



ETUC Resolution - Solidarity for Greece

Adopted at the Executive Committee on 9-10 March 2010

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) Executive Committee members attending the meeting of 9 & 10 March 2010, express their solidarity with the President of the Greek Confederation of Labour, GSEE, Yannis Panagopoulos, who was brutally attacked by perpetrators alien to the trade union movement. They note with concern that such condemnable actions inevitably bring to mind the rise of fascism and hope that the democratically elected Greek Government will swiftly bring the culprits to justice.

The ETUC expresses its full solidarity with Greek workers in their struggle against job cuts, wage freezes, wage and pension cuts. Europe's message to the Greek people should be one of stability and social progress and not one of economic stagnation and social dumping.

European trade unions are monitoring with the greatest concern the situation in Greece and in particular the pressure by the Commission, the Eurozone Ministers and the ECB on the Greek government for even harsher austerity measures that will mainly and irreversibly affect the working people and the most vulnerable segments of society and upset the social fabric in Greece.

The austerity packages announced so far comprise radical cuts in wages and pensions, extensive tax increases, lay-offs, large scale privatisation of public companies and cutbacks in welfare. Far from containing the crisis, such measures will aggravate it since they will fuel unemployment, demolish welfare, kill domestic demand and strangle economic activity.

We wholly support Greek unions in opposing this short-termist project and ask for realistic, well balanced and socially acceptable plans that are negotiated with the trade unions. We join our Greek colleagues in demanding a drastically different policy mix to support investment, growth and employment, safeguard incomes, provide fair and effective taxation, upgrade the State's regulatory role and sustain social cohesion and the environment.

The burden cannot fall unevenly on the working people of Greece who have already seen the gradual erosion of their rights, pensions and income. We cannot allow financial market speculation to shape economic and social development in Europe and to impose its agenda on society despite the near collapse of 2008 and the ensuing dramatic recession.

Europe needs to be present for its Greek citizens in a spirit of solidarity and cohesion

and to shield people and countries from the lethal impact of casino capitalism. Europe needs to address the problems by shifting away from the blinkered belief in the supremacy of the markets over society and move ahead with a new architecture that puts people, solidarity and the real economy first.