest one yet. The theme for this meeting was therefore aptly chosen: the choice we have before us, is more pressing than ever before. Socialism or Barbarism. It is our task as Communist organizations to organize the working classes to make this choice, or it will be made before us, and its consequences will be felt.

That said, we, the Communist Youth Movement of the Netherlands, are heading for our next General Assembly on the 14th of November. The General Assembly will concern itself with the new statutes for the CJB, as well as the political evaluation of the general developments and the tasks for the CJB in the coming years. We have good hopes for the future. We are growing as more and more youngsters turn away from the appalling conditions capitalism offers them. Perhaps even more important, we are educating members to be capable of organizing at the work places and in the schools, in order to create a strong and steeled cadre.

The CJB and the New Communist Party of the Netherlands are steadily working to collectively improve our understanding of the pressing issues that concern the lives of the working-class youth on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, in opposition to the influence of bourgeois ideology and opportunism. Such issues are the international and national

developments, the labour and student movement in the Netherlands and the requirements to enhance a class-oriented line, but also issues such as climate change, emancipation of working-class women, the struggle against racism and the discrimination of other minorities, which are all connected to the struggle against the exploitative capitalist system.

Both the pandemic and the capitalist economic crisis have laid bare the necessity of a socialist organization of society. Through central planning and the social ownership of the means of production many unnecessary deaths and suffering could have been prevented. The anarchy of capitalism has however shown its bloody consequences and as infection rates are rising rapidly, will probably continue to do so.

We are grateful for the TKG to organize this meeting of communist youth organizations. The effects of the pandemic and the government responses are felt throughout our countries. It is important we face these challenges united. Let us loudly declare our choice: Socialism-communism is our answer to these dire conditions!

Portuguese Communist Youth, JCP

Dear comrades,

In the name of the Portuguese Communist Youth, we send our salutation to every organization present in this meeting, and greet the comrades from TKG for the initiative.

The world's situation brutally exposes the capitalism's exploitive, oppressive, aggressive, and predatory nature, evidencing its profound inhuman character, its immense responsibility for the serious problems and scourges that hit Humanity.

In the context of the capitalism's structural crises, the COVID-19 pandemic as come to accelerate the new economical crises that had long been announced, that exposes the enormous and unacceptable injustices and social inequalities that mark the reality of millions of human beings.

Trying to contradict its relative decline and preserve its hegemonic domain in the world, the United States of America, with the support of its allies – NATO and EU –, intensify the aggressive action against the international rights, imposing sanctions, economical blockades and operations of destabilization and aggression.

The situation aggravates in several countries and regions throughout the world, derived from imperialism's offensive that proceeds and intensifies its politics of interference and aggression, such as in Latin America to what comes to Cuba and Venezuela; it persists on the promotion of "regime change" operations such as

in Byelorussia; it proceeds with the confrontation, interference and war against the peoples of the Middle East such as in Palestine, Syria, Iran, Yemen and Lebanon.

Today we point out and celebrate the October revolution, a revolution that was an emancipator act, the start of a new historical era that remains open on the horizon of the workers' and peoples' struggle – the era of the transition from capitalism to socialism – and in it the materialization of a millennial dream of emancipation and freedom of generations of exploited and oppressed!

We point out October so not to forget the role of the working class, the workers, the peoples and the youth, of its unity, organization and struggle in the process of social transformation and, particularly, the historical role of the working class and its allies in such Pioneer realization of the new society, without antagonistic social classes and free from the exploration of Men from Men.

Comrades,

The political situation in Portugal is marked by the structural problems and deficits, derived from decades of right-wing politics of successive governments of PS [Socialist Party], PSD [Social Democrat Party] and CDS-PP [Democratic Center and Social Popular Party]. This period of the pandemic has come to expose with more clarity the deficits and problems of our country, increasing the aggressiveness of the great capital in the search of the profit accumulation.

The last months confirm the essential traits of the situation in Portugal. In the economical overview, a brutal breaking of the richness produced and of the consumption. In the social overview, the aggravation of the life conditions of the workers, peoples and youth, in which the lost of salaries and income, the increase of unemployment and the failure of micro and small companies take on a particular serious expression. In the political overview, the intensification of the antidemocratic offensive with affront to the democratic regime, the exhibition of reactionary projects and agendas of the far right wing.

This recent period is marked by the aggravation of many other problems. To what comes to education, the Portuguese situation is marked by the return to presential classes. JCP and the students have been struggling, demanding urgent measures so that every hygiene conditions and security in schools are granted. Also, the necessary increase of hiring public workers to grant hygiene conditions, the hiring of more teachers, making possible the reduction of the number of students per class.

In Portugal subsist the tuitions, fees and national exams, elements that try to elitize education and that in this period it has become more clear, with the difficulties of the students in following the subject taught in distance teaching. Using the justification of the virus, the attack against democracy has been increasing in schools and universities, trying to stop propaganda distributions and also conditioning de-

mocratic processes, in particular Student's Associations and Students' Assemblies. JCP has been affirming that, towards every attempt to condition democracy, the best way to protect our rights is to exert them.

It should be noticed that in this period of confinement the problems of mental health, in particular of the students, have increased, and JCP has been demanding the hiring of more psychologists for schools, so to answer such a big health problem arising from the pandemic. Young workers, in this pandemic panorama, have been one of the most attacked. A lot of them went to lay-off, seeing its salary reduced to a third, others were fired due to the precarious contracts.

Culture is a central element of democracy and, due to the pandemic situation, this sector was one of the most scourged. JCP has been demanding support and measures for the serious situation in which workers and cultural agents are living.

Comrades,

In JCP, the reinforcement of the struggle of the youth is a supreme priority, and it was in these hard and new times that we took every measure so not to stop our intervention and struggle. Creativity in the ways of getting to the youth, with a lot of initiatives on social media, but never stopping from being present in the street next to the young workers and the students. JCP did not remain confined and continues its activity, giving continuity to reunions, the presence in the work centers of the party developing our work.

We can say that we were reinforced. There has been intervention, struggles, contacts and recruitments of many young people that took the step of taking our side.

From here, we send a strong salutation to every sister organizations that, even in the most difficult situations, did not stop their activity and maintained the struggle to protect the workers and the youth.

