



***"THESES"***  
**OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO THE  
PROGRAMMATIC CONGRESS OF AKEL**

**15-16th February 2014, Nicosia**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

AKEL, through its policy and struggles, was always at the forefront of the struggle for the freedom and independence of Cyprus and for a better future for our people. It always played a decisive role in Cypriot affairs. Our Party, the party with the longest history in Cyprus, continues to exist and remains strong because it fulfils this role with consistency, serving solely the interests of Cyprus, our people and workers. AKEL continues to exist and is at the forefront of the struggles of our people, because during all the difficult conditions it has gone through it knows how to utilize the strength which the people and workers give it to become even more combative and meet their aspirations more effectively. The experience of AKEL's almost 90-years of life and struggles, as well as the experience from the last five year term of the Christofias government's great service, but also the shortcomings and weaknesses we had, is a solid basis upon which to go forward. We are assessing in a self-critical way and manner this experience and are moving forward.

With this in mind, the Plenum of the C.C. of AKEL, which convened on 1st November 2013, approved the decision to organise a Programmatic Party Congress in mid-February. The Plenary adopted on 7th January 2014 the "Theses" to the Congress, which will be discussed in the Party Base Organisations (PBO) and in the Congress itself so as to collectively and responsibly agree on the best possible decisions. The decisions of the Programmatic Congress on the issues to be discussed will constitute the guiding beacon of our actions and struggles in the years to come.

### **We renew the hope, defending society**

The Congress will convene at a time when Cypriot society is under an unprecedented attack. A whole range of our people's social gains such as the welfare state, education, health, culture, the Cooperative movement, Local Government, the profitable Semi-state Organizations are all being targeted, as well as the low and middle income groups and SMEs. Working people's wages and rights, which were won through decades of struggles and sacrifices, together with the trade union movement, are also under attack. As a result of the attacks on young people, the danger is real of a lost generation.

Through the dismantling of the welfare state and imposition of tough austerity measures, the vulnerable groups of the population such as pensioners on low pensions, the unemployed, the refugees, large families, single parents and recipients of public assistance, have also come under attack.

At the same time an attempt to disorientate our working people and people in general is underway through the targeting of immigrants, a development which is serving the inhuman propaganda of neo-fascism and the extreme right, while on the other hand the way is being paved for the further curbing of rights and restriction of public welfare for the vulnerable groups of the population.

In these unprecedented conditions for Cypriot society, AKEL's duty and responsibility as the biggest and main opposition party was and remains enormous.

The Left's primary priority and task is to continue to defend workers, citizens and society from the attacks they are coming under. AKEL's obligation is to continue to stand as a bastion and pole of resistance against the neoliberal policies of the Troika and the government for austerity, the full deregulation of labour relations and the economy and privatizations.

We, the Left, through our struggles and assertions, must renew the hope among our people and constantly and consistently be on the side of society and the working people.

Making use of our unbreakable ties with the people and citizens, we have to listen and grasp their worries, anxieties and concerns even more and propose a perspective to meet their aspirations and visions.

Responding precisely to these considerable challenges, we must continue to take concrete steps that will make our Party stronger and more effective; measures for the continued strengthening and deepening of internal party democracy, but also for the unity in the ranks

of the Party; measures to further reinforce its ties and contact with the working people and the broad popular masses.

The convening of the Programmatic Congress is also part of this procedure.

Our goal is to develop a clear, coherent, comprehensive, alternative proposal and policies on important issues and challenges society is facing or which concern the Party itself, its functioning and presence in society and in our country's political affairs.

The need for renewal and organisational strengthening also imposed the changes that had already been made in the leadership of some District Organizations of AKEL and in the leading collective bodies of the Party. The need for the political strengthening makes placing increasing demands at all levels imperative, especially on those holding party and public posts. From the leadership to the party grassroots and vice-versa we all have a responsibility, collectively and personally, to enhance the trust of the working people and society at large in our Party.

We trust the people of Cyprus that it continues to recognize in AKEL and the Left the political force that wants and can consistently and resolutely defend society and our people in these very difficult and challenging conditions.

Consequently, the challenges for all members and militants of the Party are indeed great. With our Programmatic Congress as a starting point, we can and must be worthy of the legacy of the almost 90 years of our Party's glorious history and above all, to respond with zeal and selfsacrifice to the call of our country and people today.

## **2. THE SOCIO-POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE CONGRESS IS TAKING PLACE**

Cypriot society has changed enormously over the past twenty years. These changes are taking place both on the economic base and the superstructure. Any reference to Cypriot society and its class structure

cannot but analyse first the specific factors / forces on a global, regional and local level, which have generated significant changes in social relations in Cyprus too.

- Science and technology have become indispensable contributors of production to the economy and overall functioning of the social system. Although the development of science and technology creates the preconditions for improving humanity's living standards, this is not reflected in reality.
- The process of the internationalization of capital, as this is expressed through the process of globalization is the second factor. Globalisation's direction and content define the correlation of class power on both the national and international level. This means that this process, as it is currently evolving, is inherently capitalist and with a powerful dose of neoliberalism.
- The third variable / force shaping contemporary Cypriot society and affecting its class structure and political behaviour, is the European Union, which our country had joined in 2004.
- The continuing occupation and partition, after the treacherous coup d'état and subsequent Turkish invasion, is another important factor, given that it causes lasting and constant damage to Cypriot society's cohesion, to social behaviours that are developing and to the prospect of waging a common class struggle of our own people too.

Besides these factors, however, it is accepted that the conditions in which our Programmatic Congress is taking place remain complex and intricate, with our country going through one of the most difficult and critical phases in our modern history.

- On the international level, the attempts to impose the interests of the U.S. and its NATO allies all over the world is continuing relentlessly to the detriment of the peoples and their will, against the national sovereignty of states, human rights and freedoms.

- Despite the tragic results of the imposition of the neoliberal model of economic management, which has considerably exacerbated the worst consequences of the systemic crisis of capitalism, the ruling circles of the European Union, are not only not changing course, but are further reinforcing the neoliberal character of the EU through institutional and structural changes currently being promoted. In addition to the attacks on the rights and gains of the workers and peoples of Europe, the EU is advancing towards further militarization and growing aggression beyond its own borders.
- The efforts to resume negotiations and formulate a common basis of the talks on the Cyprus problems are currently facing serious difficulties; difficulties that have as a starting point the Turkish intransigent behaviour, which however the Greek Cypriot side has facilitated through its detachment from what has previously been agreed in past negotiations.
- The prudent, but simultaneously decisive handling of the Cyprus problem by the D. Christofias government, in conjunction with a multidimensional foreign policy and the international recognition of the Greek Cypriot side's readiness for a solution of the Cyprus problem, created the preconditions for significant steps to be taken for the delineation of the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone, the confirmation of the existence and prospects for exploiting the natural resources located in the seabed of Cyprus.
- Regarding the triangle of issues affecting the Cyprus problem, the Economy and Natural Gas in the Cypriot EEZ, whilst these issues should not under any circumstances be connected procedurally, however, unavoidably the development of one affects, or may affect the rest of the others. In particular, no one has the legitimate right to pose in the form of a dilemma and extortionate manner the solution of the Cyprus problem in advance as a precondition for proceeding with the exploitation of natural gas in the Cypriot EEZ. On the other hand however, a correct solution of the Cyprus problem will have a positive impact on the economy. Conversely, a deadlock on the Cyprus problem, the responsibility

for which will be put on the Greek Cypriot side, will have a negative effect on the exercise of the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus in the Cypriot EEZ.

- As regards the Cyprus economy it initially was negatively affected by the systemic crisis that erupted in the U.S. in 2007, like many other economies of EU Member States and in general throughout the world. Subsequently, the crisis in Cyprus evolved into a banking crisis, as result of the reckless policy of bankers and the non-existent supervision on the part of the former Governor of the Cyprus Central Bank, thus leading the economy to its exclusion from the markets, and the recourse to the EU Stability Mechanism.
- In March 2013, despite pledges and declarations to the contrary, the Anastasiades government consented to the worst ever Memorandum imposed on Eurozone countries, which, among other detestable provisions, contained the measure - unprecedented globally - for the haircut/levy on bank deposits. Under the burden of the decisions taken in March, the Cyprus economy entered into a credit crunch regime, which, together with the tough austerity policies and cuts in the developmental budgets of the state, resulted in the economy drifting into a dead-end vicious cycle of recession. On the part of the Anastasiades Government, it not only refuses to accept any discussion about any other alternative solutions, other than, it considers, the Memorandum one-way path, but at the same time it does not assert nor seek even the improvement of Memoranda terms. The explanation for the government's stand is quite simple. The government identifies with the Troika's ideological and political philosophy on a number of central issues and at the same time it exploits the "opportunity" to promote a radical redistribution of national wealth in favour of big private interests at the expense of low and middle income groups. This is what numerous government decisions illustrate, such as for example the property tax, the referring of the Bill on the freezing of rents, the abusive extension of shopping hours etc.

