

Final Document of the Second Regional Conference of Pensioners' Organizations of the Former Socialist Countries

After the counter-revolutionary coups in our countries in the late 80s and early 90s, the dismantling of the social gains achieved during the years of socialism began. All this happened according to approximately the same scenario, so our current problems are very similar.

Compared to the times of socialism in most countries, the average pension has decreased significantly and is, as a rule, at the level of the subsistence minimum or even below it. Thus, many of our pensioners live in real poverty.

In addition, as a result of pension "reforms", the retirement age has risen sharply. Under socialism, it was 55 years for women and 60 for men in most countries, now it has become higher by 5-7 years or more. This is officially justified by the supposedly increased life expectancy, which, taking into account the "optimization" of the health care system, i.e. reduction in the number of public medical institutions and health workers, absolutely not true.

The above-mentioned "optimization of healthcare" and the course towards its commercialization significantly worsens the living conditions of our pensioners and shortens its duration, despite all the manipulations with statistics.

In most of our countries, the socio-economic situation has also deteriorated significantly with the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine. Most of all, this applies to Russia and Ukraine, whose troops are directly involved in the battles. Nevertheless, the "war of sanctions", in particular the "gas war", and the militarization of the economy, which had a negative impact not only on the parties to the conflict, but also on almost the whole of Eurasia, also had serious consequences. And first of all, pensioners and the elderly, as the most socially vulnerable part of the population, suffer.

Despite the significant variety of socio-economic and political conditions in our almost 30 countries, the following areas of struggle for pensioners can be defined:

1. The abolition of raising the retirement age and returning it to the parameters that existed under socialism.
2. Raising the minimum pension to 1.5 times the subsistence minimum of a pensioner.
3. Raising the average pension to at least 50% of the average salary.
4. Indexation of pensions for all pensioners, including working pensioners, in accordance with inflation rates.
5. Payment of subsidies to pensioners for housing and communal services in the amount of at least 50% of their amount.
6. Real, and not just declared, provision of free medical care to all pensioners.

In foreign policy terms, we call on pensioners and trade unions of the former socialist countries to actively join the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle against the dictatorship of the US and NATO.

To achieve these goals, it is necessary to coordinate our activities as much as possible. This is especially important in view of the weakness of the left forces in our countries, which are still reeling from the historic defeat of socialism and the betrayal of many former leaders. Today's conference should be a new significant step in protecting the interests of pensioners and retired, as well as strengthening the left movement as a whole. And in this sense one important aspect of our activity should be noted.

Three decades ago socialism in our countries was defeated - as we are all sure, on a historical scale, temporary. We did not surrender without a fight, but the forces were too unequal. For many years we fought rearguard battles, sometimes achieving tactical successes. And if we hadn't resisted, the people would be living much worse now.

Our conscience is clear - we have done everything we could, and sometimes much more. But the point of our struggle is not to prevent our own remorse. The meaning of our struggle is to restore a social justice and genuine democracy in our countries, to ensure that our fellow citizens, both old and young, live a decent life.

In some places the bourgeois authority has managed to achieve a

relative stabilization, but in most of our countries the system of government is in permanent crisis and often cannot exist without external support. On the other hand, many of our fellow citizens have experienced the “delights” of capitalism and realized what they have lost.

Stop retreating, for the left forces in our countries it's time to go on the offensive. And here we, veterans, can do a lot. We have a wealth of political experience, we still have the strength. Let's go to work, comrades!