We look for fighting fear and resignation. We point of the tremendous struggle action of the Portuguese workers on the 1st of May, summoned up by CGTP-IN, the unitary syndical central of class, the struggle of the 26th of September demanding the general increase of the salaries of ninety euros, the increase of the national minimum wage to eight hundred and fifty euros, the prohibition of firing workers and the implementation of the thirty five laboratory hours for all the workers. We also point out the students' struggle for specific demands as well as general ones, in particular the ones that have already occurred in the universities.

We point out the realization of Avante! Festival that, confronting a strong attack accompanied by a campaign of lies, in which the most reactionary sectors of the capital tried everything to stop it from happening, an attack without regard to our party. The Avante! Festival was accomplished and it was a tremendous political achievement, affirming itself once again in our country to be the fest of the youth, workers, peoples, freedom,

democracy and socialism. This party remains marked by the resistance, capability, initiative, responsibility, courage and trust in the future of PCP and JCP. We are currently pointing out the centenary of our party, the Portuguese Communist Party, the party of the antifascist resistance, of freedom, democracy and Socialism. A party that, past a hundred years, remains in the front line of the struggle for the concretization of this millennial dream that mobilizes millions in the whole world, the realization of a land without masters, free from exploration and oppression. JCP, with the motto "The Future has a Party", will take the centenary of PCP to the youth with a great initiative that will take place in two thousand twenty one with documents, posters, murals, debates and other forms of propaganda.

Comrades,

Close by pointing out the seventy five years of WFDY, JCP reaffirms the importance of the reinforcement of the Federation, a structure that congregates many other youth organizations beyond the communist youth organizations, corresponding to their purposes, principles and anti-imperialist character. A priority that comes from the plain conscience that the communists' intervention is central to the reinforcement of the anti-imperialist movement in the struggle for peace, the youth's rights, integrating all of those that defend these values.

JCP believes that that broad unity in the action among communists – with its identity and positioning – and other anti-imperialist forces are determinant in the combat against the common enemy, imperialism. In these times marked by uncertainty, dangers and potentialities, JCP points out, with trust in the youth, the workers and the peoples, the development in the struggle of the masses and the reinforcement of our Party with the necessary path for the defense of peace, the development and the progress, of the construction of a patriotic and left wing alternative, of the advanced democracy with the April Values in the future of Portugal, Socialism and Communism.

Union of Socialist Youth, UTS

The Union of Socialist Youth has had a difficult time during the pandemic in an organisational sense but has compensated by raising online activity and online engagement. In our collective loneliness we have found, like all our comrades across the world, a pure mismanagement of a crisis. A few countries managed the situation better – such as the Asian and South-American socialist republics [Bolivia has managed to stay ahead whilst also undoing a fascist coup] whilst other countries have not only managed to handle the situation better, they have also aided the rest of the globe in an internationalist way whilst sheltering themselves also – such as Cuba.

The pandemic makes an extraordinary argument for central planning, especially in times of extreme need – as well as for the necessity of redirecting production towards essentials. Comrades from our organisation studying in the UK, before flying home, found themselves needing to make their own masks out of cloths and plastic because a set of 5 masks was more than 30 pounds on Amazon – and the pharmacies, drug stores and NHS had none to offer anymore, and this was early in March! This could have easily been avoided if a price cap would have been set and private ownership of the means of production wouldn't exist – even if perhaps we may not be able to dismantle capitalism overnight during the pandemic, we should make the argument for socialist measures, and when they are not undertaken, we should point pe-

ople towards the countries that have succeeded in staying safe through socialist measures.

Italy has received a lot of foreign aid from socialist republics and in this process has probably “harmed” its relationship with the United States. Romania has rejected Cuban aid, not surprisingly, and, whilst receiving absolutely no help from the collapsing United States, our government has signed a contract with the American company Raytheon – we are going to spend 2.7 billion dollars on anti-aircraft weaponry compatible with the Patriot rockets we have bought a few years ago for another 3.9 billion dollars. This, whilst our healthcare system is being massively neglected – there are not enough hospital beds, not enough equipment for treating covid-19. Not only this, but all other patients, especially seriously ill patients with other diseases, are being massively neglected on account of pandemic regulations and the re-direction of limited medical efforts towards covid-19. We are not going to share the terrifying statistics of how many cancer patients have died in this period – cancer deaths have risen on account of treatment becoming harder and harder to get in this horrible period.

All of this reflects a systemic failure of capitalism to deal with crisis. Sadly, this is only the beginning of the crisis – and the discourse undertaken at the beginning of the pandemic by most financial outlets speaks volumes about the forces in power. Zizek, all criticism towards him aside, nonetheless makes a good point when

he jokingly calls this phenomenon capitalist animism – “treating social phenomena like markets or financial capital as living entities”. Basically, don’t worry about the deaths, but about the fact that “markets are getting nervous”!

The Youth’s duty is to contest this by all means necessary and to undertake a struggle in culture, media, arts, and in all other aspects of superstructure to promote a discourse based on people, health, and emancipation of the working class. Millions of working-class people have been forced to pick between coronavirus and health! Thousands of Romanian workers, some during the lockdown, were allowed by the government to leave and to go work in Germany, in the UK, on plantations, picking fruits, sometimes with no protection and no health benefits, while the tech industry showed how the apparent inability to work from home for the exploited is a farce! It should not surprise us that so many proletarians sadly do not understand the real threat of the virus – they have to be dismissive in order to not become insane, because they are forced to endanger themselves to not starve! Many disillusioned middle-class youths, or even working-class youths, in the face of this crisis of horrible proportions are unable to pause their hedonistic lifestyles because this is how they have been rendered by brutal consumerist propaganda – bars and pubs and clubs re-open, nobody wears masks, and another wave of the virus hits harder! We need to educate the working-class Youth to survive in this horrible circumstance, in this

capitalism decay, whilst also thinking further than that – because this coronavirus pandemic is only the beginning of further global collapse.

We should not say capitalism has failed. The bureaucracy of capitalism, the political structures of the capitalist economies have actually been functioning perfectly, as intended – they have protected the markets and capital whilst ignoring our welfare and the working class.

Revolutionary Communist Youth League (Bolsheviks) - RKSMb

Dear Comrades, let me greet all of you on behalf of the Revolutionary Communist Youth League — RKSM[b]! Our youth organization is deeply grateful to the Communist Youth of Turkey for arranging this meeting and inviting us to participate in it! And thanks to all Communist Youth organizations who attend in this event today!

Up to the end of the year 2019 the crisis of imperialism was reaching its peak. Contradictions between different groups of financial monopolies were sharpening, destabilization was growing, affecting markets in almost every country of the modern capitalist world, which, of course means, affecting workers of all nations, making their lives even more miserable. And there came the virus. Pandemic of COVID-19, whose threat was underestimated by many bourgeois governments in the beginning, aggravated development of the economic crisis of capitalism. When the threat had become clear, once again, capitalist governments demonstrated their inability to protect peoples from such challenging phenomena. Too busy with protecting private capital, administrations of many capitalist states failed to protect workers, pensioners and youth from the upcoming disaster. You know the story, comrades. Lockdowns, quarantines, and so called “cost optimization” measures of companies, that left countless number of workers and their families around the globe out of their working places, out of their homes and some of them

even their lives. As it was expected crisis affected Russian people too.

It might look like the first wave of the pandemic was held by Russian government comparatively well. Measures were taken to seize the spread of the virus over the country: outdoor moving of people was restricted, schools and universities were transferred on remote studying from homes, as well as many office employees who had to work remotely. Before summer, spreading of the virus was suppressed by these measures. But even though this fact sounds positively, it has another side. Private capital responded on that measures with “cost optimizations”, firing thousands of workers, unemployment was growing tremendously. Many enterprises were sending workers to unpaid leave or cut wages. Quality of education fell even lower than it did years before. All this side-effects of anti-pandemic measures have once again disclosed following facts:

- 1) bourgeoisie government is not able to fulfill properly its responsibilities within healthcare, education and other important social areas during considerably calm time, and completely fails in the moment of crisis;
- 2) market economy, based on the difference and contradiction of interests of different holders of means of production is not able to mobilize itself and organize cooperation of all its participants in the struggle for health and lives of entire society;
- 3) instead of mutual help within common struggle for lives of people during pandemic, imperialist states rather uses pandemic to fulfill their

geopolitical ambitions, discouraging the anti-pandemic struggle.

The second wave is another tragic prove of the fact, that bourgeoisie government's priority – is to save private capital and its profits first. Regardless of dangerous pace with which new coronavirus is spreading, Russian government hesitates to implement even those measures that were implemented in Russia this spring, even though death toll is rising daily: in Russia this week virus was killing in average more than 300 people every day. But cafes, restaurants, malls and cinemas are still open. Only now they've began to implement certain restrictions and measures to slowdown the spread. Meanwhile in many regions of Russia hospitals and ambulances are overloaded during several weeks.

Labor protests had increased it's number since the spring, comparing to the previous years. Workers are organizing strikes all around the country, and in some cases they even got to direct aggressive actions out of outrage, for example In July on the Amur, workers at the construction site of a large raw materials monopoly company, due to non-payment of wages, seized the contractor's office, causing riots in it. The workers' revolt was suppressed by the police forces. There were strikes of the workers who works in the areas where demand had increased due to pandemic, like delivery service sector. Also in July in Moscow couriers of food [mostly migrants and students] organized strike and founded their trade union, called "Kurier". These and many others strikes and protests in different regions of Russia and diffe-

rent economic sectors, are not connected and not cooperated between each other, and has occasional character. Special attention deserves struggle of medical staff, who are fighting against pandemic on the front line. Many doctors and nurses died due to coronavirus, fighting this battle, saving thousands of lives. These heroes are not able to just organize a strike or to refuse to work in this difficult period of time, to make government pay them for their sacrifice, but still they are struggling, organizing meetings and pickets. In September medical staff in many cities of Russia have organized protests campaign under the slogan "Pay for the COVID!", because many doctors and nurses didn't get promised compensation for working with patients infected with COVID-19.

On the other hand we have historical examples of how this kind of challenges better be overthrown: at the end of December 1959 one soviet artist returned to Moscow from India, without knowing that he brought smallpox. He died six days after his arrival. On January 15th 1960, infection was confirmed, when it was already rapidly spreading. In short period of time all contacts were determined, in entire Moscow region was shutdown, all railways and flight were closed, even passenger-jet departed from Moscow was turned back on it's way to Paris. Planes delivered 10 millions doses of vaccine to Moscow from different regions. Up to January 25th 5,559,670 citizens of Moscow were vaccinated, as well as 4,000,000 people from the Moscow region. From the moment of arrival of the infection to Moscow it

arrival of the infection to Moscow it took 44 days to completely stop the outbreak, and only 19 days since the outbreak was discovered. As an outcome of the outbreak: none of people lost their jobs or their homes; 45 people were infected and only 3 persons had died. Mind that smallpox is spreading much faster than COVID-19 and it is much more dangerous.

Soviet Union has made a great contribution to defeat smallpox in the world, providing 1.5 bln dozes of vaccine and many soviet specialists to the countries where this disease was not defeated yet.

Here you may compare and see, what the difference between two systems. What is important for capitalist system and what for Socialism. Unfortunately, today we have to deal with the system, which thinks rather not about what it must sacrifice in order to save peoples lives, but about how many lives it can sacrifice in order to secure profits for privet capital. And that is what we, as communist youth, are trying to explain to students and young workers. Capitalist system is the reason of why peoples are facing not only this pandemic tragedy, but apart of it also crisis, poverty, hunger, ignorance, wars, violence used by police forces, destruction of the nature and many other major problems of the modern world. Now, in the day 103 years after Great October Socialist Revolution, and in the year of 150th anniversary of dear Comrade Vladimir Lenin, we, once again, appeal to the youth of Russia and entire world, to join the organized struggle of the working class, to overthrow

the barbaric system of capitalism, and to build socialism and communism!

Young Communist League of Yugoslavia, SKOJ

Dear comrades!

On behalf of the Central Committee of SKOJ I greet you all and I congratulate you and your organisations members the 103-rd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution! We hope that all of your members and comrades are in good health and that their fighting spirit was not undermined by the pandemic situation. We want to thank the Communist Youth of Turkey [TKG] for organising this meeting which we find very important for our common struggle.

Due to the situation with covid-19 pandemic we were not able to organise the Meeting of Communist Youth Organisations [MECYO] which was planned to be held in Belgrade. We express our hope that the problem with coronavirus will be solved and that we will be able to organise it in 2021. We consider MECYO as very important event for the struggle and prestige of our organisation, as well as the strengthening international solidarity in a common fight for the causes of Marxism-Leninism.

