

DECLARATION ON THE GSEE STRIKE OF 5th MAY 2010

The GSEE has called upon the working people, the unemployed and the pensioners to participate in the GENERAL STRIKE of Wednesday 5th May 2010 under the motto UNITY and STRUGGLE.

The working people of our country are called on to defend their fundamental labour, social security and economic rights which are dramatically cut!

Wages and salaries, pensions, the retirement age, even the institution of Labour Collective Agreement itself are at stake by the notorious demands of the Troika “creditors” towards austerity (European Commission, ECB and IMF).

Salaries and pensions are being targeted and unfairly “penalized” and will have to pay the cost for the highly indebted state, the deficits and the competitiveness shortfalls of Greek economy.

The Greek government has accepted and is fully subordinated to the most harsh and extreme neoliberal measures.

Greek workers REJECT and explicitly CONDEMN this anti-social and anti-labour frenzy. They join their voice and forces and ALL TOGETHER demand:

THE RICH AND WEALTHY MUST PAY FOR THE CRISIS!

The workers, the unemployed and the pensioners who struggle every day to survive, shouldn't pay for the crisis, the ones who caused it and profited from the crisis should pay for the debt burdens. The workers reject these UNFAIR, UNILATERAL and TOUGH measures and call for their withdrawal!

The “Troika” (European Commission, ECB and IMF) has a standard austerity recipe that serves solely its own economic interests and those of its allies, bankers and employers.

The government should say “NO” to these destructive measures and to the Troika demands that try to safeguard “at any cost” their money and profits and just don’t care about the real victims when asking unacceptable and USURIOUS interests rates for “lending” the Greek government!

It is a destructive and brutal recipe that will throw people and the society into deep poverty, will dismantle the economy, deepen the recession and the crisis and will shoot up unemployment. This will be a big step backwards for the country!

We recognize the country’s grave fiscal and economic problems , however they were not caused by the working people who are now called to tighten their belts and pay for the crisis and the loans. This is UNFAIR and UNACCEPTABLE!

It is a deadly cocktail of anti-social packages that impoverish people, deepen the recession and dismantle social cohesion.

We must save the economy, but first of all we must save SOCIETY!

We will resist the measures and we will strike

The anti-labour measures should be withdrawn

Those RESPONSIBLE for the crisis should be punished!

- The wages and salaries in the private sector are not to be blamed for the lack of competitiveness of Greek economy,
- The “restrictive” institutional framework is not to be blamed for the liberalization of the labour market since it is the employers that make most easily unjustified dismissals,

- The private sector doesn't produce DEFICITS, on the contrary it makes huge profits,
- The ultimate blame for the deficits of the Social Security Funds rests on the contribution evasion, contribution fraud, black labour, uninsured work, state debts and the debts of private individuals that are not paid off to the funds and not on the meager pensions and the retirement age,
- Wage and salary earners are not to blame for "cooking" the books and false data in Greece,
- Working people, pensioners and the unemployed who do not comply with market imperatives and the terms set by bankers and speculators, are not responsible for the crisis.

Our main demands

- no salary cuts (the two months of "bonus" pay),
- support for low incomes and pensions
- conclusion of a satisfactory National Labour Collective Agreement and enhancing the role of the Organization for Mediation and Arbitration (OMMED)
- abolishing the illegal interventions in the collective agreements of the Public Utility Corporations (DEKO)
- a ban on **layoffs**, doubling the severance pay, an increase in unemployment benefits and extension of the allocation period to two (2) years
- a reduction or even a **freeze** on the prices of all products and services that meet basic consumption needs
- cancel the anti-social security measures which overturn the provisions on the retirement age and the pensions size, penalize and combat contribution evasion, black and uninsured work

- promote **growth** through effective investment plans in order to increase employment, create stable full-time jobs and reduce unemployment
- strengthen labour relations and enforce labour rights
- we reject the new LAFKA scheme (Solidarity Account of Social Security Funds). It is an anti- social security, anti-social measure of poverty redistribution!
- Reduce the VAT rates on all broad consumption goods

Government decisions, the gravity and size of the problems, the fierce attack and the cruelty of creditors make unity an urgent imperative for workers.

We say NO to the anti-labour measures, to recession and unemployment.

At this crucial time the working people need to join forces and strengthen their fight and actions.

Together we can do it!