- Cypriot society is characterized by a series of disturbing phenomena, mainly the complete degrading of institutions and the political system, primarily as a result of the inability of the political system to protect its citizens from the problems caused by the banking crisis. At the same time, the cultivation of intolerance and fanaticism against AKEL in recent years, in combination with the severe social problems brought about by the crisis, created the fertile ground for the infiltration and growth of dangerous extreme right-wing and racist forces; forces and developments that must be combated decisively.

### **Cyprus and the European Union**

Ten years have passed since the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union. It is increasingly becoming understood that the decisions taken in Brussels, as well as the existing situation in the EU, affects the lives of Cypriots. The imposition of the anti-peoples Memorandum with the approval of the government of the Republic of Cyprus has made this painful reality even more clear in the Cypriot people's minds.

The European Union, as our Party correctly assessed in its Congress decisions, is confirming its character as an advanced organisation of capitalist integration. On this basis developments are evolving which are deepening the integration of the EU. This is the same trend that is intensifying with the outbreak of the global capitalist crisis, using the latter as a pretext.

The imposition of the Lisbon Treaty, the institutionalisation of the Single Economic Governance, the Banking Union, the rule for surplus budgets of states and the adoption of a series of packages in the direction of a single policy of the member-states under the control of the EU and the so-called Brussels Directorate take even more sovereignty away from the political power and the parliaments of member-states. They are institutionalising neo-liberalism, undermining the social role of the state, strengthening the ground for attacks on labour rights and public wealth, boosting the profitability and enhancing the role of the multinational companies and powerful states. Furthermore, the institutionalised



cooperation of the EU with the IMF is sharpening the anti-peoples character of the EU's policies and is increasingly subordinating a number of member states, primarily in the periphery.

At the same time, in the name of "combating" terrorism the right to the protection of personal data is taken away, whilst for the protection of "Fortress Europe" hundreds of people victims of wars and hunger are drowning in the Mediterranean Sea.

As far as foreign policy is concerned, the militarisation of international relations, which is based on its inclusion into law of the so-called dogma of pre-emptive war, the growing EU-NATO coupling and interaction, joint goals and alternating means of imposing the new world order in third countries is obvious. Millions of Euros from the EU and memberstates budgets are allocated to arms programmes and military missions, at the same time when other expenditures are being curbed.

In these conditions, AKEL is continuing and intensifying its efforts together with the other Communist, Left and Progressive Parties for a different Europe, the Europe of the peoples. AKEL is struggling to put a stop to the neo-liberal onslaught that is abolishing working people's gains and leading to the exacerbation of the monopoly situation under the guise of unbridled competition, the closing down of small and middle businesses, curbing the policy in support of the vulnerable groups of the population, escalating unemployment and reproducing poverty. The government must resist the attacks against our country's sovereign rights in all EU institutional bodies.

The Cypriot people, themselves a victim of these policies, need to intensify their struggle for the protection of its living standards. The upcoming elections for the European parliament are a good opportunity to send out messages, both within and outside Cyprus. AKEL will work towards this end, elaborating radical, innovative and workable proposals for the benefit of our people and the peoples of the EU.

### **3. PRECONDITIONS FOR A SOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM, THE ROLE OF RAPPROCHEMENT AND THE PERSPECTIVES AHEAD**

The Cyprus problem is the main problem facing the Cypriot people as a whole. The future, peace, progress and prosperity of our homeland and people will depend to a great extent on its correct solution. On the contrary, the non-solution of the Cyprus problem or the imposition of partitionist settlements harbours enormous dangers for the very existence of the Republic of Cyprus and our people's future.

As forty years are being completed since the Turkish invasion and occupation of almost 40% of its territory, the Cyprus problem remains unsolved. The successive attempts to find a solution all these years always ended in a deadlock, in the final analysis due to the intransigence of Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot side with the backing of imperialism. As a result, the occupational faits accomplis are increasingly being consolidated.

The question arising is what should we do, given that Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership continue to insist on the existence of two states on the island, which will have a loose union with confederal elements, whilst those forces and circles overtly or indirectly not rejecting a solution of partition are growing in the Greek Cypriot side.

AKEL continues to believe that a solution based on the principles of International Law and on the principles upon which the EU is founded, within the framework set out by the UN resolutions and the High-Level Agreements is in the interests of the Cypriot people as a whole.

With the passage of time without action fundamental principles and objectives of the Greek Cypriot side are gradually undermined: the situation on the ground changes, resulting in the prospects for substantial territorial adjustments eroding gradually. The Greek Cypriot properties in the occupied areas are being usurped in a way that will make their restoration to their lawful owners increasingly difficult or sold-off at humiliating prices to the occupation regime, through the so-called Compensation Committee that operates with the blessings of

the European Court of Human Rights. The numbers of settlers from Turkey v are rising continuously and they already constitute a majority in the occupied territories, a fact which further complicates even more the efforts for their withdrawal. With regards the Turkish Cypriot community, neither does the fruitless passage of time suit it as well, precisely because its very identity is being lost through the continuous alteration of the demographic structure in the occupied areas.

The dire economic situation in Cyprus makes the need for a solution even more urgent, because it would give a significant impetus to the economy which is sinking continuously without prospects of a substantial recovery in the foreseeable future due to the Troika's policies. At the same time, AKEL will never accept the difficult economic situation in Cyprus being turned into a lever for exerting pressure or blackmail by certain forces and circles in order to impose an unacceptable solution to the Cyprus problem.

The discovery of hydrocarbons in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Cyprus constitutes for both communities a new serious incentive for a solution. Whilst on the one hand the Turkish Cypriots will also be able to enjoy the benefits that will arise only through a solution, the Greek Cypriots on the other need a stable and secure environment that will permit the unobstructed utilization of this valuable asset.

It is for all the above reasons that, despite the increasing difficulties, AKEL considers that there is only one way forward, namely the search and achievement of a solution based on the principles of International Law and the principles upon which the EU is founded; a solution that will liberate and reunite our country and people, within the framework of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality as set out in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Any other option, in whatever mask/guise it appears, will ultimately lead to the final permanent partition. Such a "solution" will not only constitute a sell-out of the territories of the Republic of Cyprus, but would be the beginning of new sufferings and woes for our homeland and people.

Therefore AKEL's insistence on its Congress positions on the principles, basis and content of the solution of the Cyprus problem is imperative.

Within this context, the Party has elaborated coherent positions on each and every aspect and chapter of the Cyprus problem.

With regards the internal aspects of the Cyprus problem, AKEL insists on a bi-zonal bi-communal federal solution with political equality as set out in the UN Security Council resolutions. The solution must ensure the unity of the country, of its economy and people and human rights for all Cypriots. AKEL insists in particular on the functionality of the solution, the safeguarding of the unity of the country, its institutions, economy and its people because these are the preconditions for the waging of common class, political and social struggles of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriot workers in the future. We insist on the guaranteeing the refugees right to return.

Regarding the international aspect of the Cyprus problem, AKEL insists on removing the occupation, on the demilitarization of the Republic of Cyprus outside and far from any military alliances, the liberation from the colonisation in the occupied areas and the abolition of any rights of intervention. European Cyprus does not need guarantees and guarantor powers.

The solution we are seeking must of course ensure a single sovereignty, a single international personality and a single citizenship, the respect of human rights and everything that is set out in our Congress positions. Differences are not observed on these questions, but life itself has shown repeatedly that it is not enough. A minimum degree of consensus is required regarding the content of the concept of bi-zonal, bicomunal federation with political equality as defined in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Federation means two levels of power, namely a central government and the regions, each with its own organs of power and consequent allocation of competences between them. Bi-zonality means that there are two regions in the federation and each community will administer one region. Bi-communality means that both communities will have effective participation in the federal bodies and in decisions. Political equality, as defined by the UN Security Council which the National Council accepts (*Note: an advisory body to the given President of the*

*Republic on the Cyprus problem with the participation of all the parliamentary parties and former Presidents)* although not meaning equal numerical participation in all the federal bodies, but means, inter alia, the effective participation and identical powers and competences of the two federated units.

Our people in their overwhelming majority are ready to ratify in a referendum and through their free will, a fair under the circumstances, functional and viable solution of the Cyprus problem. Confidence building measures that will not replace the solution and will not constitute a counter-incentive for it can contribute towards creating the right climate. Within this context, the comprehensive proposal submitted by our side for several years for the return of Famagusta to its lawful inhabitants under UN administration in exchange for the opening of the port of Famagusta under EU aegis and the opening of chapters in the EU-Turkey negotiations could make a significant contribution.

Even more necessary is sincerity, clarity and unity on the part of the state and the political forces with regards the content of a feasible solution. Only then will the people put their trust in the prospects of the solution for real security, progress, prosperity and development to the benefit of both communities and the people as a whole.

The so-called British sovereign bases mutilate the territorial integrity of Cyprus. They are a foreign body and a remnant of colonialism. AKEL will continue to call for the abolition of the Bases. With the solution of the Cyprus problem and the establishment of a united federal republic, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, united and unanimous, must struggle together for the liberation of Cyprus from the British Bases. For as long as the bases remain in Cyprus, the British must respect the Republic of Cyprus and the obligations they have assumed with respect to the Bases. They must respect the rights of the Cypriot citizens who reside or own property in the territory of the Bases.

Furthermore, it is important to specify the causes and culprits of the Cyprus tragedy, as the Findings of the "File of Cyprus" of the House of Representatives highlight. The Finding of the House will contribute

towards excluding similar policies and behaviours in the future that can lead to a new tragedy.

### **Rapprochement in contemporary conditions**

Rapprochement is a key policy option of AKEL from 1974 onwards. It is no exaggeration to note that the policy of rapprochement helped tremendously in keeping the prospect of a solution of the Cyprus problem alive all these years, cultivating and fostering in people's minds in both communities the need for the acceptance of diversity and peaceful coexistence in a common homeland.

The policy of rapprochement is a result of our class-based outlook for the waging of a common struggle of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to reunify our homeland and our people, to create perspectives for common policies and struggle. The rapprochement between the two communities combats nationalism - chauvinism that has brought so much suffering and pain to our country. It fights against the ideological foundations of the extreme-right and the forces that are directly or indirectly supporting partition as a solution to the Cyprus problem.

For AKEL rapprochement is primarily a political process. By no means should rapprochement be confined just to contacts on the level of human relations, without ignoring the importance of these contacts too.

AKEL never argued that the rapprochement of the two communities alone can solve the Cyprus problem. The problem remains unsolved because of the continuing presence of occupational Turkey on our island. Without rapprochement however, it will be difficult to achieve the solution and for a federal solution to last and endure. Rapprochement cannot by itself solve the Cyprus problem, but without rapprochement there cannot be a viable solution of the Cyprus problem.

At a time when Cypriot society is becoming more conservative, when the extreme-right is raising its head, when nationalism - chauvinism are growing stronger, the strengthening of the policy of rapprochement is the only one that can keep the hope for reunification alive.

In these conditions it is imperative we:

- Combat politically and ideologically nationalism - chauvinism and cosmopolitan liberalism and to enhance the commitment to rapprochement, especially within the ranks of our Party.
- Strengthen and build the Movement of Rapprochement on a mass scale through concrete initiatives and actions.
- Forge alliances and cooperation with forces in Cypriot society who are fighting for the reunification of the country and are active in the field of rapprochement, recognizing that many times our starting points and approaches are different.
- Study and monitor developments within the Turkish Cypriot community which are changing and sometimes complex.

#### **4. THE ECONOMY**

##### **Global Economic Crisis**

Our country has entered a deep economic crisis, which affects almost all areas of economic activity. The current economic crisis is a crisis of the capitalist system and the neoliberal model of economic development. It is a result of the system's drive to seek fast and high profit rates and not the growth of the real economy, but speculation in financial markets.

Neoliberalism is the most extreme form and instrument for the development of the capitalist system. It relies on the "free market" with minimal state intervention, while opposing the welfare state and every form of social control over the market and wealth. The neoliberal policies have exacerbated the global economic crisis even more and cannot be the answer to overcoming it.

The neoliberal concept is dominant in the policies implemented in general in the EU and especially in the Eurozone, with the most extreme

expression being the policies in the countries that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Troika. Through these policies the political and economic attack on the state's role, small and middle strata and on working people are growing through institutional and structural changes.

The process of EU integration, with the deepening Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) at the forefront, constitutes a concession of Member States' sovereignty to an EU level. The areas of competences conceded include, inter alia, public finances and affect the entire operation of a state. Consequently, the deepening of the EMU is accompanied by policies centred on shrinking the public sector, curbing the welfare state and attacking working people's rights and gains.

### **Cyprus and the Memorandum**

The Cyprus economy faced structural problems and problems related to the distribution of wealth for decades. Public finances showed a transient and circumstantial improvement as a result of the "bubble" in the real estate sector, but subsequently due to the recession the general levels of long-standing deficits returned. Nevertheless, they did not represent the cause of the crisis, but were exacerbated by the crisis. The Cyprus crisis is fundamentally a crisis of the banking sector, the result of the absence of adequate and effective monitoring by the authorities responsible for supervision and erroneous decisions taken by executives and bank boards.

The banking crisis has in turn dragged with it the Cyprus economy as a whole, since it has created conditions of a complete lack of liquidity with a sharp increase in unemployment, the closure of many small and middle businesses and recession, which has deteriorated as a result of the Anastasiades government's decisions agreed with the Eurogroup to cover the bank losses through the seizure of deposits with more than 100,000 Euros or deposits not covered by the deposits insurance scheme.

The prevailing phenomenon in today's economic reality is the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding agreed with the



Troika by the Anastasiades Government. The Memorandum is based on the contradictory logic that the answer to the Cyprus economy's problems is austerity. However more austerity in practice results in deeper recession and deeper recession demands, in line with the recipes and ideology of the Memorandum, more austerity.

The MoU in reality excludes growth, which would give an impetus to the economy to recover from the current recession. At the same time, the continuing decline in the incomes of working people and pensioners, the curbing of their rights and the dismantling of the welfare state do not correct the problems, but exacerbate the deepening of the crisis even further.

### **Exit from the Memorandum**

As AKEL, we consider the search for proposals for the complete disengagement from the Memorandum's dictates as imperative. As part of this effort we have proposed as a tool for the disengagement from the Memorandum's shackles and the economy's recovery, the return to a domestic currency. The introduction of a domestic currency responds to an important problem, namely that of the lack of liquidity in the financial sector. Nevertheless, it requires political and social consensus, within the framework of an orderly procedure for the introduction of a new currency.

Despite our fierce opposition to the Memorandum and the anti-peoples policies that accompany it, we are ready to examine every alternative option that creates prospects for recovery and prosperity for Cypriot society. In this context, we will wage the battle to curb the most antipeoples, anti-worker and anti-development provisions of the Memorandum given the current conditions.

We struggle against the Anastasiades government's reluctance to pursue an assertive policy towards the Troika. Indeed, in many cases the government indeed appears as more "Troikanist" than the Troika itself.

At the same time, we focus our attention on the protection of workers' rights and the welfare state for a fairer distribution of economic and social burdens.

### **The Cyprus economy and the prospects for growth**

The global financial crisis, the problems of the banks on a global but also national level, as well as the economy's long-standing structural weaknesses contributed to the creation of extremely difficult conditions for the economy recently. The decisions, however, taken overnight between Anastasiades and the Eurogroup have in effect changed the structure of our economy and sharpened social conflicts and poverty.

A fundamental prerequisite for the country to be able to return on a path of growth is the consolidation of the banking sector through stricter monitoring and the enforcement of corporate governance rules and the reform of its character so that the support to the real economy can be restored. The economy's recovery and implementation of policies for growth cannot be achieved without financial resources.

What the country needs and requires today is a progressive alternative proposal for an exit from the crisis. The main goal is a new economic model, which will be based on a sound fiscal policy, in line with a multilevel economic development and social cohesion with the use of private initiative and the social character of a significant part of the economy.

### **Fundamental parameters for reshaping the economy**

- Preservation of the social character of the public utility organisations and their immediate prudent management, restructuring and modernization so that they shall operate more effectively and constitute the backbone of development/growth and the further strengthening of public finances.
- Economic policy will continue to have SME's at the centre of its attention, through the provision of incentives for development and specialized support programs and access to funding.

- A new agricultural reform is needed with the farmer at the heart of green growth and new, radical trading methods. Integrated rural development to promote and utilize all economic, social, cultural and environmental comparative advantages that characterize it.
- Significant strengthening of the efforts in the field of research and innovation to assist researchers increase their potential for drawing more funds. The sectors to be promoted should primarily be associated with the prospects for economic and social development.
- Proper utilization of the natural gas, which can create opportunities for attracting investment and create new jobs through infrastructure development and the construction of a Natural Gas Liquefaction Terminal. At the same time, the advent of natural gas will bring a sharp decline in the cost of producing electricity and will help develop new sectors in processing industries and export derivatives and the installation of high energy consumption industries in Cyprus.
- Enrichment and implementation of a strategy for Tourism, so that Cypriot tourism provides better and more quality, acquires an identity and addresses the problem of seasonality.
- Elaboration of a strategy to support and develop industrial production.
- Investment in new forms of cooperative economy.
- The Cooperative sector has already lost its substantial social and economic character. In reality, it has been converted into a state commercial bank, leaving the people to a great extent at the mercy of banking capital. It is imperative that we fight to restore its original character.
- Development in the areas of shipping, legal, financial, advisory and other services utilizing the European status of Cyprus, our country's geographical position, advanced technical infrastructure and highly skilled workforce.
- Upgrading the policy to attract investment in the productive sector. Enormous opportunities exist in the areas of Research, Innovation, Digital Technology, Health and Education.
- Continuous improvement of productivity through technological upgrading, improve the technical management of Cypriot enterprises and continuous training of working people.

- Strengthen the welfare state and support of vulnerable strata of the population.
- The state and society as a whole should focus on combating unemployment through the creation of new, high quality and dignified jobs for the integration or reintegration in productive activity.
- Protection of work and respect for labour institutions and of the labour relations model that we have in Cyprus, which is based on social consultation and the institution of collective bargaining and collective agreements.
- Reconstruction of social policy aiming at the fairer redistribution of national income, the fight against poverty and social exclusion and support of socially vulnerable groups of population.
- Formulation of a unified national housing policy. Cuts in expenditure on housing policy, particularly in relation to the refugees, restricts the possibilities for acquiring housing for a large section of the population.
- Introduction of measures and policies to alleviate households and small and medium enterprises burdened by excessive debts (interest rate, charges, non-confiscation of first residence).
- Defence of the social character of the Health, Education, Sports and Culture sectors. Ensure free access to health and education. Speed up the implementation of the National Health Scheme.

