Declaration of the 21st Congress of AKEL on the 50 years of Independence of the Republic of Cyprus

The 21st Congress of AKEL on the occasion of celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the declaration of the Republic of Cyprus warmly congratulates and patriotically salutes the Cyprus people, Greekcypriots, Turkishcypriots, Maronites, Armenians and Latins. AKEL expresses its appreciation and respect to all those who fought and many of them were sacrificed for the freedom of Cyprus, to defend the independence, democracy, social progress and prosperity of our people. We honor especially the memory of Archbishop Makarios, first President of the Republic who devoted his life in fighting for the freedom of Cyprus and defending its independence. In the struggles for freedom, independence, democracy and social progress, the Left had its own decisive contribution.

Independence was achieved as a result of years of hard struggle by all of our people against colonialism. The lack of unity on the domestic front and serious tactical errors allowed the enemies of Cyprus to foster the “divide and rule” and eventually to impose the Zurich-London Agreements. The independence, despite the heavy legacy of the Zurich-London Agreements, was a great achievement. After centuries of slavery, Cyprus was incorporated in the international community of free countries and new prospects for economic, social and cultural development of our people were opened. The independence, although under conditions, had to be used to build a better future. Unfortunately, expectations were dashed and very quickly our people went through new adventures and trials, culminating in the twin crime of the fascist coup of the Greek junta and EOKA B and the Turkish invasion and occupation.

Cyprus has victimized for the sake of geo-strategic interests of imperialism and Turkish expansionism. The bitter historical experience teaches that the enemies of Cyprus implemented their projects by taking advantage of the traitorous actions of the extreme right and errors and omissions in the administration of the Cyprus problem. The fact that some people even after independence still had in mind “Enosis” or “partition”, nationalism, chauvinism, searching for the “ideal” instead of the “feasible”, the exploitation of national sentiment and the allegedly patriotic slogans facilitated the enemies of Cyprus to promote their own goals.

Reference to historical anniversaries is important when accompanied by discussion and drawing correct lessons. Unfortunately the reality in Cyprus half a century after independence shows that many remain captives of empty slogans. They seek for unrealistic and idealistic solutions without regard to what has taken place in the last 50 years. They used the patriotic sentiment of our people and take advantage of the injustice that our people justifiably feels.

Evaluating the fifty years of Independence, AKEL notes with great satisfaction that despite the hardships and difficulties the country and our people have made great strides in terms of economic, social and cultural development. AKEL and the broader Popular Movement have contributed significantly in this area. Christofias’ government, following up on a rising growth path, is doing very important work in all sectors, despite the difficulties brought about by the global economic crisis.

Fifty years after independence and 36 years after the coup and the invasion, the Cypriot people continue the struggle for liberation from the occupation and for the reunification of our homeland. Head of this struggle is the President of the Republic Demetris Christofias. He is working hard to overturn the results of the invasion and occupation and to pave the way towards a solution. He follows the policy for which he was committed to the Cypriot people. It is a policy which vigorously defends the basic principles for a settlement of the Cyprus problem, while taking up initiatives to convince for our will for a solution, and promoting proposals that are reasonable, consensual, realistic, serving the agreed framework of a bi-zonal bi-communal federal solution and are consistent with the longstanding positions of the Greekcypriot side.

Our goal remains the elimination of the occupation, ending the colonization and division, the restoration of human rights and fundamental freedoms of our people. These can be achieved through a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, based on the UN resolutions, the High Level agreements and the international and European law. Any abandonment of the target of a federal solution will lead to permanent partition and AKEL will never accept partition.

In order to pave the way for the solution the given political will of the Greekcypriot side and President Christofias is not enough. There should be a similar will on behalf of the other side and especially Ankara. Turkey’s policy must change fundamentally, it must at last comply with the UN resolutions and accept that Cyprus is a truly independent Republic, common house for Greekypriots and Turkishcypriots, without foreign presence and dependencies. The international community, the European Union and all those abroad who say they want the solution of the Cyprus problem, must turn their influence and their pressure on Ankara.

On the occasion of 50th anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus AKEL welcomes our Turkishcypriots compatriots stressing that Cyprus is the common achievement of all Cypriots and all Cypriots have a duty and obligation to fight for the solution of the Cyprus problem and for future generations to live in a united, secure, democratic and prosperous Cyprus.

The solution of the Cyprus problem will not only prevent the dangers posed to our country but will open new horizons for progress and prosperity.

A united, secure, democratic and prosperous Cyprus is not an elusive utopia, but an achievable goal which all Cypriots have to make a reality with our common struggle.

– Long live the 50th anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus