



24th CONGRESS OF AKEL

20 - 21 - 22 June 2026

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A. SPEECHES

Opening Address by Aristos Damianou, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of AKEL

(...)

Comrades, yes, for a whole century now the Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL has been breaking down borders, abolishing imaginary borders.

The first to do so were our veterans, and we behind them. First, we broke down the chains of feudalism, of the large landowners and usurers who exploited the labour and property of the toiling people.

We subsequently fought against Hitlerite fascism. And then we confronted the campaign of terror unleashed by Grivas's hooded men and from the very outset the British colonial yoke.

We resisted ethno-fascism to protect democracy and the Republic and Democracy from the Greek junta and EOKA B, whilst at the same time defending our homeland against the Turkish army invaders.

At the very same time, we waged the struggle to restore democracy and the constitutional order, in the midst of all the displacement as refugees, whilst certain forces/circles were harbouring coupists in their ranks and parliamentary seats opposite us in the Cypriot Parliament.

Throughout these nearly one hundred years of struggle, we have been fighting to abolish the exploitation by fellow human beings.

To reach, yes, as the philosopher-poet wrote, 'where we cannot': to a better, fairer society, where a person's life will not be measured or determined by social class, ethnic origin, colour, beliefs, gender, religion or sexual orientation, but by the most fundamental right: that every person may live with dignity, under conditions of equality before the law and respect for their political and social rights, without discrimination.

In a true state governed by the rule of law, a genuine democracy and one of social justice.

Leaders and representatives of political Parties,

Ladies and gentlemen members of the diplomatic corps,

Representatives of local government,

Distinguished guests,

We welcome you all to the 24th Pan-Cyprian Congress of AKEL. We are honoured by your presence.

Our Congress is taking place at a time when the geopolitical landscape is characterised by instability and uncertainty on a global scale. In Europe itself, people are suffering growing social inequalities and the curbing of their social gains and political rights. The involvement of NATO and third countries in the war between Russia – Ukraine is increasing the dangers for the peoples of Europe. Uncertainty and dangers are multiplying following the new war front opened by the State of Israel against Iran, with the blessing of the US.

A genocide is being committed in our very neighbourhood. The genocide of the Palestinians by the State of Israel. A war crime under international law. History will place on the wrong side all those forces who turn a blind eye to Israel's far-right government. All those who sleep soundly at night after refusing to look into the innocent eyes of the massacred and starving children of Palestine - as if we, the children of the war and our uprooting as refugee in 1974, had a different perception...

All this, at a time characterised by the dangerous rise of the far right, which adopts fascist rhetoric and practices, as well as policies that capitalise on social inequalities and fear.

Comrades,

Our Congress is taking place just one month before the crucial meeting in New York on the Cyprus problem. Without overlooking the difficulties, the unacceptable and partitionist demands of the Turkish side, and its provocative rhetoric and actions, the Greek Cypriot side must remain committed to the agreed framework for a solution, the negotiation *acquis* and, of course, the UN Secretary-General's Framework itself. And it must take substantive initiatives, with the aim of resuming a meaningful dialogue far from serving political considerations.

For AKEL, there is no dilemma. Either we will succeed – by asserting our aims with realism – in reuniting the *de facto* partitioned state of 1960 and transform it into a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality, or we will be left with partition.

And AKEL will never compromise with partition.

At this point, we warmly welcome our Turkish Cypriot compatriots to our Congress. Our common struggles are the bridge across which we shall march together to tear down the barbed wires of division. To rid our homeland of foreign armies and interventions. So that we may at long last, as masters of our own land, build a Cyprus of peace and progress. We owe it to the future generations; we owe it to our honoured veterans; we owe it to our comrades Kavazoglou, Misiaoulis, to all the young people of the Left who watered the tree of freedom, democracy and peaceful coexistence with their bloody sacrifices.

For AKEL, the phrase “One Homeland, One People” is not merely a slogan. It is a compass guiding our struggle and action until vindication.

AKEL cadres and members, men and women alike, united as one, we are the driving force that has been propelling our society forward for a whole century. From the darkness to the light. With the momentum of our honourable history, we are heading into the next hundred years. Towards a new Beginning. Drawing strength from the most militant wing of the People's Movement of the Left, our youth, EDON Youth Organisation. We are ready to again wage struggles, fellow comrades, sisters and brothers.

Because we are the force asserting for our people!

Because we are at the forefront of social and political struggles!

Because we are the most steadfast bulwark against nationalism and fascism!

Because we, along with thousands of others, will step forward once more in the front line of struggle to raise AKEL's honoured banners even higher this coming May in the parliamentary elections!

Because, together with the people, we will once again take the lead to bring about progressive change in our country

Because AKEL is a force – a Force for the Future!

Long live the 24th AKEL Congress!

Long live our Cyprus!

Speech by the General Secretary of the Central Committee, Stefanos Stefanou

Dear guests,

Comrades,

Friends,

I welcome you all to the 24th Pan-Cyprian Congress of AKEL.

I welcome all our guests, who honour us with their presence.

However, I would particularly like to extend, on behalf of us all, a heartfelt welcome to our Turkish Cypriot compatriots and fellow fighters who are here with us today. To the representatives of the progressive Turkish Cypriot forces with whom we are fighting together for reunification and peace in our homeland. We shall continue this struggle in the face of disillusionment and pessimism. We affirm – from the podium of this Congress – that AKEL will continue to be at the forefront of our efforts to achieve, through a solution, a Cyprus free of foreign troops, without partitionist barbed-wire fences and checkpoints.

A federal Cyprus, free from one end to the other.

A Cyprus that belongs to its people: Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians and Latins!
Comrades, Friends,

With this Congress, we aim to give an even greater impetus to the Left's political counter-offensive, across all fronts and at all levels. To restore hope to our people, who so desperately need it. We will achieve this with a renewed, democratic, robust and well-organised Party. A Party that is outward-looking, in step with the challenges of our times and, above all, effective in implementing its policy objectives for the good of our country. For the progress of our country. For the prosperity of our people.

Our Congress marks the implementation of the changes we decided upon together at the Party Statutes Congress in November 2023. With these changes, we are giving an even greater role to Party members and further deepening internal party democracy. Because our Party is, first and foremost, its members, and we trust them.

Our Congress is taking place on the eve of the 100th anniversary of our Party's foundation. A landmark anniversary that gives us an opportunity to say a great deal. These are, after all, pivotal events in the modern history of our country, in which AKEL played a leading role in the struggles for freedom, democracy, progress and social justice.

We honour the past and express our gratitude towards the thousands of our comrades who, each in their own time, faced murder, assassinations, torture, persecution, surveillance, imprisonment and underground struggle. They stood firm in the face of job dismissals, smears and adverse discrimination in the army, at work and in the wider public sector, prioritising the common good and the good of our country.

We honour the past and feel a sense of awe:

- For the struggles waged against colonialism and the realisation of the right to self-determination.
- For the titanic effort made to consolidate independence and develop the newly established bi-communal Cypriot state in the face of all the NATO conspiracies and machinations.
- For the struggles to defend democracy, against EOKA B' and the treacherous coup.
- For the struggles to defend freedom against Turkey's invading 'Operation Attila' and for a solution to the Cyprus problem.
- For the class struggles waged through which we gained better working conditions and a better standard of living – the eight-hour working day, social insurance, the Cost of Living Allowance, improved wages and safety in the workplace.
- For the political and social struggles to ensure we have a strong welfare state and a well-developed rule of law.

We could say a great deal about the past, but the 24th Congress is about the present and the future. After all, the past serves as a source of inspiration and guidance, not nostalgia.

That's the reason why, I too, speaking from the podium of the 24th Congress, feel a duty to speak about the future of the Party and of our country.

It is our firm belief that the Left, in these bleak times of depoliticisation and populism, can play a leading role with the same vigour and dynamism. Because AKEL has a purpose and a role to play, with its gaze always fixed on society and the real needs of the people.

We are a force tied to the people, struggling amongst the people, whose lifeblood is our contact with the people. But most importantly, we are a force that has the courage to embrace change, to constantly renew itself, to evolve without losing sight of its path and its destination. An organisation that does not evolve and modernise is doomed to wither and, ultimately, disappear.

We have never feared change. It is part of our mindset. It is a fundamental element of our DNA. It is a prerequisite of our ideology. If this is not constantly enriched and developed, it turns into a dogma that traps us in the past, loses touch with reality and, inevitably, leads to decline.

AKEL is embarking on a new historical chapter and has chosen to continue waging its battles where real life unfolds. We have a different vision for the pillars of our country's governance and we are putting it forward through legislative initiatives and through mass and protest actions.

In politics, everything stems from the philosophy and understanding that each person has of society and the place of the individual within it. For a century now, we have been fighting alongside the people, for the people. That is precisely what we will continue to do! Because, for us, the economy is not merely about numbers but the arena in which we responsibly invest in development and social welfare.

Our proposal to tax the banks' windfall profits – to cite just one example – was a battle that was decided 'on the ground' and revealed who stands with society and who stands with the powerful interests. And we, as we always have been and will continue to be, stand with society!

We are all judged by our actions. All the more so when it comes to achievements of paramount importance, such as the Co-operative Movement. An achievement that the DISY government deliberately bankrupted in order to give the banking cartel free rein to act as it pleases. It is worth reiterating from the floor of this Congress that the re-establishment of the Co-operative Movement is a goal that AKEL wholeheartedly embraces and consistently supports. And we shall achieve it! Not only because we owe it to the generations who built it, but also because modern Cypriot society and the economy – which are being crushed by the arbitrariness of the banking oligopoly – need it.

Through their struggles and actions, and through their socialist vision, the members of AKEL have established our Party as a force for progress, but also as a platform for unity, rallying and cooperation amongst the country's progressive forces to achieve goals that benefit our homeland and society. What we have done over the years, we are doing right now through the broad coalition we are forging with progressive personalities and organised groups/movements within the framework of the Social Alliance and on the basis of a specific political agenda to bring about change in Cyprus.

I welcome the presence at the Congress of the representatives of the Social Alliance at this Congress and I assure them that, together, we will continue this great endeavour for our country.

In today's era, when politics and organised struggle have been discredited in the minds of many people, and pressing problems are driving a section of society to seek 'saviours' and figures citing some divine intervention, AKEL, with the credibility of its hundred-year history, has the strength, the experience, the seriousness and the responsibility to guarantee the future of the country.

There are many political formations and parties that were created on the basis of the fleeting popularity of certain figures, but ultimately proved to be short-lived and doomed to failure, having disappointed and failed to live up to expectations. No one can match the guarantee and accountability that stems from a century of existence and struggle, as AKEL possesses.

Comrades,

‘Strength for the Future’! This is the slogan of our Congress. A slogan that encapsulates and expresses our central political orientation and objective: to continue to be at the forefront of the struggles to ensure the future of our Cyprus and our people.

We are the ‘Force for the Future’. And the future is built on the decisions and actions of today, in the present. If we do not act correctly and effectively now, if we do not propose strategic responses to the challenges and sustainable solutions to the problems right now, we will not be able to secure the future. At this critical juncture, this is the challenge before us: to secure the future of our country. We owe this, first and foremost, to the future generations. Everything we have built and we have created must not only be safeguarded, but we must also create prospects for tomorrow. A tomorrow that is fraught with critical challenges and threatened by major dangers.

The first major danger is the ongoing impasse surrounding the Cyprus problem. We are convinced that the temporary situation that has prevailed since 1974 cannot guarantee lasting peace and security. The illegal presence of the Turkish occupying army, the ongoing process of altering the identity of the Turkish Cypriot community – which Turkey is deliberately implementing, the continuation of the colonisation and mass sale of Greek Cypriot properties in the occupied territories are just some of the developments that pose a major threat to our future.

Furthermore, the *de facto* situation deprives our country of opportunities, potential and prospects. We can easily appreciate how much greater the potential would be compared with the current situation in areas such as, for example, the electricity interconnection, water resources, energy, investment and shipping.

The solution, therefore, is a vital necessity for securing our future. The status quo and the steady slide towards permanent partition serve Turkey’s objective of imposing a two states solution. In order to hold Turkey to account and ensure its stance remains under constant scrutiny, we must take continuous initiatives aimed at breaking the deadlock that has persisted since 2017, when the conference on the Cyprus problem in Crans-Montana collapsed. Through our initiatives, we must strive to create – as far as possible by our own efforts – a momentum for a solution.

How can we achieve this? As a Party, we have long ago provided the answer. I shall reiterate our core positions:

1. A consistent and clear position in favour of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant UN resolutions and the convergences subsequently agreed.
2. Resumption of negotiations from the point at which they were suspended, on the basis of the Guterres Framework, to discuss the remaining issues that have not yet been agreed.
3. Safeguarding the entire negotiation acquis that has been formulated following lengthy negotiations between the two sides. Many crucial aspects of the Cyprus problem have been agreed or are close to agreement. There are only a few issues remaining to be agreed upon, and it is feasible to reach a strategic agreement, provided, of course, that the necessary political will is demonstrated, which would effectively make a comprehensive settlement inevitable.
4. It is imperative to formulate a positive agenda to make use of tools and opportunities with the aim of breaking the deadlock and creating momentum for a solution. The positive agenda could include issues

such as energy and EU-Turkey relations, given the Republic of Cyprus's presence in the EU. AKEL has long ago submitted its proposals regarding the content of the positive agenda, but unfortunately it was not even accepted that these be discussed as part of a constructive dialogue within the National Council.

5. Further strengthening our relations with the Turkish Cypriots to build trust. To this end, the Government should develop more initiatives, measures and policies. AKEL, which historically has strong ties with the Turkish Cypriot community and has promoted a policy of rapprochement, is taking initiatives, either on its own or together with Turkish Cypriot parties and other organised groups, to reinvigorate the will and the struggle to achieve a solution.

We expect the President to take initiatives based on a specific, positive agenda. We also expect a consistent and clear position on the convergences recorded. We also expect the President to clarify his position on the Guterres Framework and whether he is prepared to negotiate the outstanding issues rather than the Framework as a whole. We strongly believe that the President is not convincing when, on the one hand, he refers to resuming negotiations from where they left off and, on the other, he questions key provisions of the Framework concerning political equality and property issues. Ambiguities and evasive statements do not help in the very critical situation the Cyprus problem is at, with the threat of partition becoming permanent looming over us.

A second major threat to our country is the climate crisis. The mere fact that the various scientific models concerning the future of our region in relation to the climate crisis indicate that Cyprus is in danger of desertification should already have spurred us to take preventative and timely action. Unfortunately, this did not happen, with the result that we are now playing catch-up. As is currently the case with the water crisis, which is more pressing than ever and – as it seems – is set to become even more pressing. We are celebrating that we have solved the problem because we secured, truly at the last minute, desalination plants from the United Arab Emirates. Desalination plants are an important part of the solution to the water problem, but they can they resolve it on their own. We must improve existing infrastructures and create new infrastructures, adopt new technologies and techniques used in other countries, make full use of reclaimed water, promote water-saving policies and foster the necessary awareness among the people. The climate crisis must be placed at the heart of the new economic model that we are obliged to develop. This must be based on the respect for the environment and the protection of public resources and, of course, it must focus on people, their needs and the well-being of the many, not the privileged few. Within this framework, we must define a comprehensive strategy for key sectors of the economy that are directly affected by the climate crisis, such as tourism and agriculture, which, together with livestock farming, are of critical importance to the country's food security.

A third great danger, directly linked to the environmental crisis, is the issue of waste management. Cyprus has one of the highest rates of waste production in Europe. This places particular pressure on waste management. So far, we have failed to implement a comprehensive plan, and the spatial planning process has never been completed. Legal proceedings are currently underway against Cyprus in the European courts. The Pentakomo and Kosi Regional Waste Management Authorities have far exceeded their capacity and are facing serious operational problems. If we fail to manage the issue of waste management in a comprehensive manner, the consequences will be nightmarish. Cyprus will be transformed into a vast rubbish dump with numerous illegal rubbish dumps that will be hotbeds of pollution and destruction of our natural environment.

The fourth major danger is our country's exposure to energy insecurity and shortages. By the year 2025, we risk being left not only without water, but also without electricity. The Anastasiades Government – DISY bears a very heavy responsibility because, due to political expediency, incompetence and ineptitude, it failed to address the critical issue of energy during the ten years it was in power. The high cost of energy is also a major problem, a fact that negatively affects households and the economy. Our country has the

second-most expensive electricity price in the EU in relation to the purchasing power of wages and ranks among the European countries with the highest rates of energy poverty. Furthermore, as a country, we emit the highest per capita carbon emissions in the EU and we pay hundreds of millions of euros in fines, which come out of taxpayers' pockets. The current government has failed to make any substantial progress on the issue of energy security and self-sufficiency, nor has it tackled the high cost of energy. It issues many statements, but the work it has to show for itself is meagre.

We must speed up the introduction of natural gas for electricity generation. Without this, the price of electricity will not fall. The infrastructures at Vasilikos and the modernisation of the Dekelia power station must be completed swiftly, alongside the promotion of energy storage and the modernisation of the transmission networks. The promotion of Cyprus's electricity interconnection must be based on a cost-benefit analysis. It is imperative to promote the further integration of renewable energy sources into our country's energy mix. Of course, the top priority is tackling energy poverty. To achieve this important objective, we have put forward specific proposals, such as a permanent reduction in VAT on electricity, an end to double taxation on fuel, and the expansion and enhancement of government programmes for the installation of domestic solar panels.

The fifth major danger we face is social inequalities and explosive socio-economic problems. Cyprus ranks among the lowest in the EU on key social indicators. This is despite the fact that the economy's growth rate has been at satisfactory levels in recent years. The economy is improving, yet tens of thousands of Cypriots are on the brink or below the poverty line and are unable to meet their basic needs. Even the middle strata are under pressure from expensiveness/high prices, and the rise in working people's incomes is disproportionately slow compared with the rise in prices and needs.

The deregulation of the labour market and the dismantling of the welfare state, imposed in recent years, are exacerbating social problems. Unfortunately, the Christodoulides Government is continuing along the same lines as its predecessor on the issue of labour relations. It is failing to advance the social dialogue aimed at resolving outstanding issues, such as the Cost-of-Living Allowance and the 12% pension penalty. Moreover, its mediating role is characterised by a lack of a balance position, thus favouring employers. Many young couples are forced to live with their parents, unable to make ends meet and, above all, to buy a home, as the cost of home ownership, as well as rents, has skyrocketed.

A serious problem is the low birth rate, which is caused mainly by the costs involved in starting a family and by the lack of adequate infrastructures and government policies.

Faced with this situation, the Government is unable to implement comprehensive policies and is content with stopgap solutions. Instead of taking decisions of a structural nature, it confines itself to piecemeal and ineffective measures. Generally speaking, the Government's habit of celebrating the economy's performance at the drop of a hat, whilst society is plagued by hardship and financial insecurity, provokes – quite justifiably – reactions and outrage, which the government ruling forces, shut away in their sterile offices, are incapable of grasping.

Speaking of social inequalities and problems, permit me to touch upon, albeit briefly, two areas of paramount importance for the quality of life and the future of society. I am referring to Education and the General Healthcare System (GESY).

Whilst public education is provided free of charge up to tertiary level, Cypriot households, according to European statistics, spend among the highest amounts across the EU on their children's education. The public education system has failed to eliminate private tuition, which, apart from the cost, places a burden of stress and exhaustion not only on the children but also on their families. It is imperative to promote an educational reform that reduces the volume of the curriculum and places the emphasis not on rote learning but on democratic and critical thinking.

The GESY, in the six years since its implementation, has proven that it is indeed one of our people's greatest achievements, for which AKEL worked tirelessly to promote and implement it. Here too, however, decisions must be taken to protect the system, to address the distortions and problems that have arisen, and to ensure its further development. Of crucial importance is the support and development of public hospitals, which must form the backbone of the system. We are extremely concerned that a foreign private hedge fund is engaging in aggressive hospital acquisitions, with the clear danger of creating an oligopoly that would control the General Healthcare System (GESY). In such an undesirable scenario, the majority of society would be the victims; lacking the financial means, will be denied access to quality medical care. We have long ago highlighted this grave danger to the President of the Republic in two letters, which, however, have remained unanswered. The Government has so far failed to react and shows no sign of concern. It must, however, intervene now before it is too late. If the GESY ultimately falls into the clutches of a profit-driven fund, it will bear full responsibility and be accountable to society.