We are in the midst of the pandemic of the new coronavirus threatening people in our country and the peoples of the entire world. UN predicted that unemployed will be arose in the near future by 315 million people. The resurgence of the pandemic in the World bears the stamp of capitalist policy, which gambled the health of the people for the big business interests, especially in tourism and transportation, and did not strictly follow the health

protocols and protection measures. For the leading capitalist countries the criteria was to control the effects of the pandemic on the economy in the best way possible, especially during tourist season and thanks for it, we could see an uncontrolled outbreak of the pandemic, as we have seen in other EU countries, Brazil and the US. The criteria was, therefore, the proper function of capitalism. In fact, the international difficulty of the system in addressing the pandemic, with the millions of dead, shows that the problem is deeper and entirely due to the barbarity of the system that treats health as a commodity. The pandemic acted as a catalyst for the outbreak of a new and deep capitalist crisis on a global scale, as the signs were already visible. The crisis arose from the “normality” of the contradictions of the capitalist system and no mixture of management can prevent its manifestation.

The adoption of an expansionist-Keynesian policy by the EU and the capitalist states, i.e. a greater state intervention, with the allocation of funds to business groups and other similar measures that are necessary for the capitalist economic recovery, will not bring a dynamic growth, not even to any level of the past, because the previous capitalist recovery was also weak and did not reach the pre-crisis levels. The basic problem of capitalism to return to previous growth rates and manage the over-accumulation of capital, the debt, etc, remains and is sharpened.

Furthermore, the workers will not benefit from this growth, while at the

same time the fierce attack on the workers'-people's income and all rights continues. A bigger state intervention, after all, puts again the burden on the people, in a different way. The people are to pay the new governments loans and lift the burden of the loss-making private business groups.

The money, which is allocated to support the capital through state subsidies, freeing businessmen from debts and losses, will be earned from the bleeding and heavy taxation of the workers and the popular strata.

The situation formed in the workplaces under the pretext of the pandemic is explosive and cannot be prettified with the crumbs of subsidies, from which big employers benefit again through the subsidy of salaries. Unemployment, redundancies, part-time work, rapid expansion of flexible working forms, intensification, special purpose leaves, extension of teleworking, increase of unpaid working hours, unpaid overtime in case of preventive quarantine of employees, reductions in wages, and debts of households, self-employed, small and medium-scale farmers have skyrocketed. These measures, which passed with various governments Legislative Acts, will continue to be valid, unless the labor-popular movement abolishes them.

WE DO NOT DENY INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

But individual responsibility is established when a state assumes its own primary responsibility.

Lot of governments communication strategy of turning everything into "individual responsibility" is devious, precisely because it hides the truth from the people.

It aims to conceal the enormous shortcomings in the public health system due to the EU's overall policy, which has been accepted and endorsed by bourgeois governments, as well as the to date policy of degradation, commercialization, and cuts that all governments, have followed over time.

The hypocrisy of the current all bourgeois governments in the World is also proved by the necessary restrictive measures. Because these measures stop outside the "gates" of workplaces, hospitals, supermarkets and other workplaces, where workers are crowded without the necessary precautionary measures.

And all this, while there is the example of Italy, where, as it is alleged, the spread of the virus is largely due to the fact that, under the responsibility of industrialists and the government, the large industrial zone of the North has not ceased to operate, acting as the main outbreak centre.

After all, the dissolution of the public health system, from the obsolete or non-existent Primary Health Care up to major hospitals that had already reached their limits independently from the pandemic, now has its own seal.

THE MYTH WHICH IS UTTERLY REFUTED during the coronavirus

pandemic is the one saying that the public and the private sector can coexist harmoniously and thus contribute to address this situation. This myth is refuted by the profiteering of private health centers conducting the coronavirus testing, which is only accessible to those who can afford it, depriving state planning of valuable resources and at the same time increasing the risk of spreading the virus.

This myth is also refuted by the fact that the state depends on the world market “war” conducted by the big companies, which found the opportunity to run a very lucrative business, for the supply of basic material and drugs.

The necessity for an exclusively public and free Health system with the abolition of any business activity has been dramatically demonstrated.

THE SECOND MYTH WHICH IS REFUTED is the one about “returning to normality” and high growth rates. All of this now give their place to the acceptance that the Serbian economy as well is in deep recession.

The slowdown of the economy in the EU and other major capitalist economies has, of course, preceded, increasing the risk of a new capitalist crisis.

The measures taken by the EU and the governments of its member states, proceeding to protectionist measures, closing borders, and financing their own monopoly groups with funding packages, will not stop this course.

We must know that this Keynesian-type state intervention, as well as the promoted fiscal relaxation, to support

the capitalist economy, will be paid once again by the workers who will be called to fill the new fiscal gaps and the new lending.

As for the famous “European solidarity”, it sounds like a joke, even among the bourgeois circles of the country. Especially when, in the European Union of “freedom of movement of goods”, Germany and France even banned the export of the necessary sanitary material to other countries!

It is therefore proved also in this way, and even in tragic times for the peoples of Europe, that the EU is not a union of peoples, but a “predatory alliance” and a “lion’s den”, an imperialist union of states, demonstrating the necessity of not just a more tough stance against it, as various bourgeois parties promote when they are in opposition, but of a political and strategic choice that will lead to disentanglement from it, with the working class and the people of each country having power and ownership.

It turns out that contemporary needs and social goods, such as health, cannot be left to the mercy of markets and profit.

This decay cannot be concealed by the adjectives that some people use to describe capitalism, such as “neoliberal capitalism”, “extreme capitalism” and so on, ultimately only to conceal that they fully support the capitalist system itself.

Because, now it can no longer be said that “it may be a wrong approach”, a “simple political strategy mistake” that may perhaps be “corrected by

individual improvements” or by “changing some managers of the bourgeois power by alternating from liberals to social democrats” and vice versa ... It is the same old story ...

But the people in this case are permanently intubated, trapped in conditions of a coronavirus pandemic which may not be that difficult, but in any case under capitalist conditions.

These outrageous situations, with doctors being forced to choose who will live and who will die, exist both in countries with “neoliberal” governments, such as Italy, but also in countries where fake “progressive alliances” govern, such as Spain.

