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PROTECT THE PEOPLE NOT THE SYSTEM

The Corona crisis and the consequences for European politics

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PREAMBLE

The health crisis that the world is facing reveals a structural crisis that already existed and that the EL has consistently exposed. The EL took on the task of proposing an alternative model for this Europe following the explosion of Covid-19. For this, a Platform has been created and we are working very actively to develop it focusing not only on solutions for the actual crisis, but also, more in the long term, for a public, social and ecological transformation of the economy. It is important to rethink the role of European and global institutions, to ensure investments that go in the direction of a Social Green New Deal, and to protect workers: for a tomorrow focused on human needs and not just on profit.

The situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is a shock for all humanity. Drastic measures have been taken in almost all countries to prevent people from contracting the disease and to contain the pandemic. While, indeed, every effort must be made to protect the population, these measures must be coordinated, but an effective European coordination by its institutions is still absent as well as a global response. In this way, the countries most affected are left on their own. The risk is therefore that the politics in general, with the Stability Pact in particular, will limit solidarity among countries in coping with economic crisis by leading to the dichotomy privileged countries - countries already hit by austerity in the past.

The spread of the COVID-19 virus also has significant consequences for the economy: it is accelerating the crisis of neoliberal globalisation as a hegemonic model of society, accelerating the restructuring process of capitalism.

The coronavirus pandemic clearly shows the failure of the prevailing neoliberal economic and social model. As a consequence of the neoliberal austerity policy of privatising public services, healthcare systems are not able to cope with the public needs in a pandemic.

The Party of the European Left (EL) demands immediate measures to combat the consequences of the crisis and a radical change of policy, opening a new path for the development of the society, placing the people at its core.

Some measures at national level to protect the most vulnerable people, like in Spain, are going in a good direction, but comprehensive activities concerning five poles are necessary. First and foremost, everything must be done to protect the people. A public, social, and ecological transformation of the economy is urgently needed. Democratic institutions and rights must not be questioned by the measures undertaken in order to combat the crisis: on the contrary, in difficult times like these, democracy and civil rights have to be defended and expanded. There is no other answer than international solidarity to the global dimension of the crisis: now it's the time for a new initiative for disarmament and a policy of détente.

European and International Solidarity

We need a social way out of the crisis that goes beyond the current model of European integration. Our goal is a social way out of the crisis. In order to do so, any proposal has to encompass several strands:

- Europe shall diversify its international relations with fair commercial relations based on mutual benefit, not competition for profit.
- **The promotion of an all-European cooperation process including Russia.**
- The development of a model of socially-advanced states characterized by a “horizontal” solidarity and cooperation and with a productive and sustainable programme of reconstruction targeting at achieving food sovereignty through greater support and innovation for agriculture.
- Support to the WHO, especially financially, to play a more effective role in such crises.
- Defense of the UN threatened by the US administration in the interest of multilateralism.
- This is not just a task for Europe but for the whole world: the countries in the Global South need financial support to protect their populations and to improve their healthcare systems.
- **We need to assure that refugees and migrants are treated according to the international and European law, that their human and civic rights are definitely respected, their life is not jeopardized either by illegal detainment, push-backs, deportations hidden from the public eye, or by lack of healthcare, improper accommodation, unacceptable living conditions, racist and xenophobic reactions, exploitation, hate speech, acts of violence.** We have to focus on their proper education, decent and equal working opportunities, personal thriving and social integration.
- A humanitarian response to the situation of millions of human beings all around the world who have to leave their homes to escape from misery, hunger, disease and war and who will now see their situation worsen.
- **The world must remain united and the key to overcome the crisis is international solidarity.** There is a particular need to increase solidarity with the peoples of the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America, who are in much greater danger of being severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The blockade against Cuba and the US sanctions against 53 countries, including Venezuela, should be lifted.
- We stress a new emphasis on the cultural and value-led principles that allow the full development of the human being in an egalitarian and ecologically-protected society.

From this perspective, the Party of the European Left calls on all the organisations from the Progressive, Ecological and Leftist Forces, and especially the ones participating in the European Forum to be prepared to work together to develop a joint progressive response to the current crisis in the interests of the people.

NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

The Covid-19 pandemic shows that our society needs a new social and ecological transformation. The idea that the market can solve this crisis is an illusion, and the rhetoric of the state of emergency is used as a pretext for dismantling democratic and social rights.

We need a Social Green New Deal that goes beyond capitalist limits.

Through a Platform, the Party of the European Left took the task of proposing an alternative model for this Europe: we not only have to rethink the role of European and global institutions, but we are called now to working very actively to protect people.

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