The sixth major threat our country faces is the uncontrolled sale of property to third-country nationals. If we do not take effective measures immediately, we will one day discover that our country no longer belongs to us. This is not scaremongering. Other European countries, much larger in area and population than Cyprus, are taking measures to regulate the property market for foreign buyers in order – at the same time – to keep prices in check. Here in Cyprus, not only are we ignoring the problem, but we are also facilitating the market through “golden visa” schemes and other procedures. National security concerns are also being raised, as there are no safeguards regarding ownership status in relation to critical infrastructure.

Recently, we have seen trends developing towards the creation of closed communities (ghettos) by Israeli nationals, involving the establishment of Zionist schools and synagogues, alongside sweeping acquisitions of key economic entities and large tracts of land, whilst reputable newspapers in Israel are writing about a targeted policy of expansion by Israel in Cyprus. We are not saying this out of any xenophobia or anti-Semitism. After all, AKEL, which provided extensive humanitarian aid to many Jews who arrived in Cyprus after the Second World War and were held in camps by the British, cannot be accused of such a thing. However, we cannot but take into account that the displacement of the Palestinians began with the mass purchase of Palestinian land by Israelis, followed by the complete occupation of Palestine by the State of Israel. We cannot but take into account the way in which the establishment in Israel thinks and acts. It is the Government's responsibility to protect our land. It is the Government's responsibility to ensure that Cyprus continues to belong to and be controlled by the Cypriot people in the future too, and, unfortunately, we do not see it doing so.

AKEL is the only political force that has dared to initiate a public and parliamentary debate on this issue, and we are already moving forward with a series of legislative initiatives seeking to put a stop to this phenomenon; everyone will be judged by their stance.

Speaking of the government, we note that one of its most characteristic features is the fact that it makes many announcements without following them up with action. A tangible example is the declarations regarding the fight against corruption and the clearing up of all the scandals that have plagued us in recent years, particularly during DISY's time in government. “We will become a model country for combating corruption” promised the President. In practice, the Anti-Corruption Authority remains toothless, impunity has become the norm, and the promise to appoint criminal investigators into the scandals that have brought Cyprus into disrepute abroad has remained on paper.

Comrades,

On all the issues mentioned above, AKEL has taken to the streets in protests and demonstrations, organised campaigns lasting many months, held meetings with government and state officials and departments, tabled draft legislation in the House of Representatives, submitted memoranda and proposed specific solutions both to meet short-term needs and to resolve problems in the long term.

AKEL criticises, denounces erroneous practices and rejects government policies or conduct with which it disagrees. However, it does not limit itself to mere rejections and denunciations. AKEL is not a party of protest and denunciation. It is a party of advocacy and proposals. That is precisely why it puts forward well-documented and feasible solutions. This is how AKEL understands its role as the main and strongest opposition force, compelling the Government to back down from its decisions or to take decisions it was previously unwilling to take. This is what being a strong force, having a coherent policy and enjoying political standing, with the result that no one can ignore you.

At this point, permit me to address a broader issue concerning the role of the opposition in a well-governed modern state in which roles are distinct and clearly defined. It is imperative that the opposition identifies and criticises what it considers to be bad practices. By virtue of its role, the opposition has a duty to oppose government decisions and policies, not as an end in itself, but as a consequence of differing views and priorities. We did not support Mr Christodoulides' candidacy because we were categorically opposed to the continuation of the previous Anastasiades administration – DISY. And the current Government is a continuation of the previous one. After all, government officials, including the President himself, state this at every opportunity. Many government officials were formerly DISY officials. Consequently, the political affinity between the previous and the current government is a given fact.

We are not among those who claimed that if Mr Christodoulides' candidacy had not existed, we would have had to invent one. We sought genuine change, not a mere recycling of the old guard which is ultimately what happened with Mr Christodoulides' election. We are therefore, in substance, at odds with the Government! We disagree on fundamental policy issues. We have a different, distinct vision of governance, based on social sensitivity, transparency, accountability, consultation and meritocracy – qualities which do not characterise the current administration.

We have a different view from the Government regarding the foreign policy of the Republic of Cyprus. We want a multidimensional foreign policy that does not tie our country to the war machines of foreign forces and does not expose it to dangers, but a foreign policy that is based on international law and serves the well-intentioned interests of our country. Foreign policy must not be sacrificed for the sake of serving communication needs and must not be weaponised for internal consumption purposes. And, unfortunately, there are many instances in which the Government does precisely that.

The Government's attempt to attribute pre-election motives to our criticism and proposals constitutes an attempt to demonise differing views; it reflects a lack of tolerance for opposing views and a refusal to engage in a dialogue, as well as a failure to understand how modern democracies function. It is clear that the Government's aim is to secure consensus through silence. Those who remain silent, however, and those who find it convenient to do so, are complicit in whatever government policies are pursued. We as AKEL have learnt not to remain silent. We have learnt to stand tall and march forward. For the workers, for society, for our Cyprus.

For sure, we don't believe that our role is confined solely to that of an opposition force. AKEL is also a party contesting for power; that is why it is working to forge a broad progressive front that will bring about real change to our country. The actions we are taking both inside and outside Parliament, the strengthening of our ties with society through our contacts in neighbourhoods and at workplaces, and the enhanced development of joint action with progressive forces and figures within the framework of the Social Alliance are building the blocks of change. The country needs change, and we will bring it about together with all those forces who are seeking a different path.

A different form of governance, which will build a strong and sustainable economic model that generates prosperity for everyone and, first and foremost, for all those who drive the economy: the working people. A different form of governance, with different priorities – social and people-centred. And above all, a different culture of governance, characterised by humility and prudence, sound administration and ethics,

with empathy and social awareness, where those in government will, first and foremost, be strict and demanding of themselves.

Comrades, Friends,

At every Party Congress we set out our strategy for the next five years, and this demands an objective assessment of the reality we are living in, not only in our country and in Europe, but also across the whole world. The reality is that in the world today, we are witnessing the unfolding before our very eyes of what Marx predicted more than 150 years ago: namely, that in its quest for growth, capitalism is destroying the two sources of wealth: humanity and the environment.

We are living in an age in which environmental destruction has reached such colossal proportions that it, too, now threatens life on the planet. Unfortunately, despite all the declarations, the various agreements signed and the targets set at international and global conferences, environmental destruction continues. The obstacle is the capitalist system itself, with its inherent contradictions and the powerful interests that dictate policies, which aim to maximise profits at any cost.

The environment is also being destroyed by the ongoing wars and conflicts raging across almost every corner of our planet. The death toll from wars and conflicts is staggering. Today's world is characterised by intensifying rivalries, shifts in the balance of power and the formation of new alliances. For the first time since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, US global hegemony is being challenged so fiercely and this is precisely why they are becoming more aggressive, plunging the global political, economic and commercial landscape into uncharted waters.

The flamboyant style of the current US president does not represent a qualitative change in US policy. The Trump administration is not putting an end to the aggressiveness of US foreign policy – as he had promised – but is readjusting it by identifying China as the primary threat to US interests.

Another defining feature of today's world is the vast inequalities that exist within societies – an incredible accumulation of wealth in the hands of the privileged few on the one hand, and abysmal poverty and destitution for the many on the other. Inequalities and imbalances also exist between states and regions across the globe, and these are growing at an explosive rate.

Against this backdrop loom two threats, existential for humanity, that we thought the modern world had left behind for good: namely, the threat of a third world war and fascism. For the first time since the Second World War, the danger of a new world war is so palpable and, at the same time, the far right is coming to power in more and more countries across Europe and beyond.

Particularly regarding the issue of war, the word “concern” cannot begin to describe the depth and breadth of the dangers inherent in the unprecedented militarisation of the planet, but also in the recent decisions by NATO and the European Union to shift towards a war economy. Decisions which, in essence, constitute preparations for war with Russia. There is no need to analyse that such a war would spell the end of humanity as we know it, as it would inevitably become a nuclear conflict.

Nor is there any need to explain that it is the peoples who will foot the bill for the profits of the war arms industries, with a further decline in their standard of living. It is the peoples who will also once again pay the price, with their lives and blood, the nightmare of war.

In the face of these dangers, AKEL chooses to stand on the side of peace, dialogue, diplomacy, international law, international cooperation and solidarity. This is demanded not only by moral and legal principles, but also by humanity's very need for survival.

This is what we demand of the European Union too, which not only fails to resist this disastrous course of events but also participates in it and, at times, takes the lead. It is on the social ruins left behind by the economic policies being implemented by the EU that the far right and 21st-century fascism are fuelled and strengthened on our continent. It is the ruling forces within the EU – who, incidentally, describe

themselves as the most “European” – belonging to the Right and the EPP, who are openly collaborating with the far right, paving the way for its normalisation and entrenchment.

Of course, we once again take this opportunity to reiterate that our own criticism of the EU has nothing to do with Euroscepticism, which is, after all, a right-wing ideological current. Since 1995, for AKEL there has been no dilemma of “inside or outside Europe”. We are fighting for Cyprus and our people inside Europe. Nor, of course, do the answers to the European Union’s current problems fit within the false dilemma “less or more Europe” because the crucial question is WHAT KIND OF EUROPE.

What kind of Europe do we want, what kind of Europe do the peoples of our continent need? And what the peoples need is a fundamentally different Europe. A peaceful, socially just, democratic, ecological Europe based on solidarity.

A Europe that looks after all its member states, not just the powerful ones.

A Europe that respects international law, rather than applying it selectively or, worse still, violating it under legalistic pretexts.

A Europe that belongs to and serves its peoples.

This is the Europe we are fighting for alongside the forces of the Left across our continent.

Comrades,

It is no secret that in today’s Europe and world, the Left, its policies and its ideas face enormous difficulties and adversities. Capitalism reigns supreme not only as an economic system but also at the level of consciousness and ideology. The reactionary ideological concepts of racism, fascism, individualism and populism, along with the denigration of mass collective struggles and political thought, affect the Left first and foremost.

Such phenomena are also developing in Cyprus and inevitably influence society’s political and electoral behaviour. The Left’s response is not to align itself with these phenomena. Such an approach would abolish the Left, the ideas, the values and the ideals it stands for. It would abolish not only its ideology but also the very reason for its existence.

We in AKEL have no intention of following this path. Our ideology not only does not isolate us, but broadens our thinking and our arena for action. Not only does it not keep us static, but on the contrary, it drives us – and, I would say, compels us – to constantly renew ourselves: in terms of the people involved, our practices, our outlooks, our methods and our working tools. So that we may constantly keep pace with our times, with our society and, in particular, with the young men and women of our country.

Our Party – however much this may annoy the country’s establishment – is and remains a leading political force in our country, with a strong presence in society and local communities, in social movements and trade unions, and in state institutions; at the same time, it is a party that is held in high regard in Europe and across the world.

This is the case not “IN SPITE OF the fact that we have our ideology”, but “BECAUSE we remain faithful to our ideology’. Precisely because we are a Party of principles, a Party with a vision.

A Party with goals for tomorrow and assertions for today, for the present, for the everyday lives of working people, the young generation and the people.

A Party with an identity and principles, but at the same time, a party open to society, capable of embracing it more broadly and expressing the progress of every historical period.

This is how AKEL and the Left became established roots and grew strong in our country. And this is how we shall continue.

This is how AKEL will continue, true to its history and its political approach of being outward-looking and with openness. We are a Party for society, not a party for its own self.

We are a renewed, militant and strong party.

We are a force for Cyprus and its people. A force for the many.

Comrades, Friends,

Today the 24th Congress of AKEL marks the beginning of the second century in the life and struggle of the Cypriot Left. With a resounding message: We are here! Ready for the battles ahead. With optimism, with unity, with determination. With the momentum of our history and our eyes fixed on the future.

We are a force, and we are harnessing that force for our future. The future of our people. The future of our children!

We continue the struggle with faith in our strength and confidence in our actions.

Let's move forward! Let's move forward with vigour! For the future we deserve!

Speech by the Central Organisational Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL Charis Karamanos

Every AKEL Congress is a rich dialogue covering three days. With camaraderie in our discussions. With a collective spirit in our decisions. Decisions that we need to become better. To look ahead – with a vision, a plan, organisation, and with our principles and ideology as our starting point and guiding compass.

Of course, we are not here today to paint a rosy picture. In recent years we have suffered losses – real and measurable: in membership, in subscriptions, in participation.

But at the same time, efforts have been made. A great deal of work has been done. Over the four-year period we are reviewing, we have recruited 538 new members to the Party. During the same period, we lost 415 members from our total membership. The net balance remains negative, but it is smaller than in other periods. In 2022 and 2023, we saw an upward trend in the payment of party membership dues, but in 2024 there was a decline. In terms of educational work, a decline has been noted, with a few exceptions.

The conclusion, then, is that we have held our ground. We have worked hard. But we must work harder. We need to regroup. We need to fight back.

Organisational work does not end with membership dues and fundraising. These are a given task. The aim is for society to feel that AKEL is present – in substance, in action, by getting involved and playing a role in people's everyday lives.

The Party Cell is the heart of the Party. It is where our politics takes shape. It is where our ideology meets social reality. It is where AKEL takes on a human face in the neighbourhood, in the village, in the neighbourhood, in the local community.

The truth, however, is that many Party Cells are not functioning as they should. This situation cannot continue. If AKEL wishes to be present in society, it must first be present amongst its grassroots. Comrades, what does this mean? Every Local Organisation Committee meeting must not be a mere formality, but a process of planning and action. Party cell organisations must operate with initiative and autonomy. They do not exist to carry out orders, but to shape action from the grassroots. Members have, first and foremost, a political role, not merely the fulfilment of executive duties.

The functioning of Regional organisations is not simply an organisational issue. Today, in several districts, the Regional Organisations are not functioning as they should. The Regional Organisation must support and coordinate meaningful intervention actions. It must make the most of our elected representatives – MPs, Municipal councillors, Local community representatives and School Board members. Regional Offices need to operate where there is life – in the very places where demands arise. That is where our Party mechanism must operate –in associations, organisations and local communities.

Our victory in the Municipal and local elections is indisputable, and we must hold it high, both politically and organisationally. It may have been overshadowed by the result of the European elections, but our people gave us a clear and strong mandate at a local level.

- 14 out of the 20 Mayors in the Municipalities of the free-areas were elected with the support of AKEL. ● In two of the largest Municipalities representing occupied area refugees, namely Famagusta and Morphou, the Mayors are from AKEL.
- 3 of the 5 District Council Chairpersons were supported by the Party.
- 41 of the 93 deputy Mayors are from AKEL.
- 126 Municipal Councillors were elected from AKEL, gaining 28.5 per cent of the vote - an increase of 5 per cent compared with the 2021 parliamentary elections.
- 66 School Board members, i.e. 31.3% of the total, were elected with the Party's support.

This represents tangible political and organisational gains, which we must capitalise on. This is the mark left by AKEL, working with unity, planning and consistency. And this is the foundation on which we can move forward.

The Social Alliance is our strategic choice. Pan-Cypriot and District Coordination Committees are already operating, with positive results. The task at hand is to forge new social majorities for progressive change, together with organised groups as well as the thousands of people who share this need.

The decline in participation in party activities is also a result of the social pressures people are experiencing. Therefore, our organisational work must be flexible, adaptable, modern and people-centred. The answer is clear: meetings that are substantive, brief and focused on specific topics – whether in person or online.

Making use of social media, not to replace face-to-face contact, but to complement and reinforce it. Local Party Organisation Committees are not merely secretariats engaged in meetings. They are living cells of political action. They must deal with local issues and increase their presence in social movements and give political substance to people's demands.

Contact with the public must be steady, vibrant and ongoing. The tours, outreach visits and engagements undertaken by the General Secretary and Party officials yield positive results and must be continued with consistency and depth.

However, it is the Local Party Organisations (Cells) that strengthen the Party's connection with the people on a daily basis. They must convey the needs, concerns and proposals of society upwards, and communicate the Party's political plan and strategy downwards to the grassroots. They must be present and active in every aspect of local life: in Parents' Associations; in School Councils, standing alongside the people; in Community Councils; in cultural and environmental organisations.

We are the Party – here, now, in action. Either we reach out to the people – or they will never hear us. Either we speak using the tools of our time – or we will be left on our own. And we, comrades, choose: to be present. With a voice. With a plan. With a vision. With local organisations that are vibrant, capable and combative. With AKEL renewed, combative and strong.

Comrades, the Party is ageing, however, and risks being cut off from its future. Today, members under the age of 40 account for just 12 per cent. This figure is not merely a statistic – it is a wake-up call.

The Party leadership met with EDON Youth and we agreed to set as a priority the organic integration of the young generation into the Party as the next generation of leaders with specific responsibilities. The aim is to build bridges from our student movement, ‘Progressive Movement of Students’, to the local Party Cells. To involve new members in our activities, in our planning and responsibility. This is a collective and urgent task. We need comrades – both men and women – with influence, connections and standing amongst young people. Because without young people, there is no future.

We must invest once again in the mass organisations of the Left (People’s Movement), in the trade union, farmer’s and women’s movement. We must take the issue of the meaningful integration and active participation of women in AKEL very seriously. Our understanding of equality is not limited to quotas and window-dressing. Because women, particularly those from our class, experience exploitation more acutely: poverty, violence, precarious working conditions. If they cannot make their voices heard within the ranks of our Party, then where can they? We now need concrete steps to ensure that women not only participate in AKEL, but also shape, guide and lead on an equal footing.

A key element for the success of our work is the creative oversight that must be exercised regularly from the top down with no evasion, and with transparency and accountability. Specifically and by name. Without ideological coherence, our political identity fades. Ideological work is not a luxury. It is a condition for survival.

In an age characterised by speed, confusion and the communication dominance of our opponents, we need a solid foundation. And here our aim is clear: we are incorporating educational work into the annual organisational plan of the Local Party Committees. Not as something ‘extra’ , but as an integral part of its functioning.

Our aim is to educate our members, not so that they repeat standardised slogans. We want our cadres to be able to understand so that they can explain, persuade, and to resist. We are creating new tools for study, dialogue and the production of discourse.

Comrades, one of the positive developments of the period we have just gone through is that in several Policy Sectors and Auxiliary Bureaus/Offices of the Party there has been a substantial improvement in the work and political intervention. Content has been produced, well-researched proposals have been elaborated and submitted, and initiatives have been developed. However, there is still significant room for improvement.

The Central Committee’s decision to redefine the functioning of the Policy Sectors and Auxiliary Bureaus/Offices proved to be correct and necessary.

The Policy Sectors exist to formulate policy. Therefore, they must be familiar with the administration, maintain contact with institutions and organised groups/movements, monitor the implementation of government policy, and engage meaningfully in social, professional and academic spheres. Their primary responsibility is to plan AKEL’s engagement, to mobilise Party militants and members who work or are active in these sectors, and to ensure ongoing contact with them.

The need to purchase and – above all – study *Haravgi* newspaper on a daily basis is a permanent and important political duty. The general decline in readership, the loss of newsagents and the proliferation of mass media outlets – particularly online ones – are having a negative impact on this sector. The growth in circulation of “Haravgi”—both in print and online—must remain constantly at the centre of attention for all Party bodies, whether central, district or local, as well as for all AKEL members.

A long-standing shortcoming is the absence of an organised, permanent Party mechanism for our contacts with the people and responding to their positions, views, questions and requests raised both individually and by organised groups. Here, our response must be consistent and immediate.

Comrades,

Our digital presence is a political necessity. The fact that this Congress is also taking place digitally too is a statement that AKEL is modernising without losing its identity. Technology is a tool that undoubtedly does not replace human contact. The problem is not that we are not taking action. It is that, all too often, our struggles/actions go unnoticed. It is not enough that we are waging struggles. Our voice must reach the people.

A video, a photograph, a comment with a clear political content can reach people who would never attend a mobilisation, but who are searching for answers. The Left cannot remain silent when misinformation, populism and far-right rhetoric prevail. We must speak out, explain and engage in the digital media, because that is where the young generation is and expresses itself. If we are not there, the only ones who will be heard will be our opponents. And our ideas, however sound they may be, will have no impact if they do not reach the people.

The local Clubs of the People's Movement of the Left have always constituted the backbone of AKEL's local work. They are the building blocks of culture and sport, collective action and engagement with society. We possess a priceless treasure trove of facilities that many would envy.

What must we do? We must revitalise their activities – cultural groups, amateur theatre companies, music groups, youth workshops, organise events on various themes/subjects, and promote progressive creativity. In this way, our local Clubs will once again become points of reference, hubs of action. Comrades,

We live in an age where individualism, the projection of one's self and the glorification of profit are presented as "the norm". These mindsets affect us too. Yet no one was born a cadre. Whatever we are – whatever role we may have taken on, whatever position society has entrusted to us – we owe it to AKEL. Our Party has brought us to the fore, shaped us, and placed its trust in us. And there is no greater ingratitude than to exploit it for any personal gain.

AKEL has grown because it has operated with a collective mentality and spirit guided by political ethics. This is the foundation of our identity. And this is precisely what we must defend, not in words, but in deeds.

Comrades,

In closing, I would like, on behalf of the Central Organisational Bureau, to express a huge, heartfelt and sincere thank you. To all of you.

To the Party's cadres and members. To these wonderful comrades who give their very all – often quietly, without being in the limelight, without seeking any rewards – to ensure that AKEL remains active and at the forefront of the struggle.

To the comrades who, selflessly, with unshakeable faith, without expecting anything in return, serve the people and our values every day.

You are AKEL's lifeblood. You are the soul of the Left.

You are the reason we can hope because, as long as there is even one comrade holding the flag high, as long as there is a local organisation opening its doors to the neighbourhood, as long as there is a young person asking "how can I help?", this Party will not falter. This Party has a future.

That future has a historic milestone ahead of it: In 2026, AKEL's 100th anniversary. It is not simply an anniversary. It is a golden opportunity to celebrate, but also to regroup. To inspire and strengthen faith in the aims of the Party.

Until then, we can and must build: a major organisational counter-offensive; a broad drive to recruit new members; a Left rooted in society and proud of its history.

Our plan leading up to AKEL's 100th anniversary must be a plan for turning point, a plan for victory. Because this Party was born from the people. And it will never cease to fight for them.

This Party will be victorious!

Thank you, comrades, from the bottom of my heart!

AKEL Central Committee Financial Report for the period 2020–2024

Speech by Nikos Ioannou, Head of the Economic Affairs Bureau of the Central Committee of AKEL

Comrade delegates,

The purpose of my speech today is to outline the financial situation of the Central Committee for the period 2020–2024. In addition to analysing the Central Committee's financial results, I shall also present an overview of the financial situation of the District Organisations (DOs) of the Party.

Each DO operates as a separate financial entity, maintains its own financial statements, budget and bank account, and is accountable to the District Party Conferences. The financial statements of the District Organisations, together with those of the Central Committee, are presented as both separate and consolidated financial statements to the designated auditing authorities, namely the Registrar of Political Parties and the Auditor-General of the Republic.

The purpose of presenting the District Committees' financial statements is to provide delegates with a more comprehensive picture of the Party's financial performance over the last five years. The presentation is based on audited financial statements, in accordance with International Accounting Standards (IAS). I would like to point out that the audited accounts for the District Organisations for 2024 have not yet been finalised. Consequently, the process for that year is based exclusively on the management audit carried out by the Central Committee's accounting department.

The Party's financial statements have been published on the official Party website and are accessible to everyone for the sake of transparency and information. Without fail, and within the framework set out by the relevant legislation, for thirteen consecutive years (2012–2024), we have submitted our financial statements to the Registrar of Political Parties and the Auditor-General of the Republic, and they are subject to the prescribed audit by the Audit Office. The auditing of our finances is, first and foremost, a fundamental operating principle of our Party, which is why we attach the utmost importance to it. At the same time, we respond to and adopt the recommendations of the Audit Service, which, in our view, help to enhance the effectiveness of our audit procedures.

In recent years, significant progress has been made through the implementation of new software, which enables the Central Committee's accounting department to have a complete and immediate overview of both the finances of the Central Committee and those of the District Organisations. Furthermore, we have centralised the procedures relating to the financial management of the Central Committee and the District Organisations, bringing them under the supervision of the Central Committee's Finance Affairs Office of the Party. This approach ensures, on the one hand, the strengthening of internal scrutiny and

the promotion of professionalism and, on the other hand, the freeing up of significant time for full-time staff who were previously tasked with this duty, thus allowing them to be utilised more creatively and productively by the District Organisations.

The issue of the comprehensive unification of our accounts is regularly raised by various cadres. Our future objective should indeed focus on consolidating the accounts of the Central Organisation with those of the District Organisations. However, the consolidation of finances is a complex process, which entails risks if it is not carried out with proper planning and coordination.

The District Organisations survive largely through the organisation of fundraising campaigns. Unfortunately, in recent years there has been a decline in the number of members and supporters who contribute to the Party, as well as a reduction in the number of cadres who take a fundraising block in hand. However, should the unification lead to apathy, a further decline in revenue will inevitably result. The problems that will arise are likely to be more serious and more complex. Shifting responsibility from the district branches to the Central Committee should not, and cannot, be the easy solution for moving forward with the unification.

The unification of finances also entails the unified management of the Party's real estate assets. To date, the District Committees have been responsible for managing their own real estate assets. The management of these assets, provided it is carried out professionally and with specialist knowledge, can contribute to an increase in revenues. The Movement currently owns property that must be protected, but also commercially utilised to generate additional revenue.

The Central Control Committee monitors the implementation of budget decisions, as well as the auditing of contributions to the Party, by officials holding public office. Due to the implementation of new software and the audit carried out by the External Auditor, the financial audit by the Central Control Committee has become superfluous and meaningless.

Comrades,

The Central Committee's financial situation is not particularly favourable, but nor is it in a critical or dire state. We aim to draw up balanced budgets, whilst maintaining a satisfactory reserve to deal with unforeseen circumstances. Every five years, we draw up budgets to ensure planning and sound, rational management of our finances. The preparation of five-year budgets from Congress to Congress places greater emphasis on broader planning. We operate with transparency, both within the Party and in public. The Central Committee of AKEL was briefed on and discussed the finances at its special meetings on an annual basis, and subsequently approved its annual budget.

The practices of entanglement and cronyism are alien to our principles, and we demonstrate this on a daily basis. Unfortunately, a section of the media here is also attempting to equate us with such practices, as happened recently with the publication of the Auditor General's report for the years 2016–2021, particularly its references to the Cyprus Investment Programme. A careful examination of the Auditor-General's observations confirms that they have nothing to do with any direct involvement of the Party in the 'golden passports' scheme. However, the references made in his Report create a false impression, something we have also pointed out to him.

We have taken on board and have already implemented changes, following his own observations, on a number of issues raised in his reports. At the same time, serious efforts are being made to improve matters such as, for example, the full identification of contributions and the provision of complete data, the universal return of duplicate receipts prior to the audit, and other such issues. We must rectify these issues even if the Auditor's recommendations had not been made. In doing so, no one – whether acting maliciously or in good faith – will be able to cast any shadow of doubt.

In his report covering the years 2016–2021, the Auditor General points out that of the 32,896 contributions to all political parties during this period, 29,553 – approximately 90 per cent – were received by AKEL.

This confirms that AKEL is financially dependent on its members and supporters and is not reliant on either “golden passports”, nor on any interests at the expense of the public purse.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who work tirelessly to secure the necessary financial resources for the Party, as well as the thousands of cadres, members, friends and supporters who also provide financial backing to AKEL.

Comrades,

It is a fact that, in recent years, the Central Committee’s Fund has increased its expenditure on communications, making use of modern tools and professional communication methods. At the same time, it is under significant pressure to provide support to District Organisations, Party media and other organisations of the People’s Movement. The financial difficulties faced by District Organisations, particularly in specific districts, are more acute. In its efforts to support the District Organisations, the Central Committee’s Fund fully covers the costs of all electoral contests, with the exception of the Local Authority elections. I should mention that we approach our support for EDON Youth with particular sensitivity.

It is within this framework that the decision was taken by the Party’s Political Bureau and EDON to build an entirely new camp on the existing site in Pervolia. The camp will be named after the Party’s historic leader, the late Comrade Ezekias Papaioannou. The Party’s contribution towards the completion of this project will amount to 1 million and will be raised through the sale of property donated to the Party by the Papaioannou family. The plans and implementation of the project are at an advanced stage, and the goal is for it to be operational in time for the new camping season in 2026.

However, to create a modern and functional campsite, we need the contribution and financial support of us all, both on a personal level and from the various Clubs and mass organisations of the Peoples Movement, as well as friends and businesses. Further details will be announced shortly by EDON. Returning to the issue of utilising the Party’s real estate assets, as you are aware, the Central Committee’s offices have been transformed into a modern, energy-efficient building, equipped with technologies that meet contemporary needs and requirements. The radical refurbishment of the Central Committee’s offices was also carried out with the help of our late comrade Stelios Kkostis, who donated the sum of €200,000 to the Party.

In a spirit of sincere self-criticism, we acknowledge that there have been delays in implementing earlier announcements made at the 23rd Congress regarding the house where Ezekias Papaioannou spent the final years of his life. The Party Museum was closed due to serious structural problems with the building. Unfortunately, various legal issues have delayed our progress on the project. Our plan is to construct a new building on the site formerly occupied by the Ezekias Papaioannou Museum, with a large exhibition space on the ground floor suitable for hosting book, painting and other creative exhibitions, to be named ‘Ezekias Papaioannou’. At the same time, the space will be put to wider use.

In addition to the property registered in the name of the Central Committee, there is also property registered in the name of ETAK, an affiliate of the Central Committee.

I wish to assure the Congress that the property at the disposal the Central Committee is utilised with the primary aim of upgrading our premises, whilst at the same time also ensuring that, wherever necessary, it is utilised and invested in to generate revenues for the Party.

Comrades,

The report presented to you includes an analysis of the Central Committee's income and expenditure by year. I shall attempt to round off the figures somewhat so as not to overwhelm you with too many numbers.

In addition to the financial situation (the tables you have before you), we are also presenting a summary table of the Party's assets, namely its property, vehicles, equipment, cash and cash equivalents, as well as our liabilities.

Based on estimates for 2024, the assets of the Central Committee are estimated to amount to 2 million (€1,929,721) and consist of property, vehicles, furniture, equipment and works of art. During the corresponding period in 2019, our total assets stood at €982,000. (982,120)

The corresponding real estate held by ETAK as at 31 December 2024, based on the 2021 Land Registry valuations, amounts to 4.2 million (€4. 152,900). The properties include the offices of the Central Committee of AKEL, the EDON Youth campsite and property in Limassol.

During the period 2020–2024, the Central Committee's revenues increased by €178,750, or 1.5 per cent, compared with the previous period 2015–2019. In other words, they rose from €11,993,000 to €12,171,000. At the same time, our expenditure fell by €1,417 compared with the previous five-year period, a reduction of 10.88 per cent. During the five-year period under review, we managed to achieve a surplus of €568,457, compared with a deficit of €1, 026,892 in the previous five-year period.

Cash and cash equivalents, i.e. deposits and cash as at 31/12/ 2024, stood at €1.829 million, compared with €2.082 million on 31 December 2019. Cash and cash equivalents decreased by approximately €253,000. Our obligations as at 31 December 2024 stood at €125,130, compared with €73.9 14 on 31 December 2019. It should be noted that there are no obligations whatsoever to banks. Unfortunately, there has been a reduction in our cash holdings, which is a cause for concern regarding the financial robustness of the Central Committee.

Of course, we must not overlook the fact that the main reason for the reduction in cash reserves over this five-year period was the cost of the complete refurbishment of the Central Committee's offices, for which €585,000 was spent.

Comrades,

The statement before you sets out the income and expenditure of the AKEL Central Committee for the five-year period 2020–2024. Overall, for the five years, the largest share of our income – 66.6 per cent, amounting to €8.1 million – comes from the state subsidy, compared with the 68.3 per cent and €8.2 million it accounted for in the previous five-year period (2015–2019). I would note that the amount of the state subsidy is directly linked to the Party's electoral strength.

This is followed by contributions from membership fees, fundraising and events, totalling €3 million, accounting for 24.8 per cent of revenues, compared with €2.3 million, or 19 per cent, over the previous five-year period.

Salaries of MPs and other officials account for approximately 8 per cent of total revenues, compared with 11.2 per cent over the previous five-year period. The decrease is mainly due to the end of the practice that had been in place until June 2021, whereby full-time Party cadres elected to the office of Member of Parliament would contribute their entire salary to the Party as a contribution. This practice has changed during the current parliamentary term.

As far as expenditure is concerned, the largest portion of the Central Committee's expenditure is the payroll, which stands at €4.3 million (36.8 per cent), compared with €4.5 million (34.8 per cent) over the previous five-year period.

This is followed by grants to District Organisations, Local Council Organisations and Party Media, which amount to €3 million (25.4 per cent), compared with €3.2 million (24.6 per cent) over the previous five-year period. This allocation is intended to support District Committees facing financial difficulties, various organisations of the People's Movement such as EDON, POGO, EKA, as well as the 'Dialogos' media Group. Election expenses for the five-year period amounted to €1.6 million, representing 14 per cent of total expenditure, compared with €1.5 million and 12 per cent in the previous five-year period. During the period under review, parliamentary elections were held in 2021, presidential elections in 2023, and European and local government elections in 2024.

All expenses of national elections, with the exception of local government elections, are covered in full by the Central Committee's Fund. Candidates do not incur any personal expenses. This initiative should not be misinterpreted as a sign of AKEL's financial affluence, nor as a means of manipulating candidates, but rather as ensuring equal treatment for all, without any discrimination on the basis of income.

The financial situation facing most of our District Organisations remains difficult, despite efforts to ensure their sustainability. The attached tables reflect only two aspects of the finances: income and expenditure. The main source of income for the District Organisations is the Party's annual fundraising campaign. Unfortunately, the prevailing climate surrounding party finances also affects us, causing difficulties in carrying out this challenging yet necessary tasks. In order for the District Organisations to meet their needs, extraordinary efforts are being made, and the difficult task is being shouldered by certain local and district officials. The need to turn to Party members, friends and supporters is a constant one and is intertwined with our long-standing journey as a Party to enable us to fulfil our political and social role in Cypriot society as the Party of Cypriot workers.

In closing, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to the members of the Finance Affairs Office for their tireless daily efforts and their valuable contribution to the sound management of the Party's finances. I would also like to thank the Central Control Committee and its Chairman, Aristophanes Georgiou, as well as the Audit Office headed by Pola Kyprianidou, for their cooperation.

B. DOCUMENTS / RESOLUTIONS

POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE 24th AKEL CONGRESS

INTRODUCTION

1. AKEL is entering its second century with its sights set on the future, renewed, militant and strong, as declared by its 24th Pan-Cypriot Congress, held from 20 to 22 June 2025 in Nicosia. AKEL was, is and will remain a Party of principles and vision, the Party of the working people and a force asserting for the social majority, the great pole of freedom, democracy and progress in Cyprus. AKEL's 24th Congress reaffirmed the unwavering determination of the members of AKEL to work to strengthen AKEL and the Left in all fields and at all levels. In the struggles, in the movements, at the workplace and in education, in society and in the daily lives of the people, in elections and in institutions, in the digital world. Everywhere!
2. The Congress was the culmination of a broad, democratic and deeply political dialogue developed by thousands of AKEL members and friends, by our companions in the Social Alliance, and by unaffiliated citizens of the country who wanted to contribute their views. This dialogue, criticism and self-criticism, and new ideas, are the lifeblood and wealth of collective thought, as they all share a common denominator: concern for AKEL and the Left. AKEL would like to thank all those who took part in the dialogue that took place in the run-up to the Congress and during the Congress itself.
3. The 24th AKEL Congress took place at a pivotal moment for the modern world. Against the backdrop of the deep crisis of capitalism, unprecedented militarisation and the threat of a new world war, the rise of the far right and fascism, environmental catastrophe, explosive inequalities, and the challenges of artificial intelligence are leading humanity to an existential crossroads. AKEL approaches these dramatic developments from an internationalist, universal perspective and resolutely shares the need for a global rallying of forces to defend peace, democracy and social progress.
4. The 24th Congress finds Cyprus too facing multiple dead ends and historical challenges. Permanent partition is just around the corner. The far right is gaining a foothold with the backing of the establishment. Society is becoming more unequal by the day. The country is at an impasse regarding critical infrastructure and the functioning of the state. The Christodoulides government, which took over the baton from the Anastasiades–DISY government —is exacerbating the country's problems with its policies and its incompetence. Progressive change in the country's governance is both a necessity and a demand. AKEL is entering the fray of the upcoming electoral battles with optimism and determination to achieve the victories that our country, the people and the workers need.
5. The 24th Congress endorsed "The Positions of the Central Committee to the 24th Congress", the introductory speech by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL, Stefanos Stefanou, the Report of the Central Control Committee and the Report on the Party's Central Committee Finances. The Congress elected the new Central Committee, the Central Control Committee and the Party's General Secretary. It also approved the Political Resolution of the 24th Congress, which sets out the Party's priorities for the next five years.

A. THE WORLD – EUROPE – CYPRUS

The world today

6. For the first time since the Second World War, are there so many concerns about the future of the planet, and the threats of a new world war, fascism and environmental catastrophe have never been so visible. Humanity is dominated by chaotic inequalities, resulting from the intensification of the capital- labour contradiction, but also from the imbalances between states and regions across the globe. In the

face of capitalism and imperialist barbarism, the vision of socialism remains the genuine alternative for the future of the world, for a peaceful tomorrow that will unleash humanity's immense potential and place it at the service of social progress.

7. The world is being shaken by rivalries between the planet's powerful centres. Alliances and the balance of forces are being reshuffled, and the structures of international cooperation are in turmoil. A key characteristic of this period is the escalation of US aggression at all levels. The Trump administration is readapting and escalating American aggression. The progressive response is resistance to this aggression, just as it is against any other form of imperialist aggression. It is a struggle to promote dialogue and international law, and to develop international cooperation and mutually beneficial peaceful relations between all states and regions of the world.

8. The war in Ukraine has become one of the most dangerous threats to world peace. AKEL supports a return to diplomacy for a lasting and just peace, based on international law and addressing the root causes of the conflict. This means ridding Europe of military alliances, nuclear weapons and foreign bases, and establishing an all-European collective security system based on the promotion of peace and international law, which must include Russia too.

9. Militarisation and the return of nuclear weapons to the forefront pose a mortal danger to humanity. Militarisation also reproduces a vicious circle of self-generating tension, as it is fuelled by the interests of the war arms industries. The Left is called upon to take the lead in strengthening and broadening the anti-war movement, to mobilise broader peace-loving forces in favour of universal nuclear disarmament, for the dissolution of NATO, the restoration and expansion of regional and global arms control agreements, and the respect for the United Nations Constitutional Charter and international law.

10. The Middle East continues to be at the centre of foreign interventions and bloody conflicts, paying the price for the wars waged by the US and its allies, as well as for regional rivalries over hegemony. Our Party stands in solidarity with the struggles of the peoples of the region for peace, freedom, democracy and popular sovereignty. At the same time, AKEL will continue its joint initiatives with parties and movements in the region with which it shares common challenges, such as the aim of declaring the Middle East a zone free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and the drastic restrictions in the arms trade.

11. The period we are currently living through has been marked by the first genocide of the 21st century being committed by Israel, with the support and complicity of the US and the EU, at the expense of the Palestinians, as an escalation of the long-standing occupation and colonisation. The Christodoulides government is also offering political support and cover-ups, in a manner that clashes not only with every moral principle but also with the interests of Cyprus. Netanyahu's far-right government and its aggressive policies, across the Middle East in general, pose a threat to peace and stability in the region. AKEL, together with the international solidarity movement, is called upon to maintain its unwavering practical support towards the Palestinian struggle for freedom and the creation of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, within the 1967 borders, as well as its support towards the left and democratic forces inside Israel who are fighting for a two-state solution and peace. It demands the immediate suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, the imposition of an arms embargo on Israel, the suspension of all funding linked to the development of military equipment, and the implementation of all the decisions of international courts.

12. The continued growth of the far right is a sign of the times, the product of the dead ends and deep crisis of capitalism and neoliberal policies. Racism, the attack on women's rights, homophobia, state authoritarianism, contempt for science and ecology, historical revisionism and anti-communism are key components of their agenda, which are poisoning ever-larger sections of society. The main tools of the far right are populism but also the organised misinformation through social media. The Left is at the forefront of the struggle against fascism and the far right, which pose a direct threat to democratic freedoms, workers' rights, human rights and peace. This struggle presupposes exposing and isolating their

ideological concepts, the formation of a broad anti-fascist front and, at the same time, revealing the deeply systemic nature of the far right which acts as a reserve force of the ruling class and is a political reservoir for the Right, which is being used to divide the working class and attack social struggles .

13. The sweeping expansion of Artificial Intelligence across the entire spectrum of life raises questions about the character of economic production and labour, bioethics, privacy, human rights, democratic freedoms, the political process and environmental impacts. The contradiction is becoming apparent between the prospects opening up for humanity and the dangers inherent in the subordination of AI to serve corporate profit and geopolitical rivalries. The establishment of strict rules, so that the use of AI is always human-controlled and human-centred, and respects fundamental rights, human health and safety, is the minimum immediate demand. The aim is for these scientific achievements to be socially owned and socially controlled.

European Union

14. The character and structures of the EU, in conjunction with the policies of the ruling forces, led by the European People's Party, are exacerbating the dead-ends. The peoples of Europe are confronted with expensiveness, energy poverty, housing crisis, low wages and pensions, and the dismantling of labour relations, whilst enormous wealth is accumulating in the hands of the banks, corporate groups and hedge funds, through a process that is being carried out by the bureaucratic elite and the EU's economic governance framework.

15. The EU's decision not to undertake any peace initiative whatsoever on the war in Ukraine, but to persist in arming Zelensky and imposing sanctions on Russia, has led to tragic deadlocks and self-inflicted damage to the European economy. Now, the shift towards a "war economy" and the "rearmament of Europe" essentially constitute preparations for war. AKEL opposes the escalation of the EU's militarisation, which will also mean a further decline in people's living standards.

16. The EU's current impasses will not be solved, neither by the federalisation of the EU, nor by the Euroscepticism of the far right, which advocates a return to the nation state. Opposing these is the Left's vision for a Europe of the Peoples, that is to say, a fundamentally different Europe – one that is socially just, democratic, multicultural and peaceful – which truly belongs to and serves its peoples.

17. AKEL considers, Cyprus's participation in the EU, and particularly in the European Parliament, despite the limitations and the balance of forces, is an arena of struggle for the interests of our people and our country and, at the same time, a forum for action with the forces of the Left in Europe, in the struggle for peace, working people's rights and democracy. In particular, our Party makes use of every factor within the EU that can assist in the efforts to solve the Cyprus problem, given that EU membership can contribute to a solution, taking into account also the framework of Euro-Turkish relations.

Turkey

18. Turkey is drastically expanding its international political, economic and military footprint whilst asserting hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean according to the imperialist vision of the 'Blue Homeland'. Domestically, neoliberalism, the Islamic agenda, repression and the persecution of opponents of the Erdoğan government are being reinforced. By exploiting its geopolitical position, the size of its economy and its military power, Turkey is reaping significant benefits —most notably the revitalisation of Euro-Turkish relations—without changing neither its aggressive foreign policy, nor its authoritarianism at home. AKEL stands on the side of the country's progressive left-wing forces, which, in adverse conditions, are fighting for democracy, a secular state, social rights, friendship with neighbouring states, peace and socialism.

The Left in the modern world

The visions and values of the Left are diametrically opposed to capitalism, which has come to dominate not only the economy but also the realm of consciousness and ideology. The reactionary ideological concepts of the far right, the denigration of the class struggle and the dismissal of political thought affect the Left first and foremost. On the other hand, of course, there has been an increase in workers' mobilisations across the world, whilst progressive movements (anti-racist /anti-fascist, environmental, anti-war) are demonstrating, against the prevailing current, demonstrating resilience and momentum. These can, under certain preconditions, serve as the seed and catalyst for strengthening the Left. Our own understanding of the role of the Left in the modern world is based on three pillars:

- To link the vision of socialism with the struggle for working people's immediate assertions and the democratic, progressive tasks of our era.
- To forge alliances with broader social and political forces to achieve progressive goals and to advance specific democratic and class-based assertions.
- To build unity in action amongst the forces of the Left internationally, based on common goals and principles, such as the struggle against war, fascism and imperialism, internationalist solidarity and environmental protection.

Cyprus in the world and in our region

21. Over the last decade, Cyprus's foreign policy has been radically reoriented to fall in line with the doctrine of "Western orientation" and the transformation of the island into an "advanced outpost of the West in the eastern Mediterranean". Military cooperation with the US and Israel is being promoted, whilst the country's infrastructures are also being made available to them. Relations with Russia have been severed and a policy of "de-Russification" of the Cypriot defence and economy has been imposed. Steps have been set in motion for Cyprus' accession to NATO. Foreign policy has shifted away from principled positions on the Middle East, culminating in the political cover provided by the Christodoulides government for the genocide in Gaza. These involve the country into the West's military conflicts and plans. They are intensifying the militarisation of the island, posing enormous dangers for our people. They undermine Cyprus's relations with traditionally friendly countries and erode the credibility of the Republic of Cyprus.

22. AKEL puts forward the vision of a Cyprus which, as an autonomous actor and as an EU member, will act as a bridge of peace in the Eastern Mediterranean, pursuing a multidimensional foreign policy based on international law and the interests of the Republic of Cyprus and our people.

The key areas of action are:

- Opposition and resistance to the militarisation of the Eastern Mediterranean and the transformation of our island into a military base for foreign forces using the infrastructures of the Republic of Cyprus.
- Opposition to the use of the British bases for imperialist plans in the region and strengthening the struggle at a political and social level to rid Cyprus of these bases.
- Mobilisations against plans for Cyprus's accession to NATO or the ' "Partnership for Peace".
- Support for the reorientation of the EU's relations with Russia and China on the basis of mutually beneficial cooperation.
- Internationalist solidarity with the struggles of the peoples for peace, freedom, democracy and popular sovereignty.

The Cyprus problem

23. AKEL has always maintained that a solution to the Cyprus Question must put an end to the Turkish occupation, abolish the guarantee powers and any intervention rights, restore the territorial integrity of

our state, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the entire population, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and provide for the demilitarisation of Cyprus.

24. More than half a century after the twin crimes of the coup and the invasion, the Cyprus problem is at its worst stage ever. Since 2017 and the failure of the Crans-Montana Conference, we have been experiencing the longest-running impasse that has existed at least since 1974. Turkey is exploiting this impasse by creating new occupational fait accomplis on the ground. At the same time, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership under Mr Tatar have now officially shifted away from the agreed basis for a solution towards a two-state solution.

25. The passage of time without a solution is cementing the de facto division. Against this backdrop, the Greek Cypriot side must remain committed to the basis for a solution of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, which was agreed by the two communities in 1977 and has since been adopted in a series of UN Security Council resolutions.

26. At the same time, it is important to insist on safeguarding the negotiation acquis, which was achieved through much hard work. Safeguarding the negotiation acquis leads to the position that negotiations should resume from the point at which they were suspended at Crans-Montana; which must take place on the basis of the Guterres Framework and focus on the pending issues.

27. Anastasiades's evasive policy in the period following Crans-Montana, and the inconsistency and contradictions that characterised the handling of the Cyprus problem, have cast doubt on the credibility of the Greek Cypriot side. Similarly, the stance of N. Christodoulides towards the Guterres framework, but also towards the convergences recorded relating primarily to the issue of political equality, continues to undermine the credibility of the Greek Cypriot side, as it constitutes a glaring contradiction with regard to the declared position for continuing the procedure from where it was interrupted.

28. AKEL supports the discussion of incentives aimed at creating momentum for the Turkish side's return to the negotiating table on the basis of the agreed framework, through the formulation of a positive agenda for Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community. In addition to the EU-Turkey issues the President sets, in the relevant proposal drawn up and submitted by AKEL to the country's political leadership in December 2020, energy issues in our region and Cyprus's natural gas play a central role, whilst, of course, ensuring that the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus are not violated and making use of the relevant convergences that have been achieved between the two sides.

29. A positive agenda must be formulated by the Republic of Cyprus and directed towards our Turkish Cypriot compatriots, with specific measures aimed at fostering trust between the two communities and countering the prevailing pessimism regarding the prospects for a solution of the Cyprus problem.

AKEL and the Turkish Cypriot community

30. For AKEL, the Turkish Cypriot community has always been the natural ally of the Greek Cypriot community in the effort to achieve a solution to the Cyprus problem. The policy of rapprochement between the two Cypriot communities, which AKEL has been in the frontline, is based on the development of the Party's relations and cooperation with progressive forces within the Turkish Cypriot community, with the aim of strengthening efforts to achieve a solution to the Cyprus problem.

31. This effort must be strengthened and continue to develop on two key levels: firstly, at the level of the political leaderships, by exerting influence and pressure to ensure the correct political decisions are taken regarding the solution; and secondly, at the level of society, to mobilise the people towards supporting the efforts for a solution.

Refugees – Missing Persons – Enclaved persons in the occupied areas – War-stricken Victims

32. The wounds inflicted by the betrayal and occupation of our homeland have not yet been healed, despite the passage of more than half a century. The refugee community, those who suffered during the

war, the relatives of the missing, the victims of rape, and those enclaved people in the occupied territories, continue to bear the burden and the consequences of the tragedy of Cyprus. AKEL will continue to be at the forefront of the efforts and work from every podium and stage, particularly through the relevant Committee of the House of Representatives and the European Parliament, to ascertain the fate of all those missing persons and to support all those who are still suffering from the effects of the brutal Turkish invasion.

B. ECONOMY – SOCIETY - STATE

People and their needs at the heart of the economy

33. The 24th Congress ascertains that neoliberalism remains a dominant characteristic of the government's economic policy, characterised by the unequal distribution of wealth and the exacerbation of income and social inequalities. Despite the fact that the country is experiencing a period of economic growth, the majority of society faces significant financial difficulties.

34. Since the previous Congress, the end of the health crisis has been followed by the cost-of-living crisis; development geared towards serving powerful private interests has continued, as has the concentration of capital in key sectors of the economy; there has been a structural deterioration in the available income of the people of labour; the intensification of unchecked phenomena in the market – particularly by the banks – and the systematic downgrading of social policy.

35. The 24th Congress reaffirms the need – in today's conditions – for the economy to place people and their needs at its centre. It must shift towards sustainable, balanced and socially oriented development; a fairer distribution of wealth and economic burdens, the reduction of income and social inequalities and the improvement of people's standard of living, by creating conditions for increasing total output, an increase in available income and dignified work.

36. For AKEL, the country's development orientation cannot be based on incidental policies but on a comprehensive plan. By strengthening the primary sector and developing the rural economy with the aim of ensuring the country's food security. By formulating a new, modern industrial policy. By upgrading the services sector whilst maintaining Cyprus as an international centre for the provision of professional and consultancy services. By developing high-quality tourism that respects the environment and natural resources, working people and their rights. By developing the knowledge economy through increased investment in education, research, innovation and technology, and through the digital transformation of the economy. And finally, with the essential pillar of action being the stamping out of corruption and speeding up the administration of justice.

37. For AKEL, the protection of the public interest is inextricably linked to the implementation of public investment in strategic sectors of the economy. Attempts to sell off public assets, whether through privatisation or other means, and the creation of private monopolies, undermine the strategic role of the state. We demand the protection of the social character of existing public utility organisations through the modernisation and strengthening of the role they play in the State's developmental strategy, but also the regulation of the uncontrolled sale of property to third-country nationals.

38. The prudent management of public finances is essential for the implementation of public investment. Towards this end, AKEL supports the need to reform the country's tax system with a view to a fairer distribution of the tax burdens, including the taxation of wealth, the introduction of incentives for sustainable development and the effective combating of tax evasion.

39. AKEL stresses that strengthening the country's developmental prospects and protecting the economically vulnerable can be achieved through the development of the cooperative economy and the

re-establishment of the cooperative credit sector, and will continue the support it has offered since the outset of this effort.

40. Equally important is protection against banking arbitrariness, through the abolition of unlawful charges and abusive practices by the banks, protecting borrowers from the foreclosure of their main residence and small business premises, and amending the legislative framework to restore borrowers' rights.

41. Small and medium-sized enterprises and the self-employed continue to represent the backbone of the Cyprus economy. To address the pressure from the government's neoliberal policies, which are leading to a reduction in their turnover and a lack of liquidity and funding, AKEL supports the creation of a public financial agency and the introduction of measures to strengthen their access to European and state support schemes.

Affordable and clean energy

42. Affordable and clean energy is an integral part of the developmental strategy. The country's energy policy must safeguard the country's energy security, enshrine energy as a social good and combat energy poverty. AKEL calls on the government to proceed to the elaboration of a Strategic Energy Plan that will aim at the rational management and utilisation of energy resources, the reduction of energy dependence and ensuring the country's energy self-sufficiency, reducing the price of electricity, and protecting the environment and public health. In particular, we emphasise the need to shift energy production towards renewable resources, accompanied by the creation of public infrastructures for the management and storage of increased output. The establishment and proper functioning of energy communities will contribute to the generation, supply and storage of affordable and clean energy.

43. Consumers are currently paying very high electricity prices today due to the erroneous policies of both the previous and the current government. AKEL is calling for a substantial reduction in the price of electricity and urges the government to proceed immediately with the introduction of natural gas as a transitional solution until we gradually phase out fossil fuels. Until natural gas becomes available, we call on the government to allocate sufficient resources to support vulnerable sections of the population. **Environment**

44. Humanity currently faces serious environmental challenges, the resolution of which will determine the future of future generations. The climate crisis, environmental pollution, the loss of biodiversity, deforestation and desertification, waste management and many other issues must be made top priorities for the international community and for each state separately.

45. The 24th Congress stresses that Cyprus – which, due to its geographical position is experiencing the effects of the climate crisis earlier and more intensely than other regions of Europe – the restoration of the ecosystem, the protection of the environmental, environmental and social justice must be placed at the top of the political agenda, and environmental legislation must at long last be respected.

46. AKEL will continue to struggle for a model of sustainable development based on fundamental social and environmental principles. It will continue to advocate, among other things, the integrated and proper management of mineral and water resources – bearing in mind that water is a public good and not a commodity – the protection of biodiversity, the safeguarding of air quality and the formulation of a comprehensive waste policy. Specifically, with regard to the protection and welfare of animals and wildlife, we call for the strict enforcement of legislation, the combating of poaching, and the safeguarding of the legality and sustainability of hunting activities.

The position of working people in modern Cypriot society

47. The neoliberal approach to the management of the economy is also reflected in the way big capital confronts working people, through attacks on their wages and rights. AKEL believes that the organisation

and mobilisation of workers is the most effective weapon at their disposal in the struggle against exploitation – to improve their lives – and stands in solidarity with the struggles to protect the right to organise and trade union struggle.

48. The 24th Congress salutes the struggles and successes of the class-based trade union movement which have led to improvements in the wages and benefits of workers covered by Collective contracts, to the reinstatement of the Automatic Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and the increase in its rate of return, and to the establishment of the National Minimum Wage. At the same time, it recognises that the scope of these efforts is being eroded due to the widespread undermining of Collective Labour Agreements and the deregulation of labour relations, and calls on the government to intervene to restore balance to labour relations, to support Collective Agreements and to effectively safeguard the right to organise.

49. AKEL will continue to campaign, alongside the trade union movement, for an increase in the minimum wage, its adjustment in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and its hourly rate, the extension of the COLA to cover all workers in line with its philosophy, and the establishment of minimum rights for those workers not covered by collective labour agreements.

50. At the same time, AKEL recognises that the promotion of new forms of work such as teleworking and work on digital platforms creates even more scope for concealing the relationship of dependency and wage labour, and for distancing workers from their organisation within the trade union movement. The danger that technology and Artificial Intelligence will be used to further promote unregulated forms of work and the marginalisation of groups of workers is evident which is precisely why stresses that it is important to utilise them in a way that leads to the improvement of working conditions and working people's skills, to increase productivity and to minimise stress and the intensity of work.

51. The institution of universal social insurance is also under attack. AKEL will continue to fight to protect the character of the Social Insurance System as a universal, public, socially solidarity-based system. We call on the government to proceed with the phased cessation of internal borrowing from the surpluses of the Social Insurance Fund and to draw up an investment policy framework with an emphasis on creating a reserve that could be utilised in the future for the creation of social infrastructures.

52. AKEL's objective remains to ensure an adequate and dignified pension for all insured persons, so that no pensioner has an income below the poverty line. We continue to call for the abolition of the mechanism for retirement age based on life expectancy and the end of the 12 per cent actuarial reduction. We emphasise once again that the elderly have a right to be respected and to receive state support, with the aim of ensuring a dignified and good quality of life. We assert the development of a comprehensive network of public care, support and rehabilitation infrastructures, and for the decoupling of pensioners' benefit support from the Minimum Guaranteed Income by establishing criteria based on the needs of pensioners.

Welfare State

53. For AKEL, the welfare state and the protection of public and common goods are a top priority. Health, education, social insurance and social welfare, safeguarding the right to housing, combating poverty, policy for people with disabilities, and tackling gender discrimination are central pillars of state intervention. Social policy is a productive investment that contributes to overall economic development. It lays the groundwork for a different organisation of society, centred on equality, solidarity, human dignity, beyond the logic of profit and the commercialisation of everything.

54. The right to housing is a fundamental human right, and every person is entitled to dignified, high-quality and affordable housing. AKEL insists on the need for a comprehensive housing policy through the creation of a Unified Housing Authority, increasing the housing stock through the promotion of social and affordable housing schemes, strengthening funding sources by establishing a state-run housing finance agency, and improving the social benefits associated with housing programmes.

55. The tackling the low birth rate is inextricably linked to the elaboration of a comprehensive family policy. AKEL will continue to fight for the creation of an adequate public infrastructure network for the care of infants, toddlers and children, the implementation of support programmes for parents, including an increase in maternity leave, the extension of paternity leave, and the provision of a parental allowance covering the entire 18-week period; and the integration of the needs of single-parent, large and three- child families into the state's family policy.

56. For people with disabilities, the goal is the full enjoyment of their rights, as defined in the relevant United Nations Convention. We call on the government to relieve persons with disabilities from the flattening treatment of the GMI (Guaranteed Minimum Income) by introducing separate legislation that will increase the amount given as benefits and the number of beneficiaries, and strengthen the services that are provided. At the same time, we demand the expansion of social and psychological support infrastructures, the integration of people with disabilities into employment, and the effective implementation of the principle of accessibility.

57. The cost of the consequences of the invasion and occupation is unbearable for those who have been displaced. We call on the state to improve the housing schemes aiming at refugees and to proceed with a comprehensive plan to regenerate and upgrade run-down neighbourhoods. At the same time, we call for better utilisation of Turkish Cypriot properties and the expansion of the programmes run by the Burden-Sharing Agency.