AKEL counter-proposes policies for growth to the austerity policies and deep recession in order to create the preconditions for new, quality and dignified jobs. Faced with the deregulation of the labour market and the shrinking of the welfare state it counter-proposes policies to enhance the welfare state and support the popular strata and the vulnerable groups of the population.

## **5. COMBATING THE PHENOMENA OF INTERWEAVING INTERESTS AND CORRUPTION AND THE PROMOTION OF TRANSPARENCY**

Since the mid-90's, as a Party we have been ascertaining an increase in the phenomena of decay and corruption in Cypriot society; phenomena which far from being decisively tackled so as to stamp them out, have

with the synergy or tolerance of various factors been perpetuated and multiplied.

In a socio - economic system, which idealizes easy profit and wealth, phenomena such as the "diaploki" (*Note: the interweaving, interplay and interlocking relationships of politics, government with economic interests*) of state and business interests and subsequent corruption of state officials and public servants, are everyday occurrences. On the opposite pole is transparency. The embedding of conditions of transparency and accountability, as well as the awareness that corruption will be exposed to the community as a whole, can operate as a deterrent.

Objectively, the economic crisis has led to such phenomena being brought out into the open. The need to increase mechanisms for control and prevention, as well as those for stamping out and punishing such phenomena is now a social need. Without adopting the logic promoting the targeting and levelling, either of the political world or the public service or anyone in a post of power, we believe that for interweaving interests and corruption to find fertile ground - objectively - presupposes the participation of both the private and public sector. For sure, "diaploki" exists on a more general level too and affects a section of the mass media, the church and other organizations. The state and society need to deal with this issue in a serious way.

In the past, but also more recently, we had dealt extensively with ways to tackle phenomena of "diaploki" and corruption in Cypriot society, by submitting proposals, some of which took the form of tabling Bills. In 2010 we had also organized a series of actions aimed at elaborating our positions and enhancing the institutional framework to address these negative phenomena. Numerous positions of ours are also reflected in the establishment of independent bodies and officials, whose role is, among other, the tackling of corruption too.

For the Cypriot Left, a society which tolerates such phenomena or even worse reproduces them is not a healthy one. With regards the Party itself and especially its militants, the long-standing and constant demand for

honesty and our need to guide society through the strength of our own example, is more than imperative.

Of course our role is not limited to the analysis of social phenomena. Through our daily work and activity we should propose solutions. Without having any illusions that phenomena inherent in capitalism can be eradicated in the given socio - economic conditions.

The radical combating of phenomena of interweaving interests and corruption means changing mentalities and a different and more advanced social consciousness. We must continue to educate the whole Party and society at large in this direction.

Building on our core findings, but also actions that are already set in motion, our proposals, inter alia, include practical and institutional measures, which concern:

- a) The Party and the wider Peoples Movement of the Left, and
- b) The society at large and its institutions.

### **Proposals for the Party and the broader Peoples Movement**

1. We have already decided and proceeded to the voluntary publication of the asset and funds-source declaration of the members of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of AKEL, the members of the Parliamentary Group of AKEL-Left-New Forces, as well as of former government officials who were members of the Party.
2. At the same time, as of this year we are proceeding to the publication of annual audited accounts of the C.C. of AKEL and posting them for a specific time period on the official website of the Party, in addition to their examination at the regular Party Congresses by Party members, which has been the case for decades.
3. Although there is a general acceptance that the Law on Political Parties needs to be improved, whose content we have elaborated

specific proposals on, its faithful implementation by the Party should be viewed as given.

### **Institutional proposals to society**

1. Institutional regulation for limiting terms in various state and other posts and interchangeability in all Public Service positions without exception.
2. Expanding the list of the persons subject to control for the purposes of submitting a statement with regards the submission of an asset and funds-source declaration which shall include, inter alia, the three powers (executive, legislative and judicial), all the public and government officials from one position / scale upwards, all the independent officials and regulators, commissioners, chairpersons and members of the administrative boards of public utility organizations, local government authorities and others. In general, for the asset and funds-source declaration to be effective, it must involve all those who are handling public money and are exercising civil authority or by virtue of their position take important decisions affecting public finances or public administration.
3. Modernization of the legislative framework governing tenders and the purchase of military equipment programs aiming to eradicate corruption and interweaving interests, always having in mind the aspect of national security and confidentiality which governs the sector of defence.
4. Possibility to exercise public control of all the tenders awarded to the public and semi-public sector regardless of the amount.
5. Regulation of the economic activities of Non -Governmental Organizations, including funding, so as to be governed by a legislative framework that we will promote.
6. Modernization of the electoral laws will include lengthening the period of control of election expenses.

7. Publication of audited accounts of the mass media, print and electronic media, with the simultaneous informing of the public about the beneficial owners, including subsidiaries and associated companies.
8. Mandatory confiscation of property of former state officials and public servants from the scale A13 and above are convicted for economic crimes or offenses of tax evasion.
9. Legislative regulation for stiffer penalties so that the consequences of any commitment of offenses against the state will act as a deterrent to commit them.

Without doubt, the combating of the phenomena of interweaving interests collusion and corruption is a cause for everyone. As a Party, we will continue to undertake initiatives in various directions to raise society's awareness cultivate a culture of rejection of such conduct and of course struggle for the strict enforcement of the existing laws.

Transparency deepens and enhances democracy. The stamping out of corruption contributes towards restoring people's confidence in institutions, which is essential, especially in a semi-occupied homeland.

## **6. THE IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL IDENTITY OF AKEL**

The identity of a Party is formed by three main features: its humancentred worldview, the political program it puts forth and the organizational model upon which it is structured.

AKEL, as a contemporary communist party, is guided by the ideology of Marxism – Leninism which “is developing with the continuous progress of knowledge and economic and political development.” For AKEL, this means that society is a class society and the class struggle is the driving force of progress. Consequently, AKEL defends the class, social and political interests of the working people. AKEL is a Party that believes that capitalism is not the final stage in the development of human society, but instead, another, qualitatively different world is possible: the



world of socialism. This is the vision of AKEL: the construction of a democratic and humane socialist society.

AKEL believes that the great inequalities, poverty, hunger, exploitation and human alienation, wars and environmental destruction cannot be the necessary cost to pay for development and progress.

Capitalism, in relation to all previous socio-economic systems, played a revolutionary role in history, but it did so by sacrificing two sources of wealth, humanity and the environment. This revolutionary role has been exhausted long ago. In today's era, the exploitation of both sources of wealth has been intensified to the point that human civilization is in danger. The on-going economic and social crises, as well as the environmental crisis, are expressions of the crisis of the capitalist system itself, which this system cannot overcome.

The exploitative nature of capitalism does not allow it to develop in harmony with the environment, nor can it ensure its sustainability. It has repeatedly been proven that capitalism in its long history cannot achieve growth through moderation, rationality and morality. Quite the reverse is the case; it develops at the expense of humanity, undermining the perspective of society. This is why capitalism cannot be the end of human history.

Believing in the perspective of socialism for humanity, AKEL rejects a world in which the selfish interests of the big transnational and national capital determine the fate of billions of people. We reject a world in which the predatory wars and imperialist policies cause carnage of victims and deprive entire countries and regions of the world of the hope for the future. We reject a world in which inequality and exploitation of man by man condemns billions of people to hunger and misery while the produced wealth can feed the entire population of the planet.

It is evident and proven that in all cases where and whenever the logic of profit determines all the rest, democracy suffers and functions with restrictions. The rampant freedom of the big multinational companies means oppression and exploitation for the majority of the world. Capitalism is a system that constantly generates crises and disasters.

This tragic and inhumane situation must change. And it can change within the framework of a socio-economic system where the determinant factor in the formulation of policy is not the logic of profit but the needs of people and society.

The situation can change within the framework of a system where democracy and its institutions operate without their distortion and alteration by selfish and vested interests. Within the framework of a system where there will be genuine and uninhibited freedom, equality, justice, solidarity, transparency and meritocracy. Society will have pluralism and democratic control over every form of authority that manages issues on its behalf; in a society where individual and collective human rights are fully respected. This is society is the socialist society.

The foundation of this society is the social ownership of the basic means of production. Only this social ownership can enable the rationalization of the economy, production and trade. Only then will the economy not have production and consumption as an end in itself, but will aim to meet the practical needs - intellectual and material – of society.

The social ownership of the main means of production, and its management by workers themselves, constitutes a strong foundation and springboard for the eradication of exploitation, inequality, poverty, alienation, war, oppression and discrimination. It is upon that foundation that the universal values of democracy, freedom, equality, justice, peace, solidarity, the respect for diversity, in an inextricable relation with patriotism and internationalism, can find expression and their application through specific policies.

All the above represent the cornerstone of the identity and action of the Left, which while guided by its socialist vision, does not remain inactive and passive under capitalism, but instead, struggles to ease the contradictions preventing the preparation and advent of a better future. Furthermore, we acknowledge the need to continue our ideological struggle, as well as the parameters entailed therein, taking into account the new situations.

The perspective of socialism is constructed through the waging of small and big national and transnational struggles by progressive humanity for peace and universal values, against imperialism and the predatory expansionist wars that it instigates all over the world.

Socialism is constructed through the smaller and bigger struggles against exploitation and to curb big capital's policies; for a fairer distribution of the wealth; in order to protect and enhance worker's rights and labour conquests; for a dignified life and to ensure people's access to Education, Health, Culture, and Social Welfare; for more democracy and people's participation in social struggle, for more freedom. Furthermore, the perspective of socialism is developed through the struggles against nationalism - chauvinism, racism, against any form of discrimination, social and political oppression. All the above, of course, need to be part of a greater strategic plan to overcome the existing system.

AKEL was created and developed by serving the people of manual and intellectual labour. By serving the best interests of working people, our Party objectively also represents the interests of the small and middle class strata of our people. Since its foundation, AKEL serves the interests of the vast majority of society and not the selfish interests of big capital. Harmoniously, and for the benefit of society, AKEL combines the class with the patriotic interests and through the policy it follows, it has been elevated to a national force with a leading role.

The Party was present and in the vanguard of the struggles of Cyprus for freedom and democracy against colonialism and fascism. It is actively present and is at the forefront of the struggles to defend and complete the independence of our country, for the liberation and reunification of our country and people.

AKEL is present and struggling to tackle the consequences of the economic crisis, which is the result of the global systemic crisis of capitalism, and the crisis of the banking sector in Cyprus. We steadfastly adhere to the position that the crisis cannot be addressed by implementing austerity policies that dismantle the welfare state, abolish the working people's gains and leave no room for policies promoting growth and development. This is the reason why we are strongly against

these policies. The crisis cannot be a pretext so as to impose neoliberal policies which aim at widening inequalities in the distribution and redistribution of wealth to the benefit of big capital. AKEL continues to resist neo-liberalism and defend the workers demand for to right to work and jobs with rights; to struggle for the protection and strengthening of the welfare state, that should express its sensitivity by implementing welfare and prosperity policies, democratic education and a modern general health scheme.

Faithful to its Marxist - Leninist ideology, history and rich militant contribution, AKEL will continue to be at the forefront of our country and people's struggle; implementing its policy always with responsibility and consistent with universal principles; with realism and flexibility, in dialectical unity with society, far from dogmatism; with sensitivity to people's problems and open to dialogue with society; with clear positions, transparency and selflessness.

AKEL is present in the struggle for a Europe of the peoples and not of monopolies; for a Europe of peace and not of militarization; for a Europe of democracy and accountability to the sovereign people and not to big capital, oligarchies and the uncontrolled power of the technocrats in Brussels.

AKEL, being consistent to its internationalist ideology, stands in solidarity with the peoples fighting for national independence, democracy and human rights. It supports the workers throughout the world in their struggles against globalization and multinational capitalist exploitation, for social progress and socialism. It works for the coordination and unity of action of political parties and social forces that express the workers. It struggles on the side of the forces of peace against imperialism, its aggressive wars it is waging and the so-called new world order.

## **7. THE HONOUR AND RESPONSIBILITY OF BEING A MEMBER OF AKEL**

*“AKEL derives its strength from its ideological, political and organizational unity, functioning of internal party-democracy, collective work, conscious participation and action of its members, from the*

*continued broadening and strengthening of the ties it maintains with the workers and the people*". This statutory principle forms the foundation upon which the entire mechanism of AKEL rests on. This is the basis from which all the characteristics of a Party member emanate: the belief in our ideology, conscious discipline, and ethos, active participation in party life and popular struggles, contact with society, self-education and constant vigilance to safeguard the Party.

The correct awareness of the capacity of an AKEL member has great importance for the Party and members of AKEL.

The distortion that was allowed to penetrate into the entire party in relation to the meaning of the status of a party member (that of responsibility, obligations and rights that this entails) is responsible, to a large extent, for many of the weaknesses in the Party - organizational and political.

There is tangible evidence that shows a worrying picture for the Party, such as the attendance of members at meetings and general assemblies of the Party Base Organisations (PBO) and the participation in rallies and events organised by the Party and the People's Movement. There are cases of comrades who for various reasons are inactive and do not actively participate in the party life, not only on a daily basis but also during election campaigns. The low circulation of the newspaper "Haravgi" shows that a large part of party members are informed daily from the mass media which present events through their own political and ideological approach, formulating a hostile communications environment for our Party and its policy.

Moreover, violations of the Party statute are observed which undermine its effectiveness, unity and authority. Cases of party members who have distanced themselves from the party decisions during elections have increased and were opposed to the choices of AKEL. Increasingly, there are phenomena which are incompatible with the character of AKEL: the phenomena of "paragontismos" (*Note: permanent goal of pursuing personal ambition/advancement by abusing positions of power*), selfpromotion, careerism and "localism". Gossip, the spreading of rumours and discussion of party matters outside party bodies, or even

on the internet, has become widespread. Some party members assert only rights, but avoid their party duties and work. Other members feel it's enough just to carry out the practical fulfilment of organizational tasks and not to participate in stating their personal opinion towards shaping of party policy. Some of our cadres consider that the work done in the mass media, on the internet and the social media can even replace daily political work. Personal contact with the common people remains the most important and effective form of political action and contact.

Finally, the pressure of the bourgeois propaganda as exerted through all its mechanisms has negative effects on our members and this is expressed in diverse ways: on the image they hold of the Party and on organized struggle, as well as in the class nature of their perceptions on the economy and society. We also detect an intrusion in the consciousness of some party members aspects which are incompatible with our ideology (xenophobia, conservatism, compromise with the system, cosmopolitan or rejectionist approaches with regards the solution of the Cyprus problem, lessening of internationalist and antiimperialist reflexes, favouritism, interweaving interests etc.) Totally incompatible with the status of a member of AKEL are the cases of employers who violate labour rights or oppose trade union activity.

We have no right to compromise with such negative phenomena that have chain effects throughout the party structure. These phenomena provoke disappointment, frictions and eventually inactivity of cadres. These undermine the ties of the Party with the working people. They spread confusion about the ideological and political position of AKEL in society. They alter the criteria of evaluating and nurturing of party cadres, our representatives in public offices and mass organizations.

The reasons for the situation observed can be sought at various levels; they can be found in the influence of capitalist society and the mentalities that characterise it; in the slackening of the criteria for new party members; in the weakening of ideological work among existing members; in the fact that our participation in the government - during the last five years, but also earlier on - has attracted people with attitudes and morals which are alien to our own; in the lack of control by leading party bodies; in the delayed and non-decisive tackling of

violations of party statutes, of policies, party morals and ethics; in the lessening of inter-party democracy.

To address these negative phenomena, we have to make a targeted effort in six main areas: a) the process of admitting new Party members, b) the ideological and political work with existing members, c) ensuring the democratic operation of bodies so as to develop freely the interparty dialogue, d) the active participation of the party membership in decision making, e) enhancing comradeship and comradesly control at all levels and f) knowledge and consistent compliance with the party statute and the imposition of sanctions where necessary.

With regards the admission to the Party, the procedure provided by Article 3 of the Statute must be strictly implemented. There must be a meaningful debate in the PBO regarding how ready each candidate is to become a member of AKEL. Under the responsibility of the Secretary and the PBO Bureau, a thorough discussion with each new member must be made regarding the importance of the decision to be a member of AKEL as a life decision. The compulsory attendance of new members in a series of lectures on the basic principles of our ideology and party life must be institutionalized. At the same time, we should not fail to acknowledge that younger age groups are not sufficiently represented in PBOs; something which is due to the gap existing in the period young people should pass to and join the Party.

Concerning ideological work, it is on the one hand the duty of a party member to study and self-educate constantly and actively participate in ideological activities of the Party. On the other hand, it is the duty of the guiding bodies to continuously organize activities ideological in content. Ideological education is the best shield of party members against the system's propaganda. It is the shield of the members of AKEL so that they can contribute effectively in shaping the positions and actions of the Party at all levels. The functioning of the Pancyprian Party Cadre School is expected to produce results in this respect. A continuous flow of ideological/educational activities must be planned at local and district level, while self-education must be resolutely encouraged.

Regarding internal party democracy and the participation of the party grass roots in decision making: if party members do not feel - rightly or wrongly - that their voice is being heard or that they are the masters of the Party, then this inevitably leads to a lack of interest in party procedures and an emotional distance is created between the member and the Party. Anything that, directly or indirectly, can prevent (or give the impression that it hinders) criticism within bodies or makes the free expression of opinion difficult must be combated immediately. A party member does not just have the right, but the obligation, to submit in the relevant bodies his/her opinion and ideas and to argue in their favour. In this way, the issue under discussion is creatively enriched and approached through different angles, which is valuable for the Party. Of course, after a decision has been taken, every party member has the duty to work for the implementation of this decision, regardless whether they voted in favour or against it.

Finally, comradely control of party members should be made concrete in relation to their duties, including all members without exception, whether both full-time cadres and volunteers, members of party bodies or not, occupying party and public offices or not. Phenomena of ideological retreat may be tackled more effectively when the cadres themselves who belong to leading bodies constitute an example and a model of party behaviour to all.

In phase that our country is now entering, the conscious discipline of the members of AKEL is a prerequisite and condition for the effective intervention of the party in developments. Incidents of violations of decisions and principles should no longer be tolerated. The appropriate party bodies are obliged to exercise comradely criticism in an attempt to correct and educate through persuasion, but they also have a duty to impose sanctions where necessary. The party member has an obligation - rather than a restrained discretion - of reporting and criticizing to relevant bodies any such violation that comes to his/her attention. The speedy examination of complaints by the Central Control Commission will contribute to timely decision-making.

Each party member has a responsibility to know and claim his/her rights, deriving from the statutes of the party, but he/she also has the duty to



know and to honour his/her obligations, also stemming from the statutes. Each party member even has a personal responsibility to demand the full implementation of the letter and spirit of the Constitution and of the decisions of the Party.

Acknowledging the alarming phenomena identified in party life, it would be a big mistake to give the impression that this picture holds true for all, or even for the majority of members of AKEL. Quite the contrary, our Party still has thousands of genuine honest communists, who have identified their lives and daily life with the struggles of the Party, with the rights of the working class and the cause of our homeland. Thousands of cadres – even in the event of small or greater disagreements or bitterness - lift proudly the heavy weight of the political and organizational work of AKEL. Thousands of AKEL members, with unwavering faith in our ideology, contribute to the Party life, without demanding anything in return. Thousands of comrades, in adverse conditions such as the current ones, did not fear spoiling their image, they do not yield and retreat, but vigorously defend AKEL, its history and policies.

For the members of AKEL, being a Party member is inseparable from the rest of their lives. Their free and conscious choice to become members of AKEL is vindicated when the member of AKEL is also singled out as a person, as a personality, as a fighter for the people. When he/she is distinguished by his/her ethos, honesty, modesty and selflessness; by living among the common people and is linked with the working people, with their concerns and demands. When he/she stands out in his/her field of action for their responsibility, consistency, creativity and seriousness; does not get involved and does not tolerate cronyism, interweaving interests and the promotion of favouritism; is not afraid to clash in order to defend the ideas and values of the Left; defends at all times the need for a just solution to the Cyprus problem and the coexistence between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, as one people; constantly deepens his/her knowledge and understanding of Marxist - Leninist ideology; is informed about the developments in Cyprus and the world; appreciates scientific progress, art and culture; is a courageous voice against racism, chauvinism, conservatism, discrimination in the social, professional and family environment; is guided by comradeship in

his/her relations with party members and places the collective above the personal, the "we" over the "I".

## **8. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PARTY WITH THE POPULAR MASSES**

The political and social struggles are waged on many levels; at the level of political leaderships, Parliament, mass media, social networking, organized groups and associations, of popular masses. Without underestimating at all the importance of the struggle we must attach to the political and communicative level, we must upgrade our own ongoing initiatives for the involvement of organized groups of workers and people in the various political and social struggles we wage. AKEL and its members have the primary responsibility, and the mission to reveal the class character of our society, but also of all socio - economic phenomena that occur around us. They ought to show the road of the class struggle as an integral characteristic of capitalist society.

When popular mobilisations are organized and waged at the right time, they constitute a powerful and effective weapon we have to utilize whether we are in power or in the opposition. Furthermore, popular mobilizations stress the consistency and militancy which should distinguish us; they reinforce the class and political consciousness of the working people, especially of the younger generation.

The militant demonstrations and assertions highlight the class character of society and of its problems. They awaken, mature and sensitize consciences, they bring to the fore the idea that nothing is given, but everything is gained through struggles, even with sacrifices when necessary.

We must convince ourselves, but also others that the struggles that are lost are only the battles that have never been waged.

Bearing in mind the general environment within the European Union, the intensity of aggression of big capital, the policy of the Memorandum, the Troika and the extreme neoliberal policies of the right-wing government, AKEL strongly supports the mass movement in its struggles and demands having the following main axes:

- To promote the goal of social justice and fairer distribution and redistribution of the achievements of economic growth and of the wealth produced.
- To defend public wealth (Semi-state organizations, natural resources, etc.).
- To safeguard and expand the welfare state.
- To defend the gains of the workers, peasants and working people in general, guaranteeing the right to work and the protection of vulnerable strata of the population, especially the unemployed, those living below the poverty line, women, pensioners and youth.
- To protect the right to organize and trade union activity, and safeguard the institutionalised regulated labour relations.
- To improve the quality of life.

AKEL supports the mass organizations of the Peoples Movement of the Left (the Pancyprrian Labour Federation of Labour (PEO), the Union of Cypriot Farmers (EKA), the Progressive Women's Movement (POGO), the United Democratic Youth Organisation (EDON) and works closely with them to defend and extend the rights of working people, farmers, women, and youth.

We support and enhance the struggles developed in other trade union areas in the public and broader public sector, in the field of education, banking, academic and scientific world and other professional groups such as artisans and self-employed through our active participation.

It is a key duty of AKEL members to play a vanguard and leading role in their trade union organisations. Within the ranks of PEO, as well as through other trade organizations such as of the civil servants, teachers, bank employees, etc., AKEL members must be leading cadres, inspire and guide the working people through their example and militancy. At the same time, the active participation of AKEL members in these organizations and movements enhances the ability of the Party to formulate a correct policy on the issues of concern.

In order to strengthen the ties and the relationship of the Party with social movements, professional groups and the wider society, we should

pay special attention to the duty of every party member to actively participate not only in the organizations of the Peoples Movement of the Left, but more widely in every organized group.

Our intervention in the popular masses must not and cannot be based solely on the basis of a central plan. It has to be identified with the life and activity of each PBO. Our intervention and assertive policy should start from the leadership and spread to every single member. Assertiveness and militancy need to become part of the culture and way of working of the entire Party membership. It is a one-way path for our party to identify itself, to be in contact and active in the popular masses, in social movements, in professional groups and any other small or larger group.

Party members need to play the double role of the voice and bearer of party policy on the one hand, but also the transmitter of popular feeling towards the Party on the other. This aspect of the party member capacity has weakened to a great extent resulting in our absence or reduced presence and intervention in big contemporary social movements and organized groups e.g. large families unions, consumers, environmentalists etc. We should not underestimate any front of struggle; from the Parents Association to the workers union, from the action of our local clubs/associations to initiatives for quality of life.

Only then will we strengthen and forge the links and relationships between our party and the workers and the people.

It is not enough to have a mass presence as a party in various mass organizations and movements. We must also have clear positions concerning the subject and issues they are dealing with so as to give clear guidance to our members about the position they need to uphold and promote. This requires timely and collective dialogue so as to reach specific positions, proposals and actions.

Our Party and its cadres cannot be indifferent about the problems of our fellow citizens, who address the Party asking for help, especially when these problems concern the state bureaucracy, violation of rights or adverse discrimination. AKEL and the wider People's Movement of the

Left should systematically and consistently be concerned with the promotion and solving of social problems and problems affecting population groups. AKEL cannot be transformed into a mechanism for solving personal problems, indeed on a cliental basis. To an extent this unfortunately exists and causes great damage. The cliental relationship is unstable; it erodes consciences and encourages self-promotion within the Party.

We must reject inwardness and combat the mentality of individualism.

The solution to the problems cannot be one's personal business, but rather collective cause, nor should anyone be spent in the pursuit of personal accommodation.

The Left must restore the social example of the people's fighter to its members, the model of the vanguard militant and pioneer in the front line of the struggle to solve the smaller and greater problems through their participation in the collective, mass processes of organizations and bodies of our movement, but also through the wider collective trade union or other entities.

## **9. THE ISSUE OF ALLIANCES – COOPERATION**

The policy of alliances-cooperation has always been one of the cornerstones of our Party's overall strategy and tactics. Given the specific stage of struggle that our country is entering at each given point in time, the Party determined the main goal of this struggle, the main opponent and potential allies among which the main ally was also determined.

The logic of alliances is based on the common logic that the union of forces against far bigger opponents is imperative. If you cannot realize your main goal on your own, then in order to be able to promote your cause you have to find allies and build cooperation. If this is not achieved, it will be extremely difficult to fulfil the strategic objective set by the Party at each point in time.

Consequently, based on the main goal of the struggle, potential allies are all those who adopt this strategic objective. Of course, the forging of cooperation also involves elements besides the common objective. It encompasses issues of political, economic and social approach and development, and others. This renders the forging of an alliance an extremely complex case.

Cooperation - alliances are also affected by phenomena and facts of personal nature; facts and situations change easily through personal choices, goals and policies of individuals and organized groups.

Therefore from the moment cooperation - alliances are affected both by objective facts and strategic objectives, as well as by issues relating to tactics, or/and narrow party choices, they become unreliable and complicated. They are hard to achieve and even harder to implement and viable. Cooperation/alliances will move ahead and will reach that point where the objective and subjective conditions are ripe. The main goal is each time when alliances are implemented either by realizing the goal or by promoting the goals we set and the strategy we serve to take steps forward. This of course is to be judged by the end result, which will demonstrate what and to what extent the goals set have been fulfilled, what was not attained, what can be further used, and what the new facts are that have been shaped after the successful or premature end of a cooperation.

It is a fact that alliances, from the moment that they are formed based on a common denominator, minimum or/and greater, do not cease to be agreed between forces that also have several differences and in some cases these become tiring and lead to disappointment.

The minimum common denominator can be expressed as the common component of cooperating forces depending on the type of cooperation/alliance. That is to say, the common denominator will be expressed in another way if the cooperation/alliance takes the form of supporting a government or if the form of the alliance is expressed through a participating cooperation, and another through a coalition government with full participation.

It can therefore be expressed either by establishing a framework of principles or by formulating common positions on key issues or by concluding a comprehensive joint program of cooperation.

Cooperation - alliances often fail causing tensions between the former partners, setbacks and disappointments. On the other hand, the choice of political isolation creates very negative conditions for the implementation of the policy set, which ultimately harms the interests of the country and people.

At the same time, alliances are not an end in itself. Alliances that do not serve the goals defined, for which they were created, are meaningless.

Through decades of experience and focusing our attention on the period after 1974 - given that since then there is differentiation in the stage of struggle we entered - we can formulate some conclusions / positions on the basis of which it is possible to plan ahead.

The stage of struggle up until 1974 was to complete and safeguard the independence, freedom and sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, making efforts, at the same time, to solve the Cyprus problem, as it had evolved before 1974 and after 1960. After the 1974, the stage of struggle was complemented by the aspect of the liberation from the Turkish occupation and its consequences, and the reunification of Cyprus based on the solution of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation, to be rid of the occupation and its consequences. At the same time, the development of capitalism in our country, the accession of Cyprus in the EU in 2004 and in the Eurozone in 2008, as well as globalization, have created new, objective conditions also with regards cooperation – alliances.

The traditional national class has changed substantially. This class has shrunk economically, due to the unprecedented economic crisis since 2006, and is subordinated to the international capital. Internally big capital dominates. Politically and ideologically it is increasingly becoming dependent on the new world order, particularly at a European level.

These changes influence of course the political exponents of what we called in the past the national bourgeoisie, which we experience in

recent years and this creates additional difficulties in cooperation. All these lead the national bourgeoisie more to the right wing and seriously hinder the potential for forging cooperation with the Left.

Changes have also occurred in other social classes and strata that in turn affect the possibility of achieving and implementing cooperation - alliances. Lower and middle strata, farmers, intellectuals and others are being pushed to the margins and plunged into poverty. These strata appear as potential allies through the emergence of several new issues / problems related to Cypriot society. Perhaps the objective procedures in the future will create new social and political formations and exponents of these strata and associated problems that concern them.

As things have evolved in the political life of the country, the role of the House of Representatives has acquired an increased separate and very important role. The House of Parliament which often turns into a ruling body and creates a new state of affairs that dictates the increased importance of a parliamentary majority within the framework of an alliance.

All these changes need to be studied and evaluated continuously.

### **The Cyprus problem and Cooperation**

A distinguishing factor for forging cooperation is the Cyprus problem. The major problem of Cyprus was and will continue to be the decisive factor for cooperation and alliances for as long as it remains unresolved, regardless of whether socio - economic issues are constantly being upgraded in their importance.

The existence of the Cyprus problem adds to the complexity of cooperation - alliances because on many occasions the positions of certain forces may be approaching our own on the Cyprus problem, but not on the economy and vice-versa.

Each cooperation - alliance involves a balance in the relations of collaborating forces concerning the Cyprus problem and other issues. The prolongation of the deadlock on the Cyprus problem, the addition of



younger generations - with less or no first-hand relationship with the Cyprus problem, and especially the great changes brought about by the economic crisis, are affecting this balance to the detriment of the Cyprus problem.

Past experience has shown that it is difficult to reach a common governance program with other democratic, progressive forces regarding the Cyprus problem. However, problems arise when there are developments on the issue. At that precise point we are called to specify the very content of the solution, and then it becomes apparent that it is not enough to have a general consensus on the principles and framework of the solution.

Of course the solution we are seeking must ensure a single sovereignty, a single international personality and a single citizenship, the respect for human rights and everything set out in our Congress positions. There are no differences on these, but life itself has repeatedly shown that they are not enough.

A verbal acceptance of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federal solution with political equality as set out in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions proves in the course of events that it is interpreted differently by allies from time to time. Others reject bi-zonality, others bi-communality and others reject federation itself as a state structure. There is a minimum general content of these concepts, which overtly or covertly in the course of developments is rejected by political forces other than AKEL.

From the above it becomes clear that any future alliances regarding the Cyprus problem must take a more concrete form, apart from the main principles and the accepted framework of the solution and should include a more specific outline of positions, so that no gulf of views is expressed along the way, when we reach the negotiating process. Otherwise, we will continuously enter a vicious cycle that has been proved leads nowhere and will most likely end in the termination of any cooperation.

In conclusion, any cooperation on the Cyprus problem should in the future take a more concrete form apart from declarations of a general nature.

### **How are alliances forged?**

Alliances as we know are built both from above, as well as from below. In contemporary conditions, the simultaneous / parallel use of both forms is necessary more than ever. It is also necessary for us to be ready for a regular rotation of the two forms of cooperation.

The Left's capability of building cooperation must be more active on more and more issues without such a procedure being dependant on broader and generalised forms of cooperation.

Cooperation and alliances may concern the government itself, but may also involve cooperation on separate issues of economic or social policy or to address specific developments on the Cyprus problem. Cooperation on individual issues is part of cooperation - alliances, to which a special role and importance is attributed. This is because, in the short term, it secures the promotion of political goals for the benefit of specific strata of the people that the Party is called upon to defend, and the promotion of the Cyprus problem, but also because it prepares the ground for possible alliances for power.

It is therefore possible to build cooperation - alliances at different levels - political, economic, social, ecological, local government etc. In our case, the political problem of Cyprus, namely the Cyprus problem, is in itself a category for cooperation - alliances. Cooperation - alliances can be built at the level of the leadership, at grassroots, community level, group level and strata level, at a parliamentary level and all these together if feasible, or a combination of some of these. Cooperation/alliances may vary in objectives, duration, form and content.

Of course, all forms of cooperation that aim at achieving the various goals inevitably lead to the creation of alliances that will, sooner or later, put on the table the issue of power as well.

## **10. RUNNING FOR POWER IN CONDITIONS OF CAPITALISM**

The issue of running for power by a party of our type, as well as the operation and action of a revolutionary party in general within the political structures created by bourgeois democracy, has preoccupied over time all the parties and revolutionary movements that set as their long-term goal the replacement of capitalism with socialist structures. Equally important is the question of the nature of the state as such and its role in the process of running for power and transformation of society.

The classic Marxist thinkers, and especially Lenin, who had dealt with these issues in revolutionary conditions, mainly in the field of practical political action and not merely in theoretical analysis, have given us very important principles to approach this issue, which are timeless and still continue to form the basis of a modern, class oriented, political analysis.

These principles are summarized as follows:

1. Political action within the institutions and structures, created by the bourgeois democracy, is essential. Without this political action, it is impossible to gain the sympathy and support of the people concerning the need for progressive and radical transformations. The art is to use creatively and dialectically, daily political and social action so that working people and more broadly society understand the need for a deeper revolutionary change of the system, beyond the limits which by bourgeois democracy permits. This, of course, always needs to be done in correlation to the given political realities and political and social conditions in each country.
2. Power has a class character and ultimately, it is the tool for the imposition on a legal and institutional level of the economic domination of the ruling class. Therefore, the state has specific characteristics and is clearly not neutral. This means that in the strategic planning of a Party of our type, with regards the issue of governance and power, this factor must be taken seriously into account and no illusions should exist under any circumstances in

relation to the role of the existing state apparatus. Power and governance are not identical.

Clearly, in our case as well, we have to take these basic principles of Marxist-Leninist class analysis, that have been developed in a scientific manner, seriously in mind in our assessments/evaluations and in our political strategy.

### **The experiences gained from the participation of Communist and Left parties in government coalitions**

An important factor that must be taken seriously into account in formulating the strategy of the party is the experience which has been accumulated worldwide, and particularly in Europe, around the assertion and the participation of Communist and Left parties in government, in conditions of capitalism and bourgeois democracy. To this significant accumulated experience, our recent experience of the five-year term of the Demetris Christofias administration has been added to this significant accumulated experience.