Today capitalism itself is bankrupt, the market economy itself in all its versions is bankrupt, which nullifies every opportunity for the working class and the people to enjoy high-quality health services in line with the evolution of science and technology, precisely because its main criterion is capitalist profit.

Even in pandemic conditions, everything is subject to the profitability of the capital. This is why workers in the industries of Northern Italy have been working despite the prohibitions, without protective measures, with the known tragic results.

This is why the competition between transnational monopolies over who will patent the new vaccine is sharpening, at a time when there should be cooperation and joint efforts by the world's best scientists and research centers.

This is why even now the big emp-

loyers trample over any remaining labor rights, try new forms of exploitation, such as teleworking, and proceed to mass layoffs.

Against the decay of bankrupt capitalism, we can clearly see the superiority of socialism that ensured health and healthcare for all, let alone in the previous century and in countries that began its construction under conditions of great delay at all levels.

The figures in Soviet Russia 30 years ago, which cannot even be compared to the situation prevailing in EU countries, are relentless: over 1.1 million doctors, exclusively free healthcare for the entire population, 1,387 hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants. Even today, the mission of the Cuban doctors to Italy, the Health infrastructure in countries such as Germany, existing thanks to the socialist system of half of Germany back then, the German Democratic Republic, and even the management of the pandemic in socialist China and Vietnam show that socialism has left its powerful social imprint even three decades after its overthrow in the Eastern Europe. Thanks for socialism heritage, in Serbia and cooperation with socialist China we succeed to secure lives and our healthcare system.

So in these unprecedented conditions, we must stay strong, we struggle for protection measures of workers' lives and rights, we put forward the only perspective for the working class, the majority of our people, which is the new society, i.e. socialism.

The tangible superiority of socialism, social ownership, and central scien-

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The tangible superiority of socialism, social ownership, and central

scientific planning is the great legacy for the next day.

We must deny any political “quarantine”, we must oppose the “quarantine” in thought. We think, study and act, facing today, adapting our action, but also looking to the future, preparing tomorrow.

The protection of public health is mainly ensured by preventive measures, first and foremost in large workplaces, and by the decisive strengthening of the public health system. This is also proved by the experience from other countries, such as Italy.

Under no circumstances should individual responsibility be blamed for state deficiencies or the pandemic outbreak be exclusively attributed to individual behaviors, so that major state deficiencies remain unaffected.

From this point of view, the minimum and obvious action, which should have already been taken, is the requisition of private health units and their integration into state planning, the immediate supply of hospitals with all necessary means required by the healthcare personnel. To open all ICUs [Intensive Care Unit] and recruit the necessary healthcare personnel. To take measures to avoid congestion and provide the necessary protection measures in workplaces, supermarkets, pharmacies, hospitals, means of transport, etc., where the virus can be easily spread.

We invite progressive people of all countries to take their struggle for achieving the free, accessible and public healthcare. We consider that a capi-

talist society health is not a necessity but a commodity and that only the abolition of capitalist and establishment of socialist system can and save lives and provide people the health protection they deserve. Corona is the virus, capitalism is the pandemic

Collectives of Young Communists, CJC

Dear comrades,

First, we want to thank the comrades of the Communist Youth of Turkey for their commitment in organizing this online MECYO. We equally want to convey our support to the Communist Youth Organizations present here in their struggle and our solidarity to the ensemble of the working-class and people's youth in your countries. It is suffering in its own flesh, just like in Spain, a management of the crisis addressed in every moment to assure the plundering of capitalists on the working class, even when there is a first-class health emergency like the one we are experiencing since almost one year ago.

Comrades,

The management of the pandemic in Europe makes more conspicuous than ever the role of the capitalist State as the main guarantor of the interests of the bourgeoisie. The alleged divisions within the political scheme – left vs. right, progressiveness vs. conservatism – disappear when the profits of the bourgeoisie are at risk, even if the price is the health and lives of thousands of workers. A look to the measures adopted in our country is enough to check that the bourgeois political specter has mainly not been significant when managing this crisis. Therefore, one should not be taken aback to witness how the appeals to national unity against the alleged enemy the virus is have multiplied all over Europe.

In this way, managers of capital attempt to place in the same sphere workers – forced to keep working every day without any warrants of health safety – and bourgeois – who prioritize their million profits to the death of thousands of workers –. We say, loud and clear, that the only unity that should exist is the class, and the main enemy we have are capitalists and those who support them.

The largest part of economic indexes increasingly evidence that the economic crisis now starting worldwide will be one of the direst in recent history. This will lead to a dramatic worsening of life conditions for workers, especially for its youth, with very high unemployment rates and a temporary employment almost already assumed as mandatory. This new crisis, catalyzed by the pandemic – and not caused by it, as they will try to make us believe in the following months –, will further increase the exclusion of the working-class and people's youth of the education, will widen the system inequalities suffered by working women, and will multiply the cases of depression and anxiety among the youth.

Dear comrades,

The current situation of Spain is one of the most serious of Europe, with a second wave causing more than 1 million of accumulated cases. This is not a coincidence. This summer the public health system was not strengthened nor a safe start of the school year was prepared. Actually, it was done on the contrary: because of entrepreneurial pressures, especially

those linked to the touristic sector, a completely hasty de-escalation accompanied by an institutional speech on the population being able to recover normality was made. However, the failure of the measures that pretended to save the touristic season and forgot to reinforce the public assistance services was evident.

The current Spanish Government, the PSOE and Unidas Podemos coalition, has counted with the “Temporary Layoffs” [ERTE] as the alleged safeguard of employment among its main measures. The State had to take charge of most of the wages of workers in those companies unable to maintain their activity against what they labelled as a V-shaped crisis, i.e. a deep but short-term crisis strictly related to the effects and rhythm of the virus. Nowadays, the reality could not be more different, as more companies are announcing that these layoffs will end up being permanent. The State has spent thousands of millions of public funds to save these companies and it is proving to be unable to assure the most basic life conditions of thousands of workers doomed to unemployment.

It is true that certain allegedly social measures have been announced, being the most showy the creation of the Minimum Vital Income, a supposed basic income which up to half a million of working-class families under especially precarious conditions could benefit from. However, these measures have reached barely 100 thousand families right now. Nonetheless, these measures are certifying the failure of a system unable to grant a worthy life

to millions of workers, at the same time that a few are accumulating enough wealth to solve all the economic problems our class is suffering. It is also certifying the need of capitalists to maintain a huge industrial army that exerts pressure downwards to the labor conditions of the ensemble of the working class.

We cannot ignore the collaboration of allegedly communist Ministers in all of this. They announced with fanfare the alleged ban on dismissals during the pandemic as well as the inaction of the main trade union boards, which are whitening the current Government thus containing the social response to the new capitalist crisis. We should alert how the frustration derived from the false illusions placed by these sectors in the current Government, which can lead to wide sections of the people to fall in increasingly reactionary stances. We have been witnessing how the far-right now represented in our country by VOX, and with the assistance of the large media groups, is gaining positions in workers’ and people’s environments, spreading again the hate and lies against immigrant workers, among the different nationalities and demagogically shaking again the specter of communism.

Comrades,

In the first months of the pandemic, the CJC denounced that alleged total confinement which maintained in every moment the production of sectors which cannot be labelled as “basic”. In this sense, we paid our attention especially towards the catering sector as it is an especially young one,

highlighting the riders, whose false status as “self-employed workers” is taken as an advantage by certain companies so they do not need to assure to them the most basic labor rights. About this, we have been warning for some time on the standardization of the “uberization” of labor relations, i.e. the disposal of workforce totally “at demand” by employers.

At a students’ level, dependent on an educational system weakened after many years of privatizations and no investment, there has been no drafting of a plan for the start of the school year in order to assure the health measures required for the presence of students as a key element of public education. A return to the online model could leave behind thousands of working-class students who do not have enough technological means. Both the CJC and the Front of Students have been denouncing this situation among students. However, against the possibility to a new confinement, we will appeal as we did last year to solidarity between students, promoting initiatives of school support among the students themselves, linked to the denounce of the class-oriented management of the pandemic also in the educational sphere, whose result has been an increase of segregation.

Last, we want to highlight the mobilizations that have taken place in working-class neighborhoods, requesting for a larger public investment in primary attention centers. But especially the struggle of the working-class neighborhoods in Madrid, who witnessed how it was their neighborhoods the only ones to be confined when the

decision was made after the unstoppable increase in the number of cases in the city. Meanwhile the wealthiest areas were kept open despite having similar contagion rates and even higher ones. The CJC and the PCTE were present in the mobilizations following these measures denouncing the reason why the answer given by the different – regional and State – governments was the increase of police agents, sanctions and even police charges against the mobilized neighbors.

Dear comrades,

It is more necessary than ever the strengthening of the international ties between our organizations. It is our duty to offer the working-class and people’s youth an alternative to the barbarism of capital, an alternative rising to the occasion. We should get ready for a full-scale capitalist offensive against the interests of our class, which will be hidden under the glorification of national, religious, or other differences between the workers of the world. The increase of inter-imperialist tensions – increasingly ending in open conflicts like the one currently happening between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in which the working class can only lose – is not a coincidence.

We equally stress on the necessary struggle against those who, under allegedly progressive positions, pretend us to settle for the crumbs that capitalists are offering to us. They are taking large sections of our class to dead ends.

Our path cannot avoid the defense of the political and ideological independence of the working-class youth, its organization at workplaces, in the neighborhoods and schools; turning these spaces – our spaces – into real trenches. Trenches to lead the counter-attack from, to spread again the struggle for a new society where there is no room for the exploitation of a majority by a few privileged. Precisely today, at the anniversary of the Soviet takeover in Petrograd, it is more important than ever to remember that that revolution was made not only against the remnants of tsarism, but also against those who wanted to place the working class in the defence of bourgeois power, under the argument of its possible peaceful reform and the lack of political capacity of the working class. But as the Bolsheviks did 103 years ago today. Our duty among the working class is to make the word “revolution” sound present again and therefore we declare:

Communism is the youth of the world!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

Communist Youth Union of Spain, UJCE

Comrades,

Fraternal greetings on behalf of the Communist Youth Union of Spain [UJCE] and all of its members, especially on this important day, the anniversary of the October Revolution. First of all, we would like to share our best wishes with you, your comrades, family and friends in this difficult situation we are suffering around the world because of the pandemic. Thanks again to the Turkish comrades for the work done to organise this important online meeting of the Communist Youth Organisations of Europe even in these difficult times we are living. Despite the pandemic, the work of communists towards Socialism must continue. Moreover, because of the pandemic, the need for young communists to fight for that Socialist horizon has become more pressing than ever. We will try to explain briefly what has been and what is the situation of the pandemic in Spain, and the role that we have played as UJCE in this scenario.

1) The evolution of the data on contagion, deaths etc. and tendencies in Spain

The first confirmed contagion case in Spain was documented on January 31, being a tourist who had previously been in contact with a patient. The first case of a local contagion was not confirmed up until the 27th of February. That suggested the virus had expanded through the country without having been identified for a month at least. From then on, its inc-

rease in Spain grew at an exponential rate, affecting especially places with large concentrations of people. There have been 1.3 million people infected in Spain and at least 38,486 people have died because of COVID-19. Nevertheless, the number of hospitalised people, patients in intensive care units and the deceased has not stopped growing during the first days of the isolation of March. This fact doesn't only have to do with the virus' lethality and the increase of contagion but also with the precariousness of the public health system, which has suffered cutoffs and its services being outsourced or privatised for the last decade.

2) Impact of the coronavirus in the working-class extraction youth in the study and work centres

The situation of the youth, as well as of the whole working class, was already precarious before the capitalist crisis that has accelerated the pandemic. When our class was still dragging the consequences of the 2008 crisis and the cuts that were imposed under the excuse of that capitalist crisis, this new one has exploded to condemn our generation to a life plunged into precariousness.

Impact of the coronavirus in work centres

Furthermore, thousands of workers are suffering these days from temporary lay-offs of staff [Expedientes de regulación temporal de empleo, ERTes]. While the companies' profits are reassured through multi-millionaire government-sponsored guarantees, the working-class youth is being

pushed to the ERTes as a means for the bourgeoisie to minimise its economic risks. This way, they suspend our contracts and reduce our salaries, not ensuring that we have enough to face home rent, electricity, heat and food among others. The working-class youth is also suffering from mass redundancy, again without securing our material needs. Such is the case for the seasonal workers whose contracts are over or those workers who are paid under the counter whose income disappears. The difficulties to secure the Social Security contributions make access to unemployment benefits complicated, leaving thousands of us in a most absolute state of instability and poverty. Nor is telework the solution to this health crisis. Firstly, it is a measure the whole of the working class cannot take and, thus, it is not a valid solution. Furthermore, the lack of regulations on telework increases the exploitation of the working-class youth, blurring the workday schedule and the workplace. Likewise, the cost reduction it means to the company is burdened upon the worker whose bills are increased due to a rise in the use of facilities we need to work from home, for it is we who set the means needed to work [electricity, furniture, equipment]. The Government recently approved a regulation of telework which, in the beginning, stated that the enterprises should afford all of its costs, but after strong pressure from the bourgeoisie via its media and political organisations part of the regulation was repealed.

Impact of the coronavirus in study centres

During the first wave of the pandemic, online study was adopted as a measure to afford the situation. However, at the start of the course in September, and even now in this second wave of the pandemic, the studies are done at the study centres. Anyway, this was the situation that students suffered from the first wave of the pandemic when the face-to-face study was suspended. The online lectures preferred by most of the study centres, institutes, professional training centres and universities in Spain cannot be carried out by those who do not have the needed informatic resources in their homes, such as a WiFi network, a personal computer or a printer; or by those who despite having them cannot access them as they are also used by their relatives, who still have to telework so the capitalists' profit rate does not decrease. Besides, those who combine study and work to pay tuition fees or school materials have experienced how, when we are not forced to keep on working for the company in a perilous situation, the lay-offs [temporary or not] have made it harder to pay those fees, a situation worsened by the universities, which are not planning on returning a part of the fees due to the lack of face-to-face teaching, nor are they planning on an extension of the student grants to compensate for these damages. All of this comes into play in the middle of the alarm that has grown within our families through these days due to the expansion of the COVID-19 and the large material instability from the incoming economic crisis, which makes it impossible for us to reproduce the academic habits we had in our study centres.

3] Political situation in Spain on the COVID-19

As we said before, on March 14 the first state of alarm was declared. The declaration was delayed for too long while waiting to know the size of the epidemic and how it could impact the Spanish economy. In this declaration, isolation measures were enacted so that nobody could exit their homes but to get to work or seek assistance. Leisure services and catering services were completely closed and only productive labour was kept working. After that declaration of the state of alarm, many measures have been taken, all of them sharing a characteristic: they are presented as a restraint for any immediate catastrophe towards the working class in Spain, but without solving the severe situation threatening us in the middle and long term. An example of what happened with these measures is the shutdown of all the non-essential production [from March 29 to April 13]. This shutdown had been one of the most demanded measures for long. While it was finally enacted, we found a limitation in this measure, as it turned into a returnable paid leave which meant that the hours not worked during this shutdown must be returned before the end of this year. That is to say, there was no shutdown but a deferment instead. After April 13, despite most of the recommendations made by scientists, the shutdown finished and the productive economy was resumed due to the pressure of the bourgeoisie. Broadly speaking, the role the bourgeoisie has played in Spain during the health crisis has been one of complete belli-

gerence, being one of the main actors to ensure the capitalists' interests are fulfilled over the health of the working class. The employers have constantly pressured to avoid any kind of isolation affecting the production in Spain to assure that the Government played its part protecting their profits and all the costs the COVID-19 crisis could bring fall on the working class. The 28th of April, a process of de-escalation of the confinement in several phases was also announced, which varied the permitted activities [individual, sports, commercial, etc.] and the controlled capacity for the different spaces. This de-escalation was accelerated because of corporate pressures, putting millions of people at risk. Now, in the second wave of the pandemic, we are seeing this role of the Spanish bourgeoisie even clearer. The main motto that accompanies any measure is to avoid the economic consequences of new home confinement. Although the data are getting close to those achieved in the first wave of the pandemic [with around 20.000 contagions and 200 deaths every day], the measures are less restrictive and are aimed at reducing any activity except economic one. The situation of "state of alert" was called again the 25th of October, pretending to maintain it until May 2021, but this time instead of whole state-enforced home confinement, each region's autonomous government has the ability to enforce different measures related to their epidemic situation. Faced with these measures, the far-right reactionary forces, especially VOX, is trying to capitalize on the discontent, presenting itself as the only real political force defending

freedom, denying COVID severity and even promoting conspiracy theories, in a way it resembles the United States far-right. To this end, it has called for various demonstrations, launched several campaigns, extensive use of fake news and disinformation [not only against the government, but also trying to promote hate among the poor, immigrants, and the sectors most affected by the crisis], carried out a failed motion of no-confidence in Parliament against the government and more recently it has called for riots in the streets and then blame immigrants and antifascists for them.

4) The work of the UJCE concerning the COVID-19

One of the most important tasks for us as Communist Youth was, in the face of the state of alarm, the isolation juncture, and other measures which meant difficulties to take the streets. We had to rethink our external goals and those concerning the reorganisation of the working-class youth. For that matter, two key concepts concerning our external work were pointed out: on one side, on an ideological level and, on the other side, that concerning our work among the masses itself.

On the ideological level

We set our goal on making a campaign dealing with those issues concerning the working-class youth as a consequence of the enactment of the state of alarm and facing the health crisis. For that matter, the main lines are: In the work sphere. We understood the defence of the rights of the working class at all cost and the fight

against the relapses in labour rights which would take place during the isolation period with the excuse of the exceptional juncture were fundamental. In the educational sphere. As an organization, we've always claimed that the continuity of the academic calendar through ICTs would raise the segregation rate and it would hit the working-class students harder. Now that the education face-to-face has restarted, the main problem is that the ratio of students per classroom has not decreased, not enough teachers have been hired, and in general, not enough has been invested by the central and regional governments in security measures to ensure that classrooms are not a source of contagion. In the care sphere. Under the situation of isolation and the closure of public services such as kindergartens, schools and daycare centres for the elderly and the disabled; along with the vulnerability in which many people in our country live and the inability of the State to give a correct answer to all of this, we have been supporting class solidarity in our districts through the promotion of self-organized networks.

External work lines

In the work sphere. As the UJCE we are aware of the clear need of taking part in the labour conflicts created in this situation, supporting the self-organisation of the workers. Therefore, we must boost the trade unions so that they do not accept any resignation concerning labour rights as an excuse to deal with the hard situation we are living because of the pandemic. In the educational sphere. From the moment in which the cancellation of

the academic calendar was enacted in some territories, we all knew it was just a matter of time that it would replicate in the whole of Spain. Therefore, as we have already pointed out, we put our student unions and associations to work in measures dealing with class solidarity, with the creation of online lessons and lecture-note repositories. Now that face-to-face education has returned, our demands go in the direction of demanding that schools not be a focus for contagion. In the working-class districts. Apart from pointing out the companies' abuses concerning the conciliation measures, our support to class solidarity and the popular answer is the main axes to answer such a crisis. Therefore, support networks dealing with care work (grocery shopping, childcare, elderly care, food distribution) were created and strengthened to serve those people who cannot conciliate their labour and family life during this situation or those who are facing a situation of vulnerability.

What to do now as young communists?

Although there's still months or even years before the pandemic ends, the consequences the COVID-19 is having in our countries and especially in the capitalist system are evident. A new capitalist crisis is starting, whilst the working class is still suffering the consequences of the previous one. Likewise, the intentions of the bourgeoisie on making the working class pay for the capitalist crisis are becoming visible. Facing this situation, our work as young communists must re-double. On one side, assuming

the main rôle on the organisation of working-class solidarity against the misery this new crisis will bring with itself. The support networks created to face the COVID-19 must be an example for the future. On the other side, pointing out this crisis and its consequences toward the working class have someone to blame: the capitalist system. Only through the organisation of our class and fighting for the building of Socialism, we will be able to end the miseries we are doomed to face. Comrades, it's in our hands that after these months of suffering for our peoples we can achieve a decent life for the youth and the working class. We wish you many successes and victories.

Communist Youth of Catalonia, JCC

Dear comrades,

First, we would like to send our best wishes to all of you and your organizations. We hope that, despite the pandemic situation, your activity keeps going on, and we would like to send our sincere support to those who suffer directly or indirectly the worst consequences of COVID-19. We appreciate a lot the organization of this event by the comrades of the Communist Youth of Turkey [TKG], to whom we send a special greeting after the last week earthquake.

The situation produced by the pandemic has shocked the whole world, but specially has shocked our continent, Europe. A continent that was not used to face this kind of problems, whose States have not been really worried about other illness and pandemics that were existing and exist in other parts of the world. When our continent, and specially the European Union institutions, were starting to focus on a supposed economy recovery after the crisis of 2008, they have had to face the thread of the COVID-19. The virus has proven how the neoliberal policies have diminished the public sector: the incapacity to provide health care during the first wave, the inability to have a scholar course in acceptable conditions, the lack of policies focused on guarantee the minimal living conditions such as housing have proved how capitalism is not and never will be a system for the people.

We have seen how this crisis has been

a window of opportunity for dangerous positions that must be stopped. We can see how the extreme right is trying to use the skepticism and the mistrust on governments and institutions to expand their message and disturb our societies. Far right, united with deniers of the virus and conspiracy theorists, represents a menace for the working class and appears to protect the interests of the national bourgeoisie of our countries who don't care to put workers lives at risk to exploit them. Moreover, the recent terrorists attack happened on France and Austria have been used for spreading racism around the continent. We, the working youth, must fight against racism and radicalized religions; in defense of the human basic rights in our countries and in the countries that have suffered the imperialists wars.

It is not a coincidence that far right imperialists personalities, such as Bolsonaro, Trump or Boris Johnson have shown that position in public: their interests are opposed to ours. We also have seen how the state members of the European Union had an important discussion about the way of financing the funds for the "recovery", with a liberal group pressuring for indebt the countries and a socio-liberal group pressing for an increase in the production of euros. The discussion proved how after the crisis there are still countries which defend the austerity policies, the ones that bring the working class to the ruin while the capitalists keep increasing their bank accounts. In any case, neoliberal policies and social democrat policies come to the same point: a failure for the wor-

institutions will fail again and will not solve the problems that our class has to face. Besides all the social and economic implications of the crisis, which the young working people knows well and by firsthand, we would like to focus our intervention on the necessity of the communist organizations to keep insisting on organizing the working class youth at every neighborhood, workplace, education center and the other spaces in which the young people spend their time. The restrictions applied by governments have limited some of the activities we used to do before, but those restrictions cannot stop our action. The Communist Youth of Catalonia [JCC] has celebrated some important events during this last 8 months since the pandemic stroke us. In the first time, during the confinement we created what we called the “red confinement”, a program of online activities in which we included all kind of talks and events about different things: historical Marxism, international solidarity, sustainability, antifascism and more related issues.

At the same time, we prepared our Third Congress, by having the discussion of the documents and the process of amendments which concluded with the realization of the Congress during the 15th and 16th of July in Barcelona. In this Congress we approved our “Manifest-Program” based on ten sections which titles were: a program for the working youth, for a world of peace, for the democratic breach: a Catalan Republic, to leave precarious work, for a public education, for a revolutionary and class feminism, for LGBT rights, for a popu-

lar culture and an alternative leisure and for a change of system, not the planet. We are working on a translation in English of the conclusions that we wrote at the end of each section which, of course, we will send to your organizations together with the documents in Catalan and Spanish.

Furthermore, we also discussed the working lines that will guide our political action for the new period until our next Congress. We defined more than 200 working lines and at the same time we reorganized our organs by increasing the number of members of the Central and Executive Committees and by developing the intermediate structure of secretaries and working areas that will have to implement those working lines.

Our proposal for this course is to increment the participation of the comrades on the fronts: spaces of international solidarity in our country, on the workers and students union, on the tenants union, on the feminist and ecologists movements, on the youth councils... In summary: wherever we can fight for the working class and to achieve the victories we need or to repel the attacks of neoliberalism. For this month, in which we are facing hard and new restrictions, we are organizing the online formative school “Lina Ódena”. Because as Gramsci once said: “Ideas do not live without organization”.

Beloved comrades, we encourage all of you to keep going on the struggle for the rights of our class and to be the forefront of the revolution. International solidarity among peoples will always be a pillar of the construction of the socialist society. We hope to see you soon on a presential meeting, in which we could all share and concrete our experiences and opinions, as well as we could be having a better space to meet into bilaterals.

Comradely yours.