Quality healthcare for all

58. A modern state must ensure access to high-quality health services for all, based on a comprehensive, socially oriented plan. AKEL expresses particular concern about the trend towards the concentration of the ownership of healthcare and the pressures that are being exerted by powerful private interests. For years, AKEL has denounced the lack of a vision, political will and an operational plan – a roadmap – for the substantive modernisation and continuous qualitative improvement of the public health sector, as well as the absence of strategic planning regarding the needs and capabilities of the system. AKEL will continue to work to safeguard the philosophy and character of the General Healthcare System (GESY) and to ensure the continuous, qualitative improvement of the services provided. The public health sector is the regulator of the health system, and the state has a duty to protect it from the unchecked influence of private interests, whilst also ensuring its financial support. AKEL underlines the need for the Christodoulides Government to resolutely support public hospitals and that the State Health Service Organisation (OKYPY) must fulfil its responsibilities, so that public hospitals and the entire health system can fulfil their mission.

People-centred education

59. Education is a non-negotiable public and social good. The state has a duty to ensure high-quality public education that is accessible to everyone. Schools, as the cornerstone of the education system, must aim to promote universal ideals and values, be inclusive and offer equal opportunities to all, and focus on critical thinking and the all-round development of children. The organised and institutionalised attack on public education for the benefit of private interests, the disparagement of the teaching profession and the criminal inaction regarding special needs education have, taken together, set the country's education system back. The 24th AKEL Congress notes that much remains to be done so that the country's education system is able to fulfil its mission. To this end, it will continue to work towards modernising the content of education, the transition to a truly unified education system, the expansion of public university education, and the strengthening and upgrading of state student welfare.

Culture

60. AKEL maintains the promotion of Culture, the Arts and Literature at the top of its political priorities. The 24th Congress notes that, unfortunately, the establishment of the Deputy Ministry of Culture has not

changed anything with regard to the fundamental obstacles cultural creators face: the depreciation, underfunding and job insecurity those working in the cultural sector face. AKEL will continue to propose and assert for policies aimed at providing moral and material support for all forms of the arts and literature, at deepening artistic education, and at effectively enshrining the status of the artist, and for the creation and upgrading of cultural infrastructures.

Sport

61. Sport is a social good which can serve as a means of developing a healthy society. AKEL has, over the years, asserted and worked for the expansion of social sport so that every citizen has access to sporting opportunities, for the upgrading of facilities and the improvement of the standard of amateur sport. It works to stamp out corruption and to reform the structures and operations of sports bodies and Federations, particularly in football, and fights against violence and discrimination in sport, whilst also combating phenomena that lead to the resurgence of fascism.

Rule of Law

62. The 24th AKEL Congress noted the widespread distrust prevailing in society towards state institutions, due to the erosion of the rule of law and the rise in corruption observed over the last decade. Towards this end, it calls on the government to take concrete action to ensure that public powers are exercised on the basis of just laws, the protection of human rights, equality before the law, transparency, meritocracy, good governance and public accountability through impartial oversight mechanisms, combating scandals and corruption, and bringing those responsible to justice.

63. AKEL notes the weakening of oversight mechanisms and the undermining of good governance that occurred during the administration of N. Christodoulides, as a continuation of the practices of the DISY administration. The 24th Congress reaffirmed the Party's commitment to its principled positions and its determination to pursue initiatives that will bring about substantial modernisation reforms, safeguarding citizens' sense of justice and restoring their trust in the institutions and the state. To this end, the Congress adopted a package of proposals, such as the reform of the Legal Service and the separation of the public prosecutor's remit from the role of legal adviser to the executive, the adoption of legislation to prevent concentration of ownership in the mass media, and the strengthening of the powers of the Anti- Corruption Authority.

Relations between Church and State

64. The 24th Congress of AKEL, whilst reaffirming its respect for the religious belief of every person, underlines at the same time that the separation of Church and State is a fundamental principle which must, in practice, govern a modern and democratic state.

Defence and Security

65. AKEL recognises the need for the defence of the Republic of Cyprus, particularly under conditions of ongoing Turkish occupation. At the same time, it points out that the state's defence policy must remain free from demagogic and nationalistic approaches and must serve the strategic objective of a peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem. To strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the security forces, which have to large extent been severely damaged by nepotism/clientelism and interference under previous and current governments, the Congress has adopted a series of proposals.

Human rights

66. AKEL is at the forefront of the struggle to defend and promote human rights, guided by the principle of the inalienable right of all to enjoy the universal protection of the state without discrimination, as well as the equality of all people before the law.

The 24th Congress emphasises the need to adopt and implement a holistic National Action Plan on Human Rights and notes that AKEL will continue to assert, at every stage, the enhancement and practical strengthening of social and economic rights through all state policies.

67. AKEL continues to fight for gender equality and equity, linking this struggle to the fight against the socio-economic system which is based on patriarchal structures and attitudes and perpetuates exploitation, inequality and oppression. The 24th AKEL Congress reaffirms that the Party remains the leading force on issues of gender equality and women's rights. Towards this end, it will continue to take the lead with significant initiatives, both legislative and otherwise, to combat female unemployment and the gender pay gap, protect the rights of working women, for measures and infrastructures to support parenthood as a social responsibility, and initiate actions to combat gender-based violence and gender stereotypes.

68. AKEL is committed to combating all forms of discrimination and exclusion arising from sexual orientation or gender identity. It opposes hate rhetoric and the promotion of attitudes that marginalise and target our fellow human beings, and calls for measures to combat and end discrimination against the LGBT LGBTQ+ community.

Migration

69. The failed management of the migration issue over more than ten years has allowed problems to accumulate, enabled the far right and others to exploit the migration issue, and led to a rise in racism and xenophobia within Cypriot society. The far-right pogroms in Limassol and Chloraka have highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive migration policy. The 24th AKEL Congress calls on the Christodoulides Government to advocate at a European level for the strengthening Cyprus's capacity as a frontline country, the exemption of our country from the application of the Dublin Regulation, which piles up asylum seekers in frontline countries, and the distribution of refugees across all member states in proportion to the population and capacity of each member state. AKEL will continue to assert amongst other things, a fair and swift examination of asylum applications, a comprehensive plan for the implementation of inclusion policies, and a review of the Foreign Labour Force Employment Strategy so as to combat the labour exploitation of migrants and put an end to their exploitation that seeks to undermine Collective Labour Agreements.

C. THE PARTY AND THE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT OF THE LEFT

Ideology, Character and History of AKEL

70. AKEL is a modern communist party that encompasses and represents the broader spectrum of the Left. It is guided by Marxism-Leninism, which finds its dialectical expression in the conditions of our era and country. AKEL, committed to the struggle against capitalism, has developed its Own Vision of Socialism, in which democracy and human rights occupy a central place and which, three decades on, we must update. Its class-based understanding of society and the economy is reflected in his day-to-day activities, which addresses the overwhelming majority of society: the working class and the modern people of work – men and women, the self-employed and small-to-medium-sized businesses, the farming community, young people, and socially vulnerable groups. Of the population.

71. AKEL is the great pole of progress and the axis for the unity of progressive Cypriots who are asserting radical changes in society, the economy and the state. It forges alliances and cooperation with other political and social forces – on the basis of the principles and objectives set out at the Party's Programmatic Congress in 2014 – with the aim of changing the balance of forces and achieving victories that pave the way for the implementation of pro-people, progressive policies.

72. AKEL is a patriotic and internationalist force. It leads the struggle against the occupation, partition and foreign “guardians”, for a Cyprus that serves as a bridge of peace and cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is, by definition, an uncompromising opponent of nationalism and chauvinism; it struggles to foster a common Cypriot consciousness that unites all Cypriots and coexists with the ethnic and cultural identities of the island’s communities and religious groups. It opposes fascism, racism and xenophobia, sexism and homophobia. It advocates the class unity of the working people of Cyprus, of whom migrants and refugees are also a part of.

73. AKEL is a collective and unified force that is organised and operates democratically, with party members playing a leading role in the fermentation of ideas and the co-formulation of decisions. Democracy, transparency, accountability and renewal must be constant objectives and concerns. At the same time, AKEL’s strength is based on its ties and daily two-way communication with the people and workers, in workplaces and educational establishments, in neighbourhoods and districts, in social movements and struggles; furthermore, it invests in the Party’s planned use of new technologies for its intervention among the young generation.

74. The Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL is a force that is celebrating 100 years of existence and struggle, steeped in blood and sweat, full of struggles and sacrifices for the homeland, the people and the workers. The Party pays tribute to the pioneering communists and honours its history by carrying it forward. Through struggle, action and with an eye to the future.

Organisation and functioning of the party structure

75. The Congress stresses the need for AKEL to continue to develop and shape its structures and way of functioning, seeking for even greater flexibility, efficiency and transparency so that it can intervene more substantively and more effectively in society, taking into account the constantly changing social and political conditions. Towards this end, the Party:

- Seeks to renew itself continuously and to recruit more young people and women into its ranks by implementing specific measures to encourage and educate them.
- Enhances the role and say of Local Party Organisations so that Party members can participate even more actively and meaningfully in shaping policy-making, decision-making and the submission of proposals.
- Strengthens and enriches the Local Party Organisations’ involvement in the local community and the participation of party members in mass organisations by undertaking even more initiatives to resolve local, social and environmental problems, highlighting issues of concern to young people and developing their cultural and sporting activities.
- It organises broad actions and open meetings, so that friends and allies from the Social Alliance, as well as, more broadly, groups and movements with common goals, can take part.
- The Party’s leadership bodies constantly strengthen their day-to-day contacts and two-way communication with the Party’s grassroots; they exercise oversight and provide guidance, without substituting. Members of these bodies take the lead in implementing decisions in the day-to-day work of the Party too.
- It strengthens policy-making, by encouraging the continuous updating and specialisation of the Party’s Policy Sectors and Auxiliary Bureaux and their collaboration with universities, research institutions, experts and movements to formulate evidence-based policy proposals.
- It highlights the importance of ideological work, particularly in today’s conditions, and links ideological work even more specifically to organisational and day-to-day political work by developing a comprehensive programme of educational/ideological work and Marxist education for party cadres and encouraging self-education.

- It demonstrates zero tolerance towards phenomena of factionalism, self-promotion, entanglement and corruption – behaviours that are alien to the ethics and principles of the Left, and contrary to the character and Party's Statutes.
- It utilises digital tools (social media, video-conference platforms), without these replacing face-to-face contact, to communicate with even broader strata of the public and to combat disinformation more effectively.

Social Alliance

76. The Congress reaffirms the importance of the Social Alliance as a platform for the coexistence of progressive figures, forces and movements. At a time when society is becoming increasingly conservative and a significant section of society is turning its back on ideologies and politics, the need for the Left to reach out even more vigorously to broader sections of society and to be receptive to new ideas has never been so imperative.

AKEL's intervention in state institutions

77. The Party's intervention in state institutions is based on our belief in utilising every platform to defend the interests and rights of our people. AKEL is devoting its resources for a strong, substantive and effective intervention in the House of Representatives, the European Parliament, Municipalities and Local Communities, the District Local Government Organisations, and in School Boards.

78. Guided by the Party's Congress Resolutions and decisions, and our pre-election programme, those elected under the AKEL banner must stand out for their integrity, seriousness, in-depth knowledge of their areas of responsibility, their daily contact with the people and, above all, their class-based and progressive stance.

79. The key pillars of our intervention are to focus on the social agenda and the everyday problems faced by the people; to link our work to the assertions of the People's Movement and other trade union and social organisations; to seek cooperation with other political forces; raising the projection of our activities within society, and the regular assessment and accountability of our elected representatives. Feedback, collective decision-making and unity in implementing those decisions are the duty of our elected representatives. We continue with consistency a policy of zero tolerance and refuse to cooperate with far-right forces represented in institutions.

80. More specifically regarding our presence in the House of Representatives, our Parliamentary Group, as the force that bears virtually the entire responsibility as the opposition to the Christodoulides government, must prioritise highlighting the problems faced by local communities in coordination with the relevant Party District Organisations. In the European Parliament, our actions must continue to be guided by a bi-communal approach, whilst our key political duty is to fulfil our role within the Group of the Left. In local government, the strengthening of our presence in the 2024 elections entrusts us with the responsibility to meet citizens' expectations and, at the same time, to continue pressing for the correction of distortions and weaknesses in the Reform of Local Self-government, guided by the principles of decentralisation and democratic governance.

AKEL and the Mass Popular Movement

81. AKEL is fighting to halt the assault by big business and the government on the interests of the people and social gains, and to improve the lives of the people of our country, together with the class-based trade union, agricultural, women's and youth movements.

82. In the current climate of attacks on workers' rights, the deregulation of labour relations and the undermining of collective social struggles, the Party's officials and members must take the lead in the effort to organise and assert workers' rights in all workplaces, by supporting trade union action more broadly and, in particular, through the PEO trade union movement.

83. The problems currently facing the agricultural sector due to the consequences of the climate, economic and health crises, the inflationary crisis and the exploitation of agricultural produce by middlemen, are creating serious problems for the prospects of the agricultural economy. It is, and must remain, a constant aim of AKEL to strengthen cooperation with EKA and the organised agricultural movement to improve the position of the farming community.

84. AKEL, together with its youth wing, has fought many battles to secure gains and rights for the younger generation. AKEL's support for EDON and the progressive student and school pupil movement must continue and be strengthened. The Party Grassroots Groups must actively and specifically support the work of EDON's Local Organisations and intensify their contact with the members of the Organisation. Particular attention must be paid to the transition and integration of EDON members and student leaders into the Party's ranks.

85. Gender equality is an integral part of our social vision and of the ideas and principles of the Left. AKEL will continue support POGO at all levels, so that it can strengthen its role within society. At the same time, AKEL will undertake specific efforts to recruit more women into the Party, promote women in leadership positions and challenge stereotypes regarding the role of women.

86. AKEL supports the activities of Sports and Cultural Associations, which are an important tool in the People's Movement's engagement with local communities. There is a need to modernise the content of the Associations' activities and to involve more young people in their life and work.

AKEL and Social Movements

87. The Congress recognises and emphasises the need for the Party to continue to build an ongoing two-way relationship and cooperation with social movements and mass organisations that contribute towards tackling social problems and bring vital issues into the public sphere, such as the defence of public goods and rights, social protection and solidarity, and the defence of human rights.

88. AKEL encourages the active participation of its members in social movements and mass organisations. Our action and involvement in these organisations must respect their autonomy, be flexible and should adapt accordingly, whilst always seeking consensus with the aim of mobilising forces to pursue common goals.

The Party's International Relations

89. International Relations constitute a key area of work and an expression of the Party's internationalist character. The objectives remain the improved coordination of the Party's multi-level international interventions and the channelling of the Party's knowledge and action in this field to the Party as a whole.

90. A priority is to promote our positions on the Cyprus problem and to draw international solidarity with our people's struggle from parties, movements, organisations and institutional bodies around the world.

91. In Europe, the Party is at the forefront of the effort to unite the forces of the Left on the basis of common principles and objectives. It defends the political orientation, the confederal character and the unity of the Group of the Left in the European Parliament, and makes use of every opportunity for consultation/common understanding with forces from the socialist and green movements on progressive agenda issues.

92. It works systematically to develop relations with Communist and Workers' parties, on the basis of the principles of equality, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of parties. It defends the necessity, unity and character of the International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties, whilst maintaining that their content and functioning need to be upgraded.

Declaration of the 24th AKEL Congress on the Cyprus Problem

The 24th AKEL Congress, which convened in Nicosia from 20 – 22nd June 2025, extends a warm and militant greeting to the whole of the Cypriot people: Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians and Latins. The common struggle for the liberation and reunification of our homeland and people demands unity and cooperation so that we may achieve the long-awaited solution to the Cyprus problem within the agreed framework of a Bi-communal, Bi-zonal Federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Compatriots,

1. Turkey bears the main responsibility for the decades-long failure to resolve the Cyprus problem, which carried out the illegal invasion in 1974 and continues to maintain occupation troops on the island, in flagrant violation of the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus.
2. Eight whole years have now passed since the breakdown of the Crans-Montana Conference in the summer of 2017, without the resumption of the negotiation procedure having been achieved – something unprecedented in the modern history of the Cyprus problem. The “last mile” that remained to be covered before that Conference could reach a strategic consensus, with the prospect of a comprehensive solution in sight, had been transformed, in the years that followed, into a vast gulf.
3. The modern history of the Cyprus problem teaches us that it is during periods when there is no ongoing negotiation procedure that the occupying power Turkey appears even more intransigent and is proceeding to create new partitionist fait accompli. This was expected to happen now as well, especially given that, for the first time, the UN Secretary-General, in the report he submitted following the breakdown of talks at Crans-Montana, explicitly absolved Turkey of any responsibility, attributing it instead to the two leaders.
4. In the absence of any substantive dialogue and having been absolved of responsibility for Crans Montana, Turkey has, after many years, returned to advocating the position for a two-state solution and has intensified its illegal actions in the occupied territories. It has continued to escalate its machinations in Varosha, is further militarising the occupied areas, is obstructing the exercise of the Republic of Cyprus’s sovereign rights within its legally delimited Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and is intensifying its efforts for the complete control and assimilation of the Turkish Cypriot community. Turkey’s imposition of the partitionist Ersin Tatar as leader of the Turkish Cypriot community was intended to facilitate these machinations.
5. The only available way to counter the Turkish machinations—which confirm that the current status quo is neither static nor sustainable but is changing daily to the detriment of our people, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, is our consistent adherence to the agreed basis for a solution and the safeguarding of the negotiation acquis in its entirety.
6. The Turkish position for a two-state solution, combined with repeated backtrackings and the questioning of the negotiation acquis by former President Anastasiades, has undermined the prospect of resuming a meaningful dialogue. The diversionary policy pursued by Mr Anastasiades right up until the end of his term in office has allowed the UN Secretary-General and the international community to continue to question the credibility of the Greek Cypriot side and to doubt the readiness of both sides to engage in a substantive dialogue.
7. With Christodoulides’ election, the same policy is effectively continuing, given that the President, whilst correctly declaring that he wishes the process to resume from where it was interrupted, but at the same time he regards the Guterres Framework merely as an outline of chapters for negotiation rather than an advanced convergence on the core issues of the Cyprus problem, as it in fact is. This constitutes a glaring contradiction, since from the moment the President declares that he accepts the resumption of

negotiations from the point at which they were suspended, the only issues remaining to be negotiated are the outstanding points of the Guterres Framework. The repeated questioning of the convergences that had been achieved by the end of the Crans-Montana Conference are part of the same dangerous contradiction too.

8. In an attempt to convincingly pursue a strategy that would facilitate the resumption of negotiations from where they had left off in 2017, AKEL had submitted a specific and comprehensive proposal to Mr Anastasiades as early as December 2020, which it brought back and updated to Mr Christodoulides. Both of them pointedly ignored it. The first part of AKEL's proposal concerns the resumption of the negotiation procedure and the second the provision of incentives to the Turkish Cypriot community and Turkey – without going beyond the “red lines” of the Greek Cypriot community – so that they either cooperate towards this end or be held to account.

9. Against the broader backdrop of developments that have evolved in the wider region, the interest of the UN and the international community for progress to be recorded on the Cyprus problem has been rekindled over the past year. Following two informal meetings in New York and Geneva, a further enlarged conference next July, at which the UN Secretary-General expects concrete results in order for him to prepare the next steps. As part of this effort, President Christodoulides must seek a successful outcome to the efforts to reach agreement on low-level political measures, as requested by the Secretary-General. At the same time, he must take initiatives in the spirit of the proposal submitted to him by AKEL, given that the key issue at stake is the resumption of substantive negotiations and the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem as soon as possible.

10. The assumption of a new leader of the Turkish Cypriot community next October will be decisive for subsequent developments. Consequently, the Greek Cypriot side must send positive and convincing messages regarding its sincere desire for a solution on the agreed basis and with full respect for the negotiation acquis. Any other approach would, in effect, facilitate the machinations of partitionist Tatar. 11. AKEL, drawing strength from the sovereign people who wish to, and are entitled to, prosper in a free homeland, will continue to struggle against the partitionist status quo. The immediate future will determine the course of the Cyprus problem, and our growing concern about the danger of permanent partition makes an immediate and vigorous response on our part imperative. We shall redouble our efforts so that, during this critical period, the forces for a solution in both communities stand firm against any dangerous machinations. We shall continue to fight uncompromisingly and tirelessly for a solution within the agreed framework of a bicomunal, bizonal federation with a single sovereignty, a single international legal personality and a single citizenship, that will guarantee fundamental freedoms and human rights, as well as political equality as defined in the relevant Resolutions of the Security Council. With consistency and perseverance, we shall continue to be at the forefront of daily actions for a peaceful and truly hopeful future.