The most basic characteristics of this accumulated experience are the following:

1. Such coalitions with centre-left forces, particularly when these are based on progressive political programs, create, in most cases, a positive momentum, strengthen the self-confidence and enhance the social radicalism of the popular masses.
2. Such alliances help to mitigate anti-communism and bring to the fore the ideas of the Left as part of a realistic and feasible political program.
3. However, the experiences are not identical. There is also an accumulated negative experience, which should be taken seriously into consideration. This negative experience mainly concerns two serious side effects:
  - a) If the conditions for achieving cooperation are not sufficiently mature and if the necessary convergence do not exist that would cover the minimum of positions of principle, often the process of participation

in coalitions running for power is achieved with significant deviations from positions and principles so that the character and identity of the Party are sacrificed for the sake of the goal of participating in governance.

b) It is unfortunately a frequent phenomenon, which is tending to become the rule, that when and if the Left participates in the exercise of power, the failure for various reasons to implement its commitments (mainly due to the reaction of the establishment, the bourgeoisie and the EU) and fails in particular to meet the high expectations of the workers and the people from such administrations, this is translated as a failure of the Left itself (we have experienced this in our own conditions as well when we had to manage capitalism and indeed in conditions of an economic crisis). This is followed by frustration and disappointment of the popular masses, with serious consequences for both in general the political credibility of Left political parties and for their electoral percentages.

These phenomena become more pronounced when both factors that we have analysed hold true; namely on one hand, there is a gulf between expectations and reality and on the other, a change of the characteristics and a distancing from the traditional militant role of the Left in the mass popular movement, precisely because of its participation in coalitions in power.

Both the positive and negative experiences of the international and European movement of the Left are necessary and useful, not in order to be considered as sacred, but to be used dialectically and creatively by our party in the formation of its own political strategy.

### **The issue of AKEL running for power in the conditions of Cyprus**

In the conditions of Cyprus, apart from the given reality which are more or less common to all countries of the developed capitalist world, which we have mentioned above, there are also elements that are specific and differentiate the Cypriot political reality significantly from the situation in other countries.

An essential differentiation is of course the decisive role the Cyprus problem plays in shaping the political agenda of each political force. The fact that the Cyprus problem remains unsolved creates a state of affairs which has a key role in the process of forming alliances and cooperation to run for power.

AKEL, as the party of the Cypriot working people, thinks and acts expressing the interests of all Cypriots - Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Armenians, Maronites and Latins. The fact that the Party is a historic force of resistance against nationalism and imperialism and the fact that Turkish Cypriots trust it more than any other political force to achieve the goal of reunification of Cyprus, is an important factor which cannot be not dismissed when the Party determines its strategy on the issue of the governance of the country and its role in this governance.

Furthermore, the fact that our Party is in electoral terms the largest political force, apart from the Right, and is the main expression of the progressive, anti-neoliberal forces, is also a different reality from other European countries.

Having in mind all that has been previously analysed, the conclusion is that our Party is obliged to aspire to implement its positions and proposals also through its participation in the exercise of power, even in conditions of capitalism.

### **Principles and conditions concerning running for power**

Having in mind what has been analysed above, implies that challenging to participate in governance must be done under specific conditions and on the basis of principles.

- The first important condition is the broadest possible cooperation with other political forces, given of course that we are connected with these forces by common struggles and minimum programmatic convergences first and foremost regarding the Cyprus problem. These convergences have to be real and not constructed temporarily for the sake of challenging participation in political power. Within this framework, if and when possibilities to

run for government with our own candidate are created we should not exclude it. But clearly, this cannot be a goal in itself or the precondition for cooperation.

- A second important precondition is the programme that will form the basis for a government in which the Left will participate, a programme that will be consistent with our long-standing positions and be characterized by social radicalism.

When referring to social radicalism, we certainly do not expect it to be of such magnitude as to lead to the overthrow of the ruling system.

The fact, however, that the government programme will not lead to the change of the capitalist system does not mean that the ruling system should not be challenged on a number of issues. In particular, this could be achieved through our positions for the redistribution of social wealth in favour of the working people and the popular strata in general, as well as our positions for radical democratic reforms to enhance popular participation and social control and the quality of the democratic operations of the state and society in general. If the programmatic positions of the Left do not include radical proposals, that will challenge the system and in this sense to put across its own corresponding identity, then there is the risk that the qualitative difference between our Party and the other parties ceases being distinct.

The radicalism of the program should naturally be more distinct as the role and participation of the party in government grows. Especially if the candidate is a member of the Party, the program should ensure substantive consistency with the positions and demands of the People's Movement as expressed in our long historic course and should include such progressive transformations that the 'mark' of the Left is evident.

### **Limitations and obstacles which the Party should take into account in case of its participation in governance**

The possibility of creating a difference between the expectations of working people and of the society, and the real results of a government with the participation of our Party, includes the danger not only of

disappointment and alienation of the people, but also in the long term of the serious undermining of the role and credibility of the party in society.

Therefore, the party must take into serious consideration the obstacles, subjective and objective, which it will surely have to encounter in the case of a government that will seek to implement policies and a programme with a progressive and radical content.

- An issue that must be analysed are the commitments and framework shaped by our accession to the European Union and membership of the Eurozone. Is there any possibility in a Member State of the EU to implement reforms in the right direction, for example, the implementation of substantial social policy, and the exercise of a largely independent economic policy? The European Union, especially after the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, is proceeding on a path where the possibility for exercising autonomous policies by the Member States on the essential issues of society, economy and foreign policy is increasingly become limited. On the other hand, the official policy of the European Union is increasingly exposing its anti-peoples and neoliberal character and its intense class identity.

Given these facts, the attempt to implement on a national level, a progressive and social radical policy presupposes clashing with the policies of the European Union. We need to investigate further this issue, both as a Party and collectively with other fraternal Parties in the European Union, so that we have a scientifically elaborated strategy, concerning an aspect that will increasingly become more crucial.

- The implementation of a radical progressive socio - economic programme, even if it does not go beyond the boundaries of the existing social system, presupposes a confrontation with powerful economic and political interests of the big local and international capital and generally with the conservative forces of society. Inevitably this will provoke the reaction of the forces representing the big capital and the ruling class.



- The third important issue, which has emerged through the recent experience of the Christofias government, is the necessity to secure the necessary parliamentary majority. It is obvious that the failure to obtain a parliamentary majority on important political decisions of the government was not only an obstacle to passing specific legislation and Bills, but it was in reality a factor in producing distortion and deviation that contributed towards the creation of a political situation of intolerance/bigotry and the waging of an extreme opposition without principles.
- A fourth major issue that must be evaluated and taken into account is the role of the state and its bureaucracy. It should be considered selfevident that this class-based state will be a factor of reaction and resistance to transformations and policies, which will challenge the establishment and the interests of the ruling class. This conclusion does not of course refer to the simple working man/woman in the public sector, nor does it concern the subjective disposition of each public servant towards the Left, but it highlights the fact that the state is structured in such a way so that it safeguards both the reproduction of the ruling ideology, and the dominant economic and the social approach of the ruling class.
- An essential issue is also the role of the mass media in the modelling of perceptions and manipulation of public opinion. It is clear that the possibility of political support for a government with the participation of the Left, especially if this participation is significant, presupposes mechanisms of resistance and reaction to the manipulation of public opinion by the mass media establishment. A component of such mechanisms should be to create the preconditions for exercising democratic social control over the role and operation played by the mass media.

The Left, as a force of power, should bear in mind this fact, and should not make compromises on its programme, but instead be ready to combat it.

## **The relation between the Party and the People's Movement with the government in the case of participation in the governance of the country**

The final chapter for the formulation of a comprehensive approach to the question of the Left running for power is the relationship of the Party and the People's Movement with the government, if the Party participates in governance.

As a matter of principle, under any circumstances, the full identification of the Party and by extension the Popular Movement, with the government and state power, is wrong. Even in conditions of socialism in the former Soviet Union and other socialist countries, we have come to the conclusion that the identification of parties with the state power was a key factor for distortion that had negative effects on the system.

The Party is a political organism; it expresses social class interests, which are translated into policies and visions. As such, it must earn the respect of the popular masses not through the procedures of state structures which refer to power relations and "give and take" relationships, but through the conquest of the role of a political vanguard, won through daily political activity and social struggles. It is clear that the limitations and obstacles in the implementation of a progressive programme, as well as the fact that the programme itself will be a governance program that will not exceed the existing social system, are factors which imply that both the Party and the mass Popular Movement must, in a dialectic way, fully maintain their entity and autonomy and mobilize accordingly when the conditions and situation demand so. Within this framework, the possible participation of leading cadres of the party and the People's Movement in governments should be carefully examined in order to protect the Movement from the danger of unwanted identification which would be a factor preventing the party playing its effective autonomous role.

An important factor for the Party and the People's Movement of the Left, in this dialectical approach, must be consistency in defending positions, in the sense of the connection between positions the Movement has always defended and the ones it must defend also when it participates in

governance, as well as by taking a clear and distinct position on the side of the workers and the people, under any circumstances that are created.

## **11. CALL TO STRUGGLE FOR THE FUTURE**

This is the proposal of the C.C. of AKEL on how we will move forward on the new paths that are opening ahead us.

In the new evolving economic, political and social situation, with new problems and challenges, we boldly present before the party members, and Cypriot society at large, our thoughts and analyses on how we see our own past and especially the future, both our own future and our country's future.

This proposal will form the basis of a creative dialogue that will help us to shape together new objectives, ways of functioning, our Party's interventions and initiatives; to improve its organizational ability to wage political, class and social struggles; to strengthen its relations with society and the people; to make it more valid, timely and effective in its political interventions.

We come from far and we will march even further, always in the vanguard of the hard struggles our people is waging; embracing the concerns and expectations of the members of AKEL and the Cypriot working people.