24th Congress Declaration marking the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of Cyprus -AKEL

1926–2026: A century of sacrifices and struggles

1. The 24th AKEL Congress salutes with deep respect the 100th anniversary of the Founding Congress of the Communist Party of Cyprus, held on 15 August 1926. This anniversary marks a milestone, as for the first time in our country's history, the people of labour and toil had emerged on the arena of political action and asserting its role as a leading force in History.

1. The Founding Congress of the Communist Party of Cyprus (CPC) marked a turning point in the political affairs of our country, as its decisions defined the character of the Left in Cyprus and charted its course. The CPC and its militants heroically confronted the persecutions of colonial rule, the hostility of the establishment and the ruling class, and the deepest-rooted social prejudices. Yet they succeeded in kindling the flame of our great visions in our country too, and in laying the foundations of our Party. AKEL, taking up the baton from the CPC dramatically expanded its reach and influence amongst the Cypriot people. It became the driving force of the masses and established itself as the leading political force in the country, with a pioneering and strong presence in society and local communities, in social movements and trade unionism, and within state institutions, whilst at the same time enjoying high regard in Europe and around the world.

The 24th Congress of AKEL looks back with pride on this century of its existence and struggles. It pays tribute, with gratitude and respect, to all the members and cadres of the Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL which, over the course of this century, have faced enemies and opponents, assassinations, persecution, imprisonment, were driven underground twice, faced organised campaigns of slander, defeats and setbacks; yet not only did they not take a step back, but they forged the Party's bonds and ties with the people. We honour the pioneering communists who sowed the seed in 1926 and watered it with the blood and sweat of heroic struggles and sacrifices. We honour the AKEL members and cadres who, over all these decades, have turned that seed into a deep-rooted tree, a powerful force for the people and our homeland.

2. From the moment of its founding, the Communist Party of Cyprus set as its mission of existence the just causes and rights of the people of labour and the poor, and thus became the founder, the mind and the soul of the worker's movement, organising and inspiring the first workers' struggles. The eight-hour day, social insurance, the Cost-of-Living Allowance, the right to organise, and all the gains, big and small, that have improved the lives of the working people of Cyprus bear the stamp of the Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL, whilst popular achievements such as the co-operative movement were the result of the struggles waged by the Left and other progressive people. Our Party has managed to forge, in both theory and in practice, the alliance of the working class with the poor peasantry, the self-employed and the small and medium-sized business sectors, working women who are subject to double exploitation, pensioners and the unemployed. AKEL, as the party of all the working people of Cyprus, together with and alongside the class-based trade union movement, both inside and outside Parliament, is the force that continues today to be the voice and force of the people of labour, fighting for modern labour and social rights, for the re-establishment of the co-operative movement, and for groundbreaking social policies to support the lower and middle strata of our country.

3. The Founding Congress of the Communist Party of Cyprus set out the line of the unity between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots in the struggle for freedom and livelihood, and this policy has governed the entire history, outlook, policy and action of our Party to this day. The common class-based organisation and struggle of the Cypriot working people, the fight against nationalism and chauvinism, the policy of rapprochement between the two communities – which is AKEL's idea – the cultivation of a common Cypriot consciousness that unites all Cypriots and which coexists with the ethnic and cultural identities of the communities and religious groups in our country, and the defence of the bi-communal character of the Republic of Cyprus constitute fundamental aspects of the policy of the Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL. The unity of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots has been, is, and will continue to be the guiding principle of the Cypriot Left in the coming century of its existence and struggle.

4. Throughout this century, the Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL has – through its policies, struggles and sacrifices – imbued the struggle for the freedom of our homeland and people with a truly patriotic and anti-imperialist content, in confronting colonialism, the foreign interventions and foreign occupation. It was the first to raise the banner of the struggle to throw off the British colonial yoke when the domestic elite had compromised with the colonial administration. It took the lead in organising the mass political

struggle against colonialism, with AKEL cadres and members suffering the first casualties of the anti-colonial struggle. It mobilised the people to defend Cyprus independence against NATO's aggressive machinations. It defended the homeland against the Turkish raids of the 1960s and the Turkish invasion of 1974, demonstrating through the blood shed by dozens of its militants and members the true meaning of love for one's homeland. At the same time, ever since the days of the Communist Party of Cyprus, the Party has championed the need to forge a united anti-colonial front – as it does now – and advocates the unity of forces in the struggle against the occupation, partition and nationalism, in pursuit of a solution on the agreed basis and within the agreed framework. An integral part of AKEL's patriotic policy is the struggle against the presence of the foreign bases and foreign "guardians" on our homeland, as well as the consistent resistance to the plans to tie our country to NATO.

5. From the moment it emerged, the Communist Party of Cyprus clashed with the ignorance, religious obscurantism and social prejudices of the era, highlighting progressive and social values and demands. It introduced demands that were radical for their era, such as gender equality, the protection of maternity rights and the prohibition of child labour, free education, and the separation of Church and State. Throughout all these decades, our Party has stood in opposition to conservatism, the establishment and reactionary forces. It has given women and the young generation a place and a role, and stands alongside the women's and youth movements in their struggle to secure the position they deserve in Cypriot society. Today, AKEL and the Left, as a major pole of the progressive movements, are at the forefront of struggles with assertions and actions for the modernisation and democratisation of our country at every level, for human rights and democratic freedoms, for the protection of minorities against discrimination and racism, for a democratic and people-centred education system, and for the radical changes that are demanded in the country's state and institutions.

6. Since its foundation, our Party has inspired a love of culture, science and education amongst the working class and the people. It has provided a platform and a home for progressive thought and for many of the most distinguished figures in the fields of literature and the arts in our country. This is how the path and character of the Party – and, more broadly, of the mass organisations of the Left as the People's Movement – came to be defined as a vibrant cradle of mass popular culture and sport in the country's villages, districts and neighbourhoods, a tradition to which we are determined to breathe new life and give fresh impetus in the conditions of the 21st century.

7. The Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL has sown among the working class and, more broadly, amongst the working people of Cyprus, the seeds of communist ideals and the socialist vision, internationalism, and a love of peace and democracy. Guided by these principles, the Party has been marching forward for a century, as a steadfast and serious force of principles and vision, fighting for the present and looking to a future in which society and the world fundamentally just and peaceful, free from all forms of exploitation: the society and a world of socialism.

8. We pay tribute and honour our comrades who gave their lives and shed their blood in the struggle for our ideas and ideals, for democracy and freedom. The Cypriot anti-fascist fighters of the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, those who fell in the anti-colonial struggle, the volunteers of the Second World War who answered the call issued by AKEL on 16 June 1943, which stands as the supreme expression of anti-fascism, internationalism and patriotism, the leaders of the Demobilisation Movement, our comrades murdered by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot chauvinism and anti-communism, and the defenders of Democracy and Freedom who resisted the coup d'état and the invasion in 1974.

9. The Party will honour this landmark anniversary with all the historical and political significance it carries, in a manner and with content befitting the occasion. This anniversary can and must serve as an opportunity for educational and self-educational work within the Party as a whole, as well as for encouraging – more broadly across the progressive spectrum – academic research, cultural and artistic creation concerning the history of the Communist Party of Cyprus-AKEL. It can and must also serve as an

opportunity to take new steps in documenting the history of the people's and social struggles waged in Cyprus, in bringing to light the true history of Cyprus, as well as the truth—suppressed by official historiography—regarding the Left's contribution to our country.

10. At the same time, the Party's centenary must serve as a landmark for collective ideological and political reflection on all that has emerged from our journey: our identity, our starting point, our milestones and our destination. On political dialectical thought and action, the revolutionary boldness but also the revolutionary composure that the Party has demonstrated whenever necessary. On the Party's resilience in the face of all manner of enemies and trials, the likes of which no other force in this country has ever endured. On the work carried out amongst the people, alongside the people and for the people. On the lessons drawn from our mistakes and weaknesses along this journey. On the Party's strength and courage in pursuing change, constant renewal and development. Above all, this centenary must first and foremost serve as a springboard for the future, for the new century of the Cypriot Left.

11. The 24th Congress of AKEL sends the message that we honour our 100-year history by continuing the struggle. AKEL enters the second century of the Cypriot Left's existence with optimism, hope and determination. For Cyprus and the world we envisage.

Message to the Turkish Cypriot Community

Dear Turkish Cypriot compatriots,

The 24th AKEL Congress extends to you all a warm, militant greeting of friendship and cooperation.

1. The common class and political struggles of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots serve as a compass guiding Cypriots towards a common future of peace and cooperation.

2. AKEL remains steadfastly committed to the policy of rapprochement and the common struggle of all Cypriots for a reunified Cyprus, the heritage of all its children.

3. The Cyprus problem remains at an impasse, despite the UN's efforts to resume negotiations. Despite the difficult circumstances, it is the duty of all the progressive voices in the country to reverse this gloomy climate and ensure that the voice of the majority of Cypriots, who are seeking a Bi-zonal, Bi-communal Federation with political equality, based on the relevant UN resolutions and decisions, the convergences achieved to date and the Guterres Framework. A mutually acceptable solution that will ensure a promising future for our people and our country. A future of development, prosperity and peaceful coexistence, which will serve first and foremost the interests of Cypriots in a homeland free from foreign troops and "guardians".

4. At the same time, both sides, in line with the call issued by the UN Secretary-General, must move decisively towards implementing specific Confidence-Building Measures which will improve the political climate and provide solutions to the everyday problems faced by all Cypriots.

5. A solution to the Cyprus problem also concerns the preservation of the identity of the Turkish Cypriot community and their continued presence on the island. We stand in solidarity with the struggles of the Turkish Cypriots against Turkey's attempts to assimilate and silence the voice of those who disagree with the prevailing policies. For AKEL, the struggle of our Turkish Cypriot compatriots to defend our common homeland represents an integral part of the struggle of all Cypriots to build peace in a reunited Cyprus. 6. For AKEL, rapprochement is first and foremost a process with a political and social content that forms an integral aspect of the struggle against the occupation, with strategic significance for the common struggle of all progressive forces on the island. For AKEL, rapprochement is, above all, a cause for the Cypriots themselves, and the policy that can help heal the wounds inflicted by the crimes committed by

chauvinism and imperialism in our country, as well as to foster a more positive climate in the efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem. It is the pathway to vindicate our common struggles for peace, a solution and reunification.

7. The progressive forces of Cyprus must:

- Remain consistent and unwaveringly committed to the fundamental principles of a solution to the Cyprus problem, as outlined above.
- Intensify the struggle against nationalism and chauvinism, which are responsible for crimes against the Cypriot people and which hinder the achievement of a solution – particularly at a time when the far right is rearing its head.
- Seek to reverse the negative climate being fostered by supporters of the partitionist status quo in both communities.
- Strengthen rapprochement and the assumption of bi-communal initiatives at various levels, with the aim of cultivating cooperation, solidarity and mutual understanding between the two communities. AKEL, together with the progressive voices on both sides of the Green Line, will continue the struggle for reunification and resist any machinations aimed at keeping our people and our land partitioned. We will intensify the struggle for friendship, cooperation and the common struggle for a free, reunified, common homeland, the Mother of all its children.

C. GREETINGS / MESSAGES

Message from Martin Schirdewan and Manon Aubry, Co-Chairs of the Left Group in the European Parliament

On behalf of the Left Group in the European Parliament, we send warmest comradely greetings to Cyprus, to AKEL and all AKEL members. We hope and believe that the 24th Congress of your Party will be a milestone in strengthening AKEL and the Left in Cyprus at all levels. We believe that this is what Cyprus needs, but also what the Left in Europe needs. And we believe that this will also be the best tribute to your party's upcoming 100th anniversary.

Dear friends and comrades,

The first thing I want to say is that AKEL and the entire people of Cyprus can count on the solidarity of the Left Group. On the solidarity and support of our Group for Cyprus' struggle to end the Turkish occupation and division. For the reunification of the island and the people of Cyprus, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. For a solution to the Cyprus problem on the basis of the UN Resolutions providing for a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality for the two communities. Those of us who are involved with the Cyprus problem here in the European Parliament greatly appreciate AKEL's role and position, and in particular its insistence on speaking for the whole of Cyprus and defending the rights of all Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike.

Dear friends and comrades,

We, the Left Group, have no dependency on the interests of the war industry or on NATO's geopolitical plans. That is why we have clear and consistent positions vis-a-vis Türkiye. Anyone who takes a look at the minutes of the European Parliament on Euro-Turkish issues and the Cyprus problem as well as its humanitarian aspects, will confirm that the solidarity of the Left to Cyprus is not just words. It is action. For example, we are the only Group in the European Parliament calling for an arms embargo on Türkiye, because it is unacceptable for European countries to continue trading arms with a country that is occupying another member-state. Nor is it possible for the dominant political forces in the EU – led by the European right-wing and the far right – to have opened the door of European defence to Türkiye, at a time when Turkey not only fails to recognise the Republic of Cyprus, but also illegally occupies Cypriot territory and moreover insists on a two-state solution to the Cyprus problem, which is totally unacceptable. That's why the Left Group has always stood by Cyprus and its people. And we will remain so until the day you invite us to your island to celebrate freedom and reunification. To celebrate a Cyprus without foreign armies, without barbed wire and roadblocks. A Cyprus that truly belongs only to its people. This vision is also our vision.

Dear friends and comrades,

As we all know, the European Union and the whole of Europe are at a historic crossroads. Things that we thought our continent and our world had left behind are now returning as nightmares. War, genocide, militarisation, nuclear arsenals, the rise of the far right and fascism. At the same time, the peoples of Europe are facing inequality, high prices, a housing crisis and energy poverty.

In the face of all the above, our group, the Left Group, is essentially the only consistent and combative voice in the European Parliament in favour of peace, democracy, workers' rights, ecology and gender equality. We are the other voice in the European Parliament. The voice of labour and social struggles, the voice of movements, trade unions, young people, citizens. In our group, we manage to unite forces from across the spectrum of the Left – communist, radical, socialist, ecological, feminist, anti-fascist – and work

together to achieve results. Our vision for a different Europe, one that is peaceful, social, democratic and ecological, is always our guiding light.

In these struggles, in this effort, the creative and active role of AKEL here in the European Parliament and in the Left Group is truly invaluable, and this is recognised by everyone here. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere and unreserved appreciation for AKEL's contribution – for over 20 years now – to the Left Group and to the European Left in general. I would also like to express our gratitude for the long-standing cooperation we have on a daily basis with AKEL MEPs and with all AKEL members here in the European Parliament.

With these thoughts in mind, we send you our best wishes on behalf of the Group for a productive Congress that will mark a new beginning for new struggles, both in Cyprus and here in Europe. We look forward to working with you to strengthen AKEL and the Left, both in Cyprus and throughout Europe. Dear friends and comrades,

The Left in Europe needs the left in Cyprus; it needs a strong and combative AKEL.

Address by Palestinian Ambassador Abdallah Attari

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be with you today at the AKEL Congress. It is always a pleasure to be amongst you. As we always say, there is no place for diplomatic pleasantries amongst comrades and fellow fighters. That is why I have not come here today to thank you. I have come, however, to offer my best wishes and to congratulate you.

On behalf of the Palestinian leadership and the entire Palestinian people, I wish you every success with the outcome of the Congress and I congratulate you on your stance and your support for the struggling people of Palestine. I congratulate you for insisting on standing on the right side of history.

Whilst all the hypocrites in the West speak of self-defence, you speak of aggression, occupation and ethnic cleansing. Whilst they speak of “collateral damage”, you tell the truth: “children and civilians are being murdered”.

When some people tried to frame the discussion on the Palestinian issue in terms of 7 October, you reminded us that the occupation and humiliation of the Palestinian people have been going on for decades.

When they talk about “dialogue with Israel”, you call not only for dialogue but also for pressure to be brought to bear on the occupying state, on the apartheid state of Israel. When they speak of a ceasefire, as if this were a war between two states and two armies, you speak of an end to the occupation in Palestine and an end to the genocide in Gaza – a strip of land measuring 365 square kilometres with a population of 2.3 million, onto which 85,000 tonnes of explosives have been dropped, at a rate of 37 kilograms per person.

Whilst today attempts are made to present the Palestinian question exclusively as a humanitarian issue, you state clearly: yes, there is a humanitarian crisis and a deliberate and systematic starvation campaign, but the Palestinian question remains, above all, a huge national issue.

Some accuse us of dangerous rhetoric under the pretext of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Yes, what is happening in Palestine is known as the ‘Gaza Holocaust’, and for those who reject anti-Semitism – and rightly so – they should adopt the same stance towards anti-Palestinian sentiment.

Here I would like to clarify that we are the true Semites and ownership of this land belongs to us. We did not come from California or from Budapest...

At this point, I would like to refer to the statement by the former Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, who said that what we are doing in Gaza is genocide. The former head of Israel's secret services stated that in Gaza we are killing children for fun. Let us not forget that the current Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu, is wanted for war crimes and genocide.

We will not forgive anyone for the sight of the proud Palestinian people being humiliated by starvation. To support the Palestinians' just struggle, you don't need to be a politician; it is enough to be human.

I do not forget, and I do not forgive. I do not forget those who did not forget us and stood by our side, nor do we forgive those who forgot us and turned their backs on us.

We will not end up in the graveyard of history's wronged. We will resist and fight until victory. In the future, when your grandchildren ask you about Palestine, tell them it was the land where blood triumphed over the sword, where the power of reason the logic of force, that it was a people who were wronged, resisted, fought and triumphed.

We are neighbours with the Cypriots. We breathe the same air and share the same sea. We believe in the same values and principles. We believe in the values of democracy, freedom and justice. We believe in the right of every people to fight, using all lawful means at their disposal, for their freedom and dignity. From where we stand, we are just 420 kilometres from Gaza. If we fall silent for a minute, we will hear the cries of the children beneath the ruins and rubble of Gaza. If we fall silent, we will hear the cry of Ala al-Nazar, the paediatrician at Nasser Hospital who rushed to help the wounded and found herself faced with the utter tragedy of seeing nine of her ten children dead, with the tenth clinging to life and her husband seriously injured.

I wonder where humanity is? Where are human rights? Where is the civilised world? Or are all those grand words just empty rhetoric? What do we have to say to this woman?

I ask myself once again: are we ready to welcome the people of Gaza? What should we say to them? Do you think we'll have the courage to look them in the eye? I doubt it.

At this point, I'd also like to mention with pride the Cypriots who are taking part in the demonstrations for Palestine. Those who are not remaining silent. Who are raising their voices and stand tall, waving flags and banners and standing on the side of truth and resistance.

Because Cypriots know all too well from their own history what occupation means, what injustice means and what it means to be a refugee. The voices of the Cypriot demonstrators unite the Mediterranean with a single cry: no more death, no more silence. Because the struggle for Palestine is a struggle for us all. The struggle for justice knows no borders.

Stop the genocide, let the starvation end and let the occupation come to an end.

Thank you very much.

Address by Andreas Assiotis on behalf of the Social Alliance

Dear General Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL,

Distinguished Guests,

Friends and Delegates to the 24th AKEL Congress,

On behalf of all the members of the Social Alliance, I warmly welcome the opening of the 24th AKEL Congress today with particular joy and honour.

As you know, the Social Alliance includes active and thoughtful citizens who, despite coming from different political and ideological backgrounds, have worked together amongst ourselves and with AKEL during the election campaign for the 2023 Presidential Elections and in the run-up to the 2024 Local and European Parliament elections. The seed of cooperation and solidarity has been, and continues to be, our shared concern for the development of the Cyprus Problem and for the successful conclusion of the efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution as soon as possible. We have also been united by our shared aim to see the adoption and implementation in the Republic of Cyprus of strategies, policies and measures in the fields of democracy, the economy, the welfare state, the rule of law, development, health, education and the environment, which will place people at the highest priority and in the most effective way.

I would like to assure you that we, the members of the Social Alliance, feel particularly honoured by the invitation and the opportunity we have been given to participate constructively in various stages of the process of formulating the positions to be submitted to the 24th Congress for discussion, so that the Party's political positions for the coming period will be decided

The resumption of a political dialogue and negotiations between the communities for the peaceful resolution of the Cyprus problem is the greatest challenge for all of us, our constant concern and daily anxiety. We are not among those who affirm in words their willingness to proceed with the dialogue and negotiation processes with our counterparts, whilst demonstrating on a daily basis that their priority is to continue with Cyprus's international status and the internal governance of the island, as they took shape after 1963 and 1974, as if there were no substantive outstanding issues whatsoever.

The prolongation, for half a century, of the unresolved status, the occupation and the division of the state territory of the Republic of Cyprus and its communities is not only unacceptable. It is also extremely dangerous, because it harbours unspeakable dangers and nightmarish possibilities for the whole of Cyprus. The extremely dangerous developments in our region and the volatile situation persisting in many parts of the world, even within Europe itself, cannot lead to the normalisation, in our minds and hearts, of the violent loss of life, of death, and of the destruction of lives, property and entire regions. We must constantly remember that armed conflicts and wars are not merely spectacles on computer and television screens! On the contrary, they have dramatic consequences, every day, every minute, and, although they occur several hundred kilometres away from our own lives and our own property, whilst this dramatic uncertainty persists, it is not unlikely that they might also occur on our own island and turn our lives upside down as well.

As sensible citizens of the bi-communal Republic of Cyprus and the European Union – a status we have held since 1960 – we are deeply concerned because the failure to resume the talks from the point at which they were wrongly and ingloriously terminated in 2017 at Crans-Montana, for which the former President Anastasiades bears responsibility, with President Christodoulides aiding and abetting this. This failure, for which Mr. Tatar and the Turkish Government clearly bear the main responsibility:

- leaves us exposed and vulnerable to dramatic possibilities,
- restricts the rational and modern development of the whole of Cyprus,
- suspends for the long term the proper and fair utilisation of our wealth-generating resources for the benefit of all,
- prevents thousands of our fellow citizens from both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, who have already built their lives in other countries, from even consider returning to their homeland. The complete failure to resume substantive negotiations also leaves existential problems unresolved, such as the energy and water impasses, which both the Anastasiades governments and the Christodoulides government, during the more than two years it has been in power, have failed to produce even a single positive and tangible result. These and other similarly crucial issues could be addressed through different, more productive and effective policies, were we to realise the hitherto elusive dream of the reunification

the country and the establishment of friendly, cooperative relations with all neighbouring states, including Greece and Turkey.

With self-confidence, optimism and self-awareness, AKEL – Left – Social Alliance must continue to be at the forefront of the historic endeavour to create a progressive movement for change, together with other democratic forces that share the same fundamental aims and principles regarding the Cyprus problem and domestic government of the country. Among other things, we must strengthen our contribution to providing correct and unbiased briefing to both our Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot fellow citizens:

- On the urgent need to bring this endeavour to a successful conclusion,
- the significant benefits of a solution,
- the dangers posed by the perpetuation of the status quo,
- the opportunities available to us all, so that, within a Bi-zonal, Bi-communal Federal Cyprus, with political equality enshrined, we may learn once again to trust one another, to live together, and to achieve common goals from which we shall all benefit,
- for the prospects that will be created, provided we stop viewing one another as enemies and a threat. Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear delegates,

During the three-day 24th Congress of AKEL, a historic political party which is celebrating 100 years of significant and particularly positive political presence in our country, all the issues, policies and positions of concern to both AKEL and Cyprus as a whole will be discussed in depth. It would therefore be presumptuous of me to even attempt to address all these serious issues.

I shall therefore conclude my brief address by assuring you that the Social Alliance is present, active and productive, ready to work and contribute in every way possible to every specific issue that concerns our country and the citizens of this land.

We look forward to the success of the proceedings of the 24th AKEL Congress and to the work you will continue to do for our country, whether as the Opposition, or –better still – by participating in the governance of our country, because we believe that, as the oldest organised political force in our country, you CAN and MUST continue to provide valuable and positive services to this country, to this society, and to all our fellow citizens without exception.

On behalf of the Social Alliance, I wish every success to the proceedings of the 24th AKEL Congress.

Greeting of Erkut Şiahali, General Secretary of the Republican Turkish Party (CTP)

Dear General Secretary of AKEL,

Dear Delegates,

Dear friends,

I extend a warm greeting to you on behalf of the Republican Turkish Party and wish you a successful 24th Ordinary Congress.

I wholeheartedly commend AKEL's determination in its deeply rooted struggle for justice, work and peace. CTP, as a political movement that shares the same ideals regarding the reunification of Cyprus, has always regarded AKEL as a fraternal party in this struggle.

Today, whilst our island remains divided and the common future of our people is being led astray into uncertainty, it is clear that we need more courage and more solidarity. We are parties that must demonstrate our commitment to a solution not only through words but also through actions and determination. This determination is not only a political, but also a human responsibility.

A solution in which the two communities can live together in equality, freedom and security under a federal framework is not only achievable but also essential. On this path, as CTP, we maintain our goal for a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation based on the UN parameters, with political equality, and we continue to work towards achieving this goal.

Peace in Cyprus is in the common interest not only of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, but of all the peoples of the region. That is why our struggle is not a matter for the island alone, but an issue for humanity.

In this sense, we believe that the 24th AKEL Congress is not merely a political event, but also a call for action, a declaration of intent on the path to peace and progress. I greet you once again in a spirit of comradeship and hope that your Congress will bring hope, courage and determination.

Long live the struggle for labour and peace!

Long live the friendship of the peoples!

Thank you!

Address by Mine Atlı, former President of the Social Democratic Party (TDP) and current Secretary for External Relations

Distinguished members of AKEL,

Valued comrades, dear friends,

It is an honour for me to be here at this historic Congress together with you, who believe in peace, equality and the friendship of the peoples.

On this occasion, I am making use of this platform and gathering as an opportunity to condemn in the clearest possible terms the inhuman attacks to which the Palestinian people are being subjected: the destruction, the exile, the bombs targeting children, and this genocide being perpetrated before the eyes of the whole world. This is a matter of conscience that is being put to the test not only for the Palestinian people but for the whole of humanity.

History will record not only what happened, but also those who remained silent. Consequently, we, as Cypriots, must assume both our individual and collective responsibility. We cannot allow this genocide against the Palestinian people to be indirectly supported via Cypriot territory. We openly oppose the Republic of Cyprus's military cooperation with Israel and the use of the island as a base for attacks by the United States and the United Kingdom. This island should be a beacon of peace, justice and the will of the peoples to live together, not of war.

Today, some are trying to impose their own identity through weapons, oppression and occupation. Let them not believe that the identity that comes with tanks is stronger than the memory of the people. Let them not believe that time legitimises oppression.

Even after a thousand years, the Palestinians will still be here, just like all the peoples whose identity and will are being targeted for erasure.

As Cypriots, we must find a way to live together, to produce together and to resist together. We must defend human rights, gender equality, environmental justice and freedom, not only on our own behalf, but also on behalf of everyone living on this island. Ensuring equal access to these rights for everyone, including those born to parents in mixed marriages, is essential for true democracy.

We will not abandon the defence of a social order that is based more on solidarity and is more resilient to the growing conservatism, oppressive forms of governance and discrimination in today's world. Our call is directed not only to the present but to the future as well.

I wish to address, once again from this conference hall, all those who support the people's struggle: I believe in our own strength.

We will never abandon either our sense of justice or the future we will build together.

Our struggle will continue for the freedom of Palestine and for a peaceful future for Cyprus, which will be shaped by our own will.

Because freedom is too precious to be relinquished, and it is a deep longing in everyone's heart. Greetings, then, to all my comrades in this hall, with whom we have walked side by side in common struggles.

Thank you!

Message from the New Cyprus Party (YKP)

Honourable Presidium, dear members of AKEL,

As the New Cyprus Party, we welcome the 24th AKEL Congress and hope that your Congress, which is taking place during difficult times, will be a success.

Comrades,

Every day we see confrontations escalating and tensions on our island growing constantly. Whilst the Republic of Cyprus, by deepening its relations with countries such as Israel and concluding new military agreements with various states, is moving the island towards a more militarised state in the northern part of Cyprus, the puppet administration has turned Lefkoniko Airport into a military base housing armed drones and new warfare technologies. During times like these, it is our duty to strengthen our united voice in favour of peace, both in our region and on our island.

During times when we are once again witnessing the devastation caused by war, the need to find a solution in Cyprus becomes all the more urgent. The new ground for a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation is the Guterres document, which we must adopt and strive even harder for the reunification of the island. Otherwise, what we are currently witnessing in war-torn regions such as Gaza could also happen in our own country as well. At the same time, we must step up our joint struggles, from the river to the sea, to end the wars and invasions in Free Palestine, and to dismantle NATO, which is a war machine.

Economic crises, corruption and political decay have become part of everyday life on both sides of the island. Just as in the past, so too today, amid a deepening economic crisis, capital is once again promoting fascist and far-right populist policies as a solution for society. Under these circumstances, we must step up the fight against fascism, not just in words, but in every sphere of life, shoulder to shoulder. To this end, we must forge a strong united front against fascist paramilitary organisations such as the nationalist groups in the north and ELAM and similar organisations in the south. By confronting fascism and facing

the past head-on, we will pave the way for the reunification of our island and block the far-right's manipulative policies.

The problems in the northern part of Cyprus are growing by the day. Despite the fact that we say it is illegal, the administration in the northern part of Cyprus continues to grant citizenships. These newly naturalised citizens will be voters in the next elections. The numbers may seem small, but in 2020 Akinci lost the election by 8,000 votes, and we know from various sources and statements that the administration in the northern part of Cyprus has naturalised 30–35 thousand new 'citizens' over the last five years. With further privatisations, more and more public space is coming under the control of capital linked to the AKP party. The population being relocated under Turkey's auspices is becoming increasingly organised, both religiously and socially. Reflecting these developments, with a new disciplinary bill has recently been introduced, we have recently faced the imposition of headscarf-wearing pupils in secondary schools.

Human rights violations in the northern part of Cyprus, the imprisonment of trade unionists, politicians and journalists, as well as threats against journalists because of their work, have unfortunately become part of everyday life.

Turkey's policy of colonisation is advancing at a rapid pace, which is why time is of the essence for Turkish Cypriots. We must do everything we can to find a solution without delay; otherwise, tomorrow will be too late...In such conditions, it is the duty of Cypriots to unite more closely in support of a solution, peace, the complete demilitarisation of the island and the struggle against fascism.

With these feelings and thoughts in mind, we wish you every success once again to your 24th Congress.

Greeting from Abdullah Korkmazan, Secretary for External Relations of the Left Movement (Sol Hareket)

Dear members of AKEL,

Dear comrades,

We salute the 24th AKEL Congress with our revolutionary feelings. We salute the progressive force of the working class of Cyprus and the Cypriot people, and you, the members of AKEL.

AKEL, throughout its political history in Cyprus, has been a significant and militant force in support of labour, democracy and peace. It has never yielded to pressure, threats or bans; on the contrary, it has continued to lead the Cypriot people and the working class, growing stronger with each passing day. AKEL, did not back down either under the difficult conditions of the colonial era or in the face of the intense pressure and bans imposed by the fascism of the British colonial Palmer era. Neither the dirty machinations of Anglo-American imperialism, nor the political assassinations carried out by EOKA and TMT were able to deter AKEL from its struggle. AKEL resolutely and persistently continued its struggle for peace despite the conditions of the coup d'état executed by the fascist junta of the colonels on 15 July and the invasion of 20 July 1974, which plunged our country into permanent division. Under the conditions of division, it was and continues to be one of the leading forces in the struggle for rapprochement, peace and a federal solution.

Today, AKEL and the Cypriot Left, as forces in favour of peace and a solution, continue to struggle under very difficult conditions. We may experience setbacks and defeats in the struggle, but the important thing is not to be discouraged, to draw the necessary lessons from those failures and defeats, and to continue the struggle with even greater determination. As Bertolt Brecht said, "He who fights may be defeated. But he who does not fight has already lost."

Dear comrades,

Imperialism and the nationalist elites on both sides are acting as if they have sworn to condemn our country to permanent division. It is worth remembering that we, too, have sworn – and continue to swear – that we will never give in in the face of setbacks and difficulties, and that we will fight with all our might for a United Common Homeland.

We saw during the Annan Plan process and the Crans-Montana summit that a solution procedure that is left at the mercy of the imperialist powers and the community leaders has no chance of success. To achieve a comprehensive federal solution in Cyprus and reunite our country, what needs to be done is for all the forces for a solution – the progressive forces – to rally their forces around a common militant programme of struggle and a common platform for action.

We believe that the struggle for work, peace and a Common Homeland will certainly be successful. Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Armenians, Maronites and Latins, the entire Cypriot people and the working class – the struggle for peace and a solution needs a stronger AKEL now more than ever.

I believe that the 24th AKEL Congress will be a success and that we will succeed in our common struggle, shoulder to shoulder.

Long live our common struggle!

Long live AKEL!

Greeting from the United Cyprus Party BKP President, Izzet Izcan

I greet the 24th Congress of our fraternal party, AKEL, with the deepest feelings of comradeship. The 24th AKEL Congress is taking place at a time when the Middle East is ablaze and the Palestinian people are being brutally massacred.

Our homeland, Cyprus, was divided by a coup and occupation in accordance with the decision taken at the NATO summit in Lisbon, Portugal, and thousands of our citizens were killed. Our suffering continues. What is happening in our region reveals once again the importance of peace and freedom.

The deadlock over the Cyprus problem persists. The two-state solution proposals being imposed by the AKP government in Turkey and its representatives here are the main cause of the deadlock.

BKP believes that the Cyprus problem should be resolved through a federal solution based on the political equality of the two communities, in accordance with UN resolutions. To achieve this, substantive negotiations must resume from where they were suspended at Crans-Montana in 2017 and be concluded within the framework of the six-point proposals put forward by the UN Secretary-General.

BKP will continue to stand in every way in solidarity with and cooperate with our fraternal party, AKEL, for such an agreement that respects the fundamental human rights of Cypriots.

We wish the 24th AKEL Congress every success and send our comradely greetings to you all.

List of friendly and fraternal Parties abroad that have sent greetings

1. European Parliament, The Left Group

2. (Europe) Party of the European Left (PEL)

3. Australia: Communist Party of Australia (CPA)
4. Belgium: Workers' Party of Belgium (PVDA-PTB)
5. Venezuela: Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV)
6. Brazil: Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB)
7. Brazil: Brazilian Communist Party (PCB)
8. Britain: Communist Party of Britain (CPB)
9. France French Communist Party (PCF)
10. Germany: German Communist Party (DKP)
11. Germany: The Left (Die Linke)
12. Denmark: Communist Party of Denmark (DKP)
13. Greece: Communist Party of Greece (KKE)
14. Greece: SYRIZA – Progressive Alliance (SYRIZA-PA)
15. Greece: New Left (NA)
16. USA: Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA)
17. Japan: Japanese Communist Party (JCP)
18. India: Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI(M)
19. India: Communist Party of India (CPI)
20. Iran Tudeh Party of Iran Tudeh of Iran
21. Ireland Communist Party of Ireland CPI
22. Ireland: Sinn Féin SF
23. Spain: Communist Party of Spain (PCE)
24. Spain: PODEMOS (PODEMOS)
25. Spain: Communists of Catalonia (PCC)
26. Spain: Popular Union of Galicia (UPG)
27. Israel: Communist Party Israel (CPI)
28. Italy: Communist Refoundation Party (REFONDAZIONE COMUNISTA)
29. Italy: Italian Left (SINISTRA ITALIANA)
30. Italy: Five Star Movement (M5S-MOVIMENTO 5STELLE)
31. Canada: Communist Party of Canada (CPC)
32. Kenya: Communist Marxist Party of Kenya (CPMK)
33. China: Communist Party of China (CPC)
34. Cuba: Communist Party of Cuba (PCC)
35. Kuwait: Kuwaiti Progressive Movement
36. Laos: Lao People's Revolutionary Party
37. Luxembourg: Communist Party of Luxembourg (KPL)
38. Mexico: Communist Party of Mexico (PCM)
39. Bangladesh: Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB)
40. Bahrain: Progressive Tribune
41. Hungary: Hungarian Workers' Party (HWP)
42. Ukraine: Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU)
43. Pakistan: Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP)
44. Palestine: Palestinian People's Party (PPP)
45. Palestine: Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)
46. Palestine: Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
47. Portugal: Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)
48. Russia: Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF)
49. Serbia: Communists of Serbia
50. Swaziland: Communist Party of Swaziland (CPSw)
51. Sri Lanka: People's Liberation Front (JVP)
52. Turkey: Communist Party of Turkey (TKP)
53. Turkey: Workers' Party of Turkey (TIP)
54. Philippines: Philippine Communist Party (PCP-1930)
55. Finland: Communist Party of Finland (CPF)
56. Chile: Communist Party of Chile (PCCh)

D. AWARDS / PAN-CYPRriot EMULATION

AWARDS

The veterans of the Progressive Party of the Working People who were honoured at the 24th AKEL Congress for their 50 years of uninterrupted party membership and activity.

NICOSIA

Andros Kyprianou (date of Party membership: 1974)

Avraam Melia (1975)

Avraam Takis (1975)

Vassos Georgiou (1974)

Antonis Neophytou (1975)

Petros Pasiás (1975)

Lakis Polycarpou (1973)

Yianna Skouroupathi (1974)

Toumazos Tsielepis (1975)

LEMESOS

Thomas Giannakis (1975)

Simos Ioannou (1973)

Christia Christou (1973)

Andreas Christou (1973)

LARNACA

Christou Stella (1974)

FAMAGUSTA

Aleku Christos (1975)

Zannettos, Venizelos (1974)

Zaouras, Giannakis (1975)

Koukouma Skevi (1973)

Mavrokordatos Christos (1975)

Petsas Pieris (1973)

PAPHOS

Zoukov Giorgos (1972)

Leonida Panikos (1976)

Christofi Andreas (1974)

UNITED KINGDOM

Dimitris Lazarou (1972)

Speech by Andros Kyprianou on behalf of those honoured with the AKEL Medal for 50 years of active Party membership and struggle

On behalf of the comrades who have been honoured, I extend a warm greeting to the 24th Congress of our Party. We thank the Party leadership for the honour they have bestowed upon us. We humbly declare that these over 50 years, we have simply sought to fulfil our duty to society. The surest and most effective way to do so was within the ranks of AKEL.

Our Party, however many weaknesses and problems it may have had over the years, has been, is, and will remain the very best that our country's political life has to offer. Profoundly people-centred, serious and responsible.

A party committed to improving life for everyone, not just for the few and the privileged.

A party that has consistently fought against social injustice and inequality.

A party that has championed freedom, democracy and peace. The brotherhood of peoples.

A party that has fought against discrimination in all its forms. Which has defended human rights regardless of people's origin, colour, religion, gender or individual circumstances.

A party which, when confronted with corruption, had the strength to tackle it decisively and make it clear that the Left and corruption are incompatible concepts.

The esteemed AKEL is a cause worth fighting for and for which one should give every ounce of one's strength. This is precisely what the comrades honoured today have done.

The conditions facing humanity today are particularly worrying. International law has been violated. It is used by the West when it suits their own interests. The UN Secretary-General, who is trying to defend it and who stands up for the truth, is being discredited by those very same people. As for the International Court of Justice in The Hague, which ordered the arrest and trial of Netanyahu, it is now being denounced by those very people who once glorified it when its rulings concerned Putin and Milošević, and is now being called "untrustworthy".

The laws of war have been trampled on. What is being attempted in long-suffering Palestine is not merely genocide but also a rewriting of historical reality. An attempt is being made to redraw the map of the region, spearheaded by Trump and Netanyahu. They want to build, they say, a new tourist Riviera on land that belongs to the Palestinians. The self-proclaimed spokespeople of the so-called "free world" are nothing more than merchants of nations and butchers of the peoples.

At the same time, the war in Ukraine continues with undiminished intensity. A war that began and has unfolded as a result of power games and the interests of the world's mighty. With flagrant disregard for the human lives being lost. NATO cannot, especially indeed at a time when there is no formidable opposing pole, seek to expand into every corner of the planet. To impose its strategic plans across the globe.

The Europeans, following their well-known policy of double standards, are directing all their severity towards Russia. They are supporting Zelenskyy with billions of euros and weapons, perpetuating a war in which many lives are being lost. At the same time, they are committing hundreds of billions of euros to investment in military equipment, whilst countries are plagued by poverty. In the case of Palestine, they allow their political ally, Israel, to massacre people on a daily basis, including small, defenceless children. They do not even consider imposing any sanctions on it. Only when Israel crossed every boundary of barbarity did some – though not all –, find the strength to whisper that war crimes were being committed.

Amidst all that is happening, President Christodoulides and political parties claim they are on the "right side of history". They used to say this when things were easy. Now that their political friends are bringing shame on the human race, they have remained silent.

Genocide, racism, sick nationalism and xenophobia were not, nor will they ever be on the right side of history. They have always characterised fascists and dictators. The Nazis who drowned all of humanity in blood were trying to impose their inhumane ideology by force.

Unfortunately, fascism is rearing its head again today. In Trump's America. In the Europe of Meloni, Le Pen, Orbán and others. In the Cyprus of far-right ELAM. When their far-right party served their purpose in fighting AKEL, they supported and fawned over it. When they needed it to win the Presidency of the Republic and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, they embraced it. Now that they feel its hot breath on the back of their necks or it has overtaken them, they are shedding crocodile tears. They have remembered the sickening nationalism that has nothing to do with patriotism. The populism that is leading the country to ruin.

When AKEL warned about all this, they accused us. They joined forces with ELAM, accusing us of supposedly undermining the homeland. That we were "anti-Greek".

We reply that AKEL is a profoundly patriotic party. That all its actions and initiatives are aimed at serving Cyprus and its people. We tell them that we are proud of our Greek heritage. At the same time, however, we recognise that every person has the right to be proud of their own heritage as well.

We also tell them that our Greece is not the same as their Greece.

Our Greece is the Greece that gave birth to democracy and civilisation, which shed its light upon all of humanity. Theirs is the Greece of dictatorship and obscurantism.

Our Greece is the one that spat blood at the Agios Stratis concentration camps but did not betray its ideals. Their Greece gave the Nazi salute to Greek dictator Metaxas.

Our Greece won the battles at Fardykampos with its blood, was mowed down by gunfire in Kaisariani and rose again when it tore down the Nazi swastika from the Acropolis. Their Greece wore hoods and denounced the patriotic resistance fighters.

Our Greece raised banners at rallies for freedom and independence. Their Greece drew pistols to kill the people who were demanding what was only right.

Our Greece is Belogiannis's smile at the moment of his sentencing. Their Greece is the deep state and the court that sentenced him to death.

Our Greece is the Greek flag soaked in the blood of the 1973 Polytechnic uprising, which to this day flies as a banner of honour. Their Greece honours the memory of Papadopoulos and Grivas in Cyprus.

At a time when fascism is rearing its head once more, AKEL is the only political force that consistently stands up and fights it. It must continue to do so with determination and in a political manner.

ELAM has learnt lessons from the actions of "Golden Dawn" in Greece. It no longer demonstrates with batons, helmets and other gear. It no longer organises beatings of foreigners. It attempts to present itself as a mainstream party, concerned about the poor and helping those in need. It engages in patriotic jingoism rather than nationalism, along with plenty of populism. However much it tries to disguise itself, however, its nature and character remain the same. This, unfortunately, is known only to AKEL. Many people are taken in by this disguise. Its true positions and views must therefore be exposed.

We are proud of the initiatives undertaken by the Party leadership with the aim of improving citizens' lives. For tackling the cost of living, particularly energy costs; to ensure access to affordable housing; to defend the General Healthcare System (GESY) and the public education system; to protect the environment; and much more. It is this pro-people approach that sets it apart from the other parties. We must continue along the same lines.

As regards the Cyprus problem, for our Party it remains a matter of survival for the entire people, on the land where they were born. The Turkish invasion and the ongoing occupation pose a huge threat to the future and prospects of our country. Anastasiades' tragic and contradictory handling of the situation, and his treacherous references to a two-state solution, have brought us within a hair's breadth of permanent partition.

N. Christodoulides, unfortunately, has shown that he is more concerned with the public relations aspect of the problem than with its substance. His aim should have been, from the very outset, to take initiatives that would dissuade the Turkish side from its unacceptable demand for a two-state solution, without making any concessions on the substance of the issue. Our Party has been putting forward specific proposals to N. Anastasiades since December 2020 on what could be done to persuade the Turkish side to abandon its intransigence.

It submitted the same proposals to N. Christodoulides. Unfortunately, neither of them was interested in examining them or discussing them with our Party.

As time goes by, the developments surrounding the Cyprus problem are becoming increasingly difficult. We are but a breath away from permanent partition. Partition is not the end of the road. It will, unfortunately, be the beginning of new hardships and disasters for our country and people. If the President fails to realise this, the future will be very bleak.

Developments in society are becoming increasingly difficult. The enormous and relentless problems plaguing it, the inability of those in power to provide solutions, the fragmentation of political forces, the emergence of many new political formations and the presence of numerous 'meteor-like' internet personalities, all make our Party's future path more difficult.

However great the difficulties may be, though, they must not break us. AKEL carries with it a heavy legacy from the past. Struggles, sacrifices, dedication; people who made history, people who became history. At the same time, it has a wealth of potential for the future.

It possesses a precious reserve force in its youth: EDON Youth and PROODEFTIKI Student Movement. Young people with knowledge and capabilities, and above all the selflessness to fight for a better society. Volunteers who give their all, for example, from small initiatives for their neighbourhood park, to local councils, voluntary organisations, in solidarity campaigns, every call from the movement is answered to take up the struggle and make a contribution.

Hundreds of anonymous cadres and active members. You'll never see them on television, they are not in the spotlight, and they may not even feature on social media. Yet they are there, working quietly for AKEL, for the People's Movement of the Left, for the country, for the people.

All of them are AKEL's true wealth. They are the ones who carry on their shoulders the legacy of a movement that holds high the banner of the People, the banner of Cyprus.

Hold your heads high. Keep your hearts high.

Over the course of our hundred years, we have waged battles, we have won, we have lost, we have fallen, we have risen again, and we have always pressed on.

That is what we will do now too.

Because AKEL will not bow its head, will not be intimidated, will not remain silent. It will march forward once more, always forward.

Long live the 24th Congress! Long live AKEL!

PAN-CYPRIOT EMULATION

Speech by Charis Karamanos, Central Organisational Secretary of AKEL on the results of the Pan-Cyprian Emulation

Comrades,

In an age of individualism and self-interest, organised struggle for the good of the people and the country is what sets our Party apart. And organised struggle means a strong and mass-based organisational structure. It means objectives and concrete steps towards achieving them. It means collective action and the conscious participation of everyone in realising those goals.

It is these qualities that we are honouring today.

We are accustomed to focusing on our shortcomings and weaknesses – in an effort to constantly improve. Today, however, we shall focus on the immense work carried out, on a daily basis, by thousands of our members and militants. For it is this work that enables our Party to withstand adversity and play a leading role in the political and social life of the country.

A huge thank you is due to all our comrades who, under difficult circumstances, have stood on the front line, giving their time, effort and heart. They are the unsung, selfless cadres of the Party who, without complaint, have kept AKEL strong. Motivated solely by their love for the Party and their faith in our principles and values.

This is the backbone of our 100-year journey. This is our strength.

In the persons of those who will be honoured today for achieving the best results under the Organisational Plan since our last Congress – whether they be District Organisations or grassroots party groups - we honour all our comrades who work day in, day out, with dedication and pride, to carry the voice of AKEL to every corner of Cyprus and to put our party's policies into practice.

The organisational targets we have set for the purposes of comradely competition between the District Organisations certainly do not reflect the full scope of our activities. They are not, merely numerical – behind them lies an aspect of activity that is of vital importance to our Party. Beyond the numerical targets, it should be noted that the District Organisations have carried out a range of other events and activities, such as election campaigns, political rallies, door-to-door canvassing and outreach, engagement with communities, local councils and other bodies, and have participated in a range of activities that are quantifiable and which broaden the scope of our Party's work; we must find a way to record and value them accordingly.

The main aim of recruiting new members is to bring in a younger generation, with all the positive implications this has for the Party. By paying their membership fees, members fulfil their statutory obligation and reaffirm their political commitment to the party, whilst educational initiatives serve to strengthen the political ideological foundation of the Party's members and cadres. The daily reader of 'Haravgi' newspaper is also the daily, effective advocate of the Party's positions. Members' attendance at Local Organisation Committee meetings provides an opportunity both to stay informed and to express their views. Through the Central Committee's fundraising campaign, besides the financial aspect, hundreds of our cadres come into contact with thousands of members and friends of the Party. Comrades,

For the purposes of awarding prizes at the 24th Congress, the Central Organising Committee has decided that we will honour:

- a) the top two Regional Committees that achieved the best results in the period between the 23rd and 24th Congresses,
- b) the top two Regional Organisations for the special Organisational Plan in honour of the 24th Congress, covering the period from 1 January to 11 June 2025;
- c) the top two District Organisations from each Regional Organisation.

Comrades,

Today we are honouring the two District Organisations that achieved the best results during the period from the 23rd to the 24th Congress with a commemorative item bearing the logo selected to mark the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of Cyprus -AKEL. The logo was designed by graphic designer Adonis Papadopoulos.

First place: the Limassol District Organisation with 4,147 points.

Second place: the Larnaca District Organisation with 3,784 points.

Third, the Pafos District Organisation with 3,620 points.

Fourth, the Nicosia District Organisation with 3,305 points.

Fifth, the Famagusta District Organisation with 3,224 points.

We also honour the two District Organisations that achieved the best results in the special organisational plan in honour of the 24th Congress with a commemorative print by the artist Christos Foukaras, depicting the Founding Congress of the Communist Party of Cyprus, held on 15 August 1926. The original painting is housed at the offices of the Central Committee of AKEL.

First, the Famagusta District Organisation with 50,432 points.

Second, the Limassol District Organisation with 49,481 points.

Third, the Nicosia District Organisation with 45,826 points.

Fourth, the Paphos District Organisation with 43,957 points.

Fifth, the Larnaca District Organisation with 43,529 points.

Honorary awards are also presented to the AKEL branches in Britain and Greece. Although they do not participate in the comradely Competition – as they operate under circumstances entirely different from the reality in Cyprus – they consistently carry out significant political and social work, keeping AKEL's voice alive among Cypriots abroad. With profound appreciation for their work and their ongoing contribution. Finally, we are honouring the first two Party Grassroots Groups from each District Organisation with a commemorative piece by the artist Daphne Trimikliniotis. The work is entitled 'Vision of Peace'. In a world where the shadow of a global war looms everywhere, art stands out as a counterbalance, as a hope, as a vision of peace.

NICOSIA

1. Party Cell "DIMITRIS CHRISTOFIAS" Engomi
2. Party Cell Geriou, Shooting Range

LEMESOS

1. Party Cell Peledri
2. Party Cell Agios Athanasios

LARNACA

1. Party Cell Agios Ioannis Women's Community Centre
2. Party Cell Vattenas 1 – Ormideia

FAMAGUSTA

1. Party Cell Avgorou
2. Party Cell Oroklinis Refugee Settlement

PAFOS

1. Party Cell Palio Ktima – Agios Theodoros neighborhood
2. Party Cell Geroskipou A'

E. CONGRESS DATA / ELECTIONS

IDENTITY OF THE 24th AKEL CONGRESS

A total of 1,042 delegates attended the 24th Congress

MEN: 770, WOMEN: 272

REPRESENTATION OF DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS: Nicosia 375, Limassol 208, Larnaca 176, Famagusta 169, Paphos 86, Greece 4, United Kingdom 22, Brussels 2

ATTENDANCE BY DAY: 1st day: 768 delegates attended, 2nd day: 929 delegates attended, 3rd day: 822 delegates attended. First-time delegates: 97

AGE OF DELEGATES: Up to 30 years old 88, 31–40 years old 152, 41–50 years old 177, 51–60 years old 180, 61–70 years old 312, 71 years and over 133

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF DELEGATES: Primary 57, Secondary 361, Higher 118, Higher education 506

SOCIAL BACKGROUND: Employees 719, Farmers 2, Middle strata 58, Pensioners 242, Students 9, Housewives 7, Unemployed 1

Election results for the new Central Committee of AKEL

The members of the newly elected Central Committee, in order of votes received:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. LOUCAIDES GIORGOS 751 | 19. NIKOLAOU MARINA 640 |
| 2. STEFANOU STEFANOS 744 | 20. SAVVA EVANTHIA 633 |
| 3. KOUKOUMAS GIORGOS 743 | 21. KOSTA KOSTAS (PELE) 627 |
| 4. VYRAS, ANDREAS 739 | 22. ANTONIOU CHRYSTALLA 607 |
| 5. KAFKALIAS ANDREAS 736 | 23. IOANNOU NIKOS 607 |
| 6. KARAMANOS CHARIS 716 | 24. TOMBAZOS CHRISTOS 602 |
| 7. KETTIROS NIKOS 712 | 25. ZANNETTOU CHRYSANTHOS 592 |
| 8. CHRISTOFIA CHRISTINA 702 | 26. GAVRIEL GIANNAKIS 591 |
| 9. CHARALAMBOUS SOTIROULA 698 | 27. EVAGOROU ELENI 587 |
| 10. DAMIANOU ARISTOS 698 | 28. POLYCARPOU VERA 585 |
| 11. CHRISTOFIAS CHRISTOS 686 | 29. GEORGIOU K. GEORGE 584 |
| 12. GEORGIOU (ATHOS) CHRYSANTHOS 682 | 30. PANIKOS HAMBAS 582 |
| 13. KOULAS SEVIROS 673 | 31. ALKIS SYLIKOTIS 578 |
| 14. PASIOURTIDIS ANDREAS 671 | 32. CHRISTOS CHRISTOFIDES 577 |
| 15. POLYCARPOU CHARIS 659 | 33. KOSTAS DIPLAROS 569 |
| 16. PAPALAZAROU NEOPHYTOS 656 | 34. FAKONTIS ANDREAS 553 |
| 17. SAVVA MARINA 655 | 35. HATZIPAPA FOTOULA 548 |
| 18. KALOPSIDIOTI STAVRI 652 | 36. SKOUROUPATIS APOSTOLOS 537 |

37. GRIGORIOU ANDREAS 536
38. PASIARDIS CHRYSOSTOMOS 533
39. XYDIAS KYRIAKOS 515
40. FILOTHEOU LEONTIOS 509
41. PARMAKI GEORGIA 503
42. CHARALAMBOUS VAKIS 501
43. GEROLATSITIS ALEXANDROS 500
44. IOANNOU ARGENTOULA 494
45. NIKOLAOU CHRISTINA 492
46. THOMAS THOMAS 486
47. DIMITRIOU ILIAS 483
48. KALOGIROU NIKOLAS 482
49. AGATHOU STAVROS 479
50. ZAOURA ATHINA 475
51. NEOFYTOS NEOFYTOS 475
52. KKONE CHRISTOS 474
53. FAKONTIS VALENTINOS 474
54. KAZANTZIS ATHOS 472
55. LAMBROU LAMBROS 469
56. NIKOLAOU MARIA 469
57. PASIAS CHARIS 467
58. GRIGORIOU NIKOS 462
59. GIASEMI SOTIROULA 459
60. KOUKOU-STAVRINOY MARINA 458
61. KOUMAS SOTIRIS 454
62. LIASIS GEORGE 454
63. TSAKKISTOS APOSTOLOS 451
64. IOANNIDOU MARIA 443
65. LAGOU MARIOS 442
66. STEFANOY STEFOS 438
67. NIKOLAOU CHRISTOS 437
68. PANAGI MARIOS 435
69. GEORGIOY RENOS 432
70. ALEXANDROY GIORGOS 423
71. MICHAEL MICHALIS 418
72. LILIS G. NIKOS 414
73. XIOUROPPA MARIA 413
74. POLYCARPOY VALENTINOS 408
75. GIALLOURIS GIORGOS 407
76. GIORGOS IULIANOS 407
77. CHRISTOS MAKRIS 405
78. IAKOVOS TOFARIS 405
79. NATASIA ANASTASIOY 404
80. ANDREAS KOUNNIS 403
81. KOUKOS NASOS 401
82. PIERI LAMBROS 401
83. GEORGIOY T. GEORGE 400
84. PAPANIKOLAOU MICHALIS 398
85. ANTONIOY TOULA 398
86. TRIMIKLINIOTIS NIKOS 398
87. ANTONIOY THOMAS 397
88. TSAKKISTOS GEORGIOS 383
89. CHRISTOFOROY KONSTANTINOS 382
90. TSALAKOS GEORGIOS 377
91. GIATROY, ANTONIS 376
92. KONSTANTINOPOYLOS KONSTANTINOS 374
93. LAPITHIOTI ARETI 370
94. NIKOLAOU – LILI MARIA 368
95. GEORGIOY MARIOS 360
96. MICHAEL – MOLESKI ANDRI 359
97. ARGYRIDIS MARIOS 358
98. CHRISTODOYLOY POLINA 357
99. PSARAS APOSTOLOS 354
100. MICHAELIDOU-CHRISTOY, FOTEINI 353
101. GEORGIOY, ERMIONI 347
102. ANDRONIKOY, KYPROS 346
103. AUGUSTI, PAMPOS 331
104. CHARALAMBOUS SOTIRIS 328
105. ANDREOY ANDREAS 313
106. KOULERMOY PETROS 304
107. PAPADIMITRIOY NIKOLAS 304
108. ACHILLEOS ACHILLEAS 302
109. IOANNOY PAULOY 299
110. GAVRIEL GAVRIEL (LAKIS) 291
111. ZACHARIADES ALEXANDROS 286
112. PETSAS KOSTAS 284
113. PANAGIOTOY KONSTANTINOS 282
114. DEMETRIOY MINAS 274

115. KOUNTOURIS CHRISTODOULOS 273
116. CHRISTODOULOU STELIOS 270
117. MINA ANDREAS 265

118. SKOUROUPATHIS DOMETIOS 255
119. MAVROMMATIS KOSTAS 251
120. LIASI KATERINA 249

Results of the election of the new Central Control Committee

The members of the newly elected Central Control Committee, in order of votes received:

1. NEOPHYTOU KATERINA 515
2. KYRIAKOS HATZITTOFIS 512
3. MICHALIS MICHAEL 502
4. PAMPOS EXADAKTYLOS 495
5. EUGENIA ALETRA 477

6. IOANNOU YIANNAKIS 453
7. GIRGORIS GRIGORIS 445
8. CHRISTODOULOU-SYGGERI MARIA 430
9. CHRISTOFIS ANDREAS 423

Profile of the New Central Committee

Age

Average age 48.18

Up to 30 years old 3, 31–40 years old 32, 41–50 years old 37, 51–60 years old 28, 61–70 years old 20

Education

Secondary 5, Higher 9, High education 106

Composition

92 men, 28 women

20 seconded to the Central Committee, 12 seconded to the Regional Committees, 4 seconded to the Youth Movement, 2 seconded to the Farmer's Movement, 1 seconded to the Women's Movement, 7 trade unionists, 12 civil servants, 12 self-employed, 18 public and semi-public sector employees, 30 private sector employees, 1 artist, 1 pensioner

The election of the new General Secretary of AKEL

St. Stefanou continues to lead AKEL following his re-election—for the first time directly by the Congress—to the position of General Secretary of the Party.

Out of a total of 810 valid votes, 781 delegates (96.4%) supported his candidacy, while 29 delegates (3.6%